Leland Bridge Night returns to Almaden Valley for another successful year **SEE PAGE 4**



End of an era Downtown Tabard Theater faces its final curtain call — SEE PAGE 7 California Connections Academy making a difference by offering six tuition-free public schools **SEE PAGE 4**



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Silicon Valley community college district could offer free tuition

By Joan-Anh Pham San José Spotlight

R ultimate goal for one newlyintroduced state bill: California Senate Bill 629, introduced by state Sen. Dave Cortese.

The new bill would allow the West Valley-Mission Community College District to stop charging its students tuition and cover other costs such as transportation and books.

If approved, the bill would expand access to higher education and open opportunities for low-income students in one of the nation's most expensive regions, advocates said.

The proposed bill's co-authors include Assemblymembers Evan Low and Gail Pellerin, as well as state Sens. Josh Becker and Marc Berman.

Brad Davis, chancellor of the West Valley-Mission Community College District, said the aim is to eliminate enrollment fees for students by January 2024. Under California's Education Code, community colleges charge students *See TUITION, page 18*

'Wild, Wild West Winter Walk' a rollicking good time

By Lorraine Gabbert Senior Staff Writer

D onning cowboy hats and boots, residents kicked up their heels at the 15th annual Wild, Wild West Senior Winter Walk and Resource Fair.

Aimed at adults age 50+, the Winter Walk is an opportunity for seniors to learn about city and county resources, meet with government officials, exercise and socialize.

Western music played as residents enjoyed line dancing and moseying around the interior of Westfield Oakridge Mall on Feb. 24, led by District 10 City Councilmember Arjun Batra and District 9 City Councilmember Pam Foley. District 2 City Councilmember Sergio Jimenez joined them in hosting the event but was out of the country on government business.

This year, Shirleyn Cannon, community relations coordinator for Batra, put together the Winter Walk with support from Chief of Staff



Former Councilmember **Johnny Khamis**, Councilmember **Pam Foley** and Councilmember **Arjun Batra** joined residents in line dancing. *Photo by Lorraine Gabbert*

Michele Dexter. Cannon said following the isolation of the pandemic, she was excited for seniors to have a chance to mingle and find out what's available in the city, including nonprofit organizations they can volunteer with.

Batra and Foley suggested people take advantage of the variety of resources available, including information on medical support, fraud alert and estate planning. Foley preferred having the event in-person, rather than virtual, as it was during the pandemic.

"It was a lot of fun, but not nearly as fun as being here," she said. "The ability to socialize is so important."

Vanessa Sandoval, chief of staff for Jimenez, thanked residents for coming out to meet elected officials, gather information and connect.

See WINTER WALK, page 20

EPA commits \$727M in low-cost loans for Anderson Dam and Coyote Creek

Valley Water is the recipient of the EPA's 100th loan from the Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act

t a news conference held last Thursday, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced it has approved \$727 million in low interest loans to the Santa Clara Valley Water District to help fund the rebuilding of Anderson Dam near Morgan Hill.

The largest reservoir in Santa Clara County, Anderson has been drained for earthquake repairs since 2020, limiting the amount of water needed during a semi-draught. Concerns about the stability of the dam, which was built in 1950, prompted officials to approve the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project which now has an estimated price tag of \$1.4 billion.

Two of the largest projects benefiting from the federal loans



include the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project and the Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project. These projects provide environmental justice benefits, such as flood protection for disadvantaged communities and local water supply reliability.

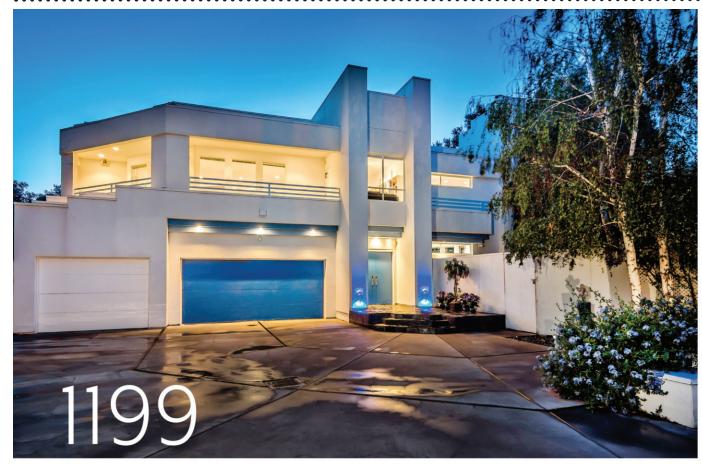
"We know making smart investments in water infrastructure and technology today remains the most cost-efficient way to ensure Santa Clara County has enough safe, clean water now and into the future," said John L. Varela, Valley Water Board Chair. "Thanks to WIFIA (The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014), we can do this in a cost-effective manner that will benefit our rate and taxpayers."

A portion of the 100th WIFA loan included in this commitment was

awarded to help fund the Coyote Creek Flood Protection Project. As we reflect on the sixth anniversary of the Coyote Creek flooding, we're reminded about the importance of flood projects which are vital to protect communities in Santa Clara County. This project will protect homes, schools, businesses and highways in historically floodprone areas.

"From our first loan to Seattle in 2018 to today's announcement of our 100th loan to Santa Clara County, EPA's WIFIA program has benefited over 50 million people across the country and supported 123,000 jobs," said EPA's Assistant Administrator for Water Radhika Fox. "Ensuring access to clean, safe water is essential. Thanks to the Biden-Harris Administration's historic \$50 billion investment through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and the availability of *See LOAN, page 19* PAGE 2 ALMADEN TIMES MARCH 3 – MARCH 16, 2023

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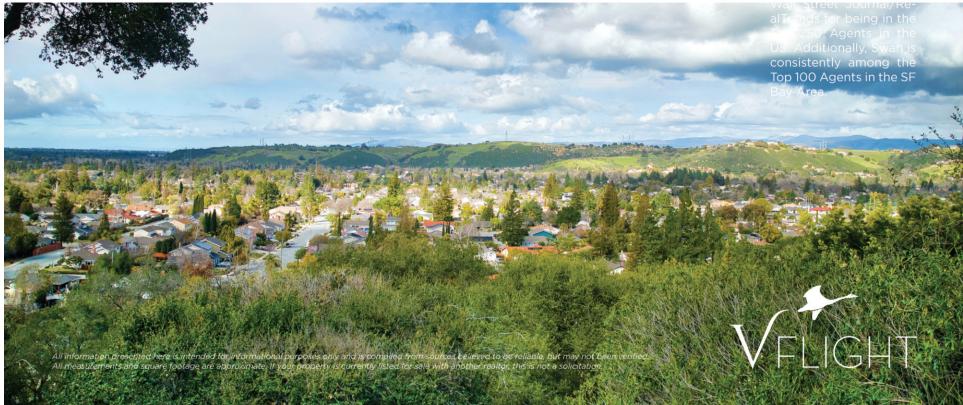
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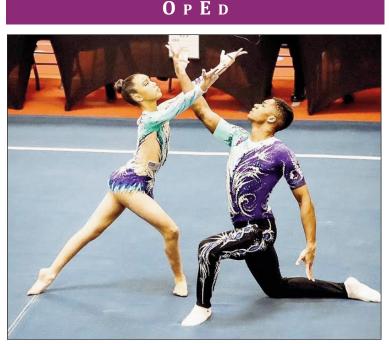
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PAGE 4 ALMADEN TIMES MARCH 3 – MARCH 16, 2023

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California Connections Academy Monterey Bay serves students across Santa Clara counties including San Jose gymnast and senior **Jaylen Ivey** (pictured with partner **Cassidy Cu**) who has been enrolled with the school since 2020. *Photo by Alison Wang*

California Connections Academy making a difference in the community offering six tuition-free public schools

Online enrollment for 2023-24 school year now open By William Bellou

Publisher

alifornia Connections Academy, a network of six tuitionfree online public schools serving students in grades TK-12 across 32 counties in California, has opened enrollment for the upcoming 2023-24 school year.

The public school, with more than 18 years of experience, has provided its high-quality online learning expertise since 2004 and currently serves more than 8,400 students across California.

Families choose to enroll in California Connections Academy for a variety of reasons, including advanced learning opportunities,

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The opinions and viewpoints expressed by guest authors and columnists in this publication do not necessarily reflect the opinions and viewpoints of the staff and management of the Almaden Times and Times Media, Inc. a safe learning environment, and the ability to support extracurricular pursuits or medical needs, so students can reach their fullest potential.

Made up of six WASC (Western Association of Schools and Colleges) - accredited virtual public schools authorized to operate in different geographic regions across the state, California Connections Academy has demonstrated expertise in the virtual learning model and provides a highly personalized online education. With a rigorous curriculum that meets state education standards and features structured LiveLesson sessions, socialization opportunities for its students and top results from its annual Parents Satisfaction Survey, the school is an excellent choice for families interested in a high-quality online learning option.

"Students need education options that will prepare them to thrive in a changing world. At California Connections Academy, we offer nearly two decades of experience in meeting students wherever they are academically and empowering them to take ownership of their education," said Dr. Richard Savage, California Connections Academy Superintendent. "Our experienced staff, administrators and teachers are excited to introduce new families to our individualized approach and curriculum that keep students engaged and motivated to succeed.'

California Connections Academy serves a diverse student body, including gifted students seeking See ACADEMY, page 18 Valley Currents

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



(From left to right) Justin Lai, Daniel H. Xu, Ryan Qin, Daniel Xu, Gavin Liu during their martial arts performance (photo credit: J. Xie)

Leland Bridge Night returns to Almaden Valley for another successful year

Entire show run by student and parent volunteers

By Claire Chen Special to the Times

whirl of festivity greeted the eye before even entering the door. Streams of excited audience members of all ages meandered their way from the parking lot, past tables piled with food and décor. Volunteers wore light-up rabbit ears to welcome the Year of the Rabbit. It was, of course, Leland Bridge Night. All proceeds fund programs

At the same time of the celebration of the Lunar New Year and Chinese culture, Leland Bridge Night is the annual show and fundraiser that takes place for Leland High School, which was hosted on Leland's own campus on Feb. 5 by Leland Bridge Parents Club, a parent and student organization at local Leland High School that aims to bridge the gap between Asian-American families and the school community. Prof-



President of Leland Bridge, **Monica Ho**, addresses the crowd (Photo credit: J. Xie)

its from the tickets go directly to funding programs at Leland High School like speech and debate, journalism, music, robotics, and college application support.

Dazzling local talent

Once there, the audience was entreated to a dazzling array of local talent, interspersed with trivia, speeches, and chances to win raffle prizes. As Jianqi Miao, parent volunteer, director, choreographer, and program designer, put it, Leland Bridge Night "Is an opportunity to be proud of ourselves and celebrate Chinese culture, while bringing it to the greater school community."

In the audience this year were San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan, Leland High School principal Peter Park, and San Jose Unified Board of Education Vice President Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo. Multiple teachers and staff of Leland High School were also in attendance. Yunyun Jiang, parent volunteer, stage manager and student recruiter, proudly recalled the overwhelmingly positive reaction from teachers, who praised the performances and expressed a renewed interest in Chinese culture, with some asking to wear traditional Chinese clothing at next year's show. The best part? The entire show is run by student and parent volunteers. Whether serving food or being MC, Leland Bridge and their associates banded together to create a spectacle to remember.

Principal Park and Mayor Mahan spoke to all. Park recalled in his speech at the beginning of Bridge Night that this is his tenth time attending, and Mahan shared that he wished to thank parent and student volunteers and that he'd enjoyed coming to previous Bridge Nights.

Former Leland principal and current Pioneer High School principal Brad Craycroft remembered Leland Bridge Night, too, and even returned to Leland for a night to attend. From the administrative staff to the alumni who sent in videotaped greetings to start the show, Leland Bridge Night has made an impression as a time-tested tradition with excellent staying power which is one of the keys to its longevity!

Overcoming challenges

Generation after generation of willing student vol-

Times Community News

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Performers of the Hip Hop Dance Medley (Tony Dung, Isaac Jin, Rei WangCharles Li, Yifan Li, Ethan Yin; photo credit: J. Xie); Brenda Wang, Carissa Robinson, Celine Ho, Karl Xing, Teresa Sun and Sarah Sun perform a K-pop dance routine (photo credit: Solomon Chang)

unteers proudly showcase their skills onstage, whether in the form of song, dance, or in the case of a production preview of the musical, Aladdin, in which the full-length show, starring, casting and directed by Leland students, will be open to the public later this spring. Having a show entirely run by parent and student volunteers hasn't been without its challenges, however.

Ms. Miao recalled that students' busy schedules often clashed with practice times, and Senior and Bridge Night performer Nicholas Yen corroborated this point of view, citing wrangling with the sound system and inconsistent attendance at practices as the biggest obstacles. And while Yen painted the setbacks as "chaotic," he adds, "ultimately, we pulled through" and called the final performance "far, far better" than any of their practices.

Despite the challenges, participants in Leland Bridge Night overwhelmingly supported the student- and parent-centered nature of the event. Sophomore Eleanor Yu, who performed "Love Story" by Taylor Swift, said Leland Bridge Night "helps us students feel more connected to Chinese culture" by "allowing students to bring their A-game to the performance, which makes it more unique to Leland."

Seniors Brian Jackson and Jonathan Zhao, who acted as Aladdin in Aladdin and MC, respectively, add on this point of view, calling it a "great opportunity for local talent" and both a "celebration and outreach" of Chinese culture that has, as Sophomore Shan Moitra said, a "big impact" on the Almaden community.

Uplifting to all

Meanwhile, Senior and Leland ASB President Alexander Lee, who also directed and played the Genie in Aladdin, reflects that his participation in Leland Bridge Night taught him just how much he could learn from others, even while having a leadership role. Forming connections with others appeared to be a consistent theme on the minds of Bridge Night performers, with Sophomore Caroline Tomaz, who performed in four separate acts throughout the show, citing enthusiastic invitations from others as the reason for her considerable participation in the show. Junior and backstage manager Lori Yang found it "really cool to see a bunch of students come up with their own programs," saying, "it really helps bring the community together."

Over 100 volunteers make the difference

Parent volunteers like Ms. Miao and Ms. Jiang helped make the final result a proud culmination of the work of so many volunteers, who'd begun planning the event in September. Ms. Jiang found the credits at the end of the show particularly moving, watching the names of over a hundred volunteers go by, feeling that their work had surely paid off.

All in all, Leland Bridge Night is here to stay — and not in the least because of its



Leland Bridge parents Fang Fang, Haoqing Sun, Jianqi Miao, Kathy Xiong, Kathy Zhou, Nancy Wang and Yifeng Luo take the stage with a classical Chinese dance (photo credit: Solomon Chang)



Aladdin as performed by Alexander Lee, Brian Jackson, Christopher Wu, Ethan Chang, Kai Cheung-Nguyen, Marcin Witanis, Brandon Shoji, Nicholas Yen, Anuveer Chadha, Ariyana Chadha, Charlotte Kuo, Eddie Chang, Milli Blom, Niharika Roy Choudhury, Shaun Altman, Varna Mouli and Aadi Shah (photo credit: J. Xie)

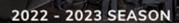
fundraising. Bridge Night strengthens the bonds between students and their culture, students and their passion, and students

with their community, while simultaneously putting the best of Chinese culture on its brightest and most colorful display.



Anthony Xie, Michael Deng, Ryan Jin and Suvia Li team up to perform a song of Ryan's own composition (photo credit: Solomon Chang)





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Times Community News



AI Technology: Californians' dream home is a 6-bedroom French Country-style

New study reveals each state's dream homes; AI technology used to create images for each dream property

izard of Oz's Dorothy famously said 'there's no place like home.' It's the most important place to a human being, a place of comfort, of safety, and, if we're lucky, somewhere with all the latest smart home technology, and a personal gym.

Californians would choose a 6-bed French Country style home set in the suburbs, complete with a swimming pool, solar panels, double garage, large backyard, modern kitchen, open plan living, complete with a gym. Above is the AI image generated for California,

And if money was no object, what would our dream home really look like? Some might be happy with a modest farmhouse in the country, while others might crave a high-rise condo in the hippest part of a city. Do some crave modernity? Or, do we hanker after a historical style to make us feel more traditional? For some, the perfect house might have a pool so we can do laps every day to stay healthy; others might place more emphasis on the type of kitchen, depending on whether they're the type to entertain regularly, or just need access to a fridge and a microwave. Either way, it's fun to, well, dream...

Real time coupon and deals discovery engine CouponBirds surveyed 3,500 Americans to find out what their dream home would look like, taking into account details such as the style, the setting (in a city, suburbs, coastal or the country), the type of kitchen (modern, traditional or transitional), the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, whether it has a garden and/or a pool, if it has open plan living or not, and whether there is any kind of wellness area, such as a gym or a sauna.

The results have been divided up by state, and for each one, OpenAI's DALLE artificial intelligence deep learning models has created a mock-up picture of their perfect dream home. The project brought up some interesting designs!

A French Country home is known for its rustic yet upscale charm. The French Country architectural style is inspired by French chateaus and became popular among American soldiers returning from World War I. These homes are unique in their design and typically feature steep pitched or hipped roofs, tall ceilings and windows, traditional materials such as clay, stone, and brick which give a rustic appeal, and exposed wooden beams in the ceilings and walls. French Country homes are designed with their environment in mind, often featuring neutral colors with soft, nature-inspired pops of color such as sunshine yellows and grass greens.

Other interesting results

Nutmeggers would choose an opulent 4-bedroom Greek Revival style house, complete with swimming pool, double parking garage, a modern kitchen, large backyard, set in a Connecticut suburb.

Wyomingites, on the other hand, stuck fairly closely to what they already know: in this case, they dreamed of a large country ranchstyle home - perfect for keeping some horses - with 6 bedrooms, a pool, a large backyard and an open-plan setting. Ranch homes are generally popular in the West, and help promote the cowboy image... so it's possibly no surprise that this was the house style of choice for Texans, too.

It's maybe not unexpected, either, that in the land of the prairie, Kansas, they dream of a Prairie-style home. These were made famous by the celebrated architect, Frank Lloyd Wright, and these long and low buildings celebrate and complement the natural beauty of the Midwestern landscape. Kansans also wanted to live in the country and have a traditional-style kitchen, five bedrooms, solar power and a steam room, but no pool.

The very quirky and ornate Queen Anne style - think turrets, stained glass windows, elaborate woodwork and half-timbering - is coveted by those who live in Iowa. With just four bedrooms, no pool, a medium sized backyard, based in the suburbs, it sounds as if they want the exterior to do the talking.

Editor's note: CouponBirds created a 50 slide infographic showing each state's dream home - from Alabama's Colonial Style to West Virginia's Gothic. Here is a Link to survey results showing specifications for each home: www.couponbirds.com/research-center/data/ what-would-your-dream-home-be-like



San Pedro Square in downtown San Jose is pictured in this file photo.

Downtown Tabard Theater faces its final curtain call

A truly magnificent gift to all

San Jose art institution in downtown is closing its curtains later this year.

The Tabard Theatre is closing indefinitely on April 2, according to Jonathan Rhys Williams, executive artistic director of the Tabard Theatre Company.

"After three years of battling increasing costs, decreasing ticket sales and the ongoing effects of a global pandemic, we are simply no longer able to make ends meet and therefore will be unable to complete the current season," Williams wrote in a letter to the community today.

The COVID-19 pandemic decimated the local arts scene in downtown San Jose. In 2021, Team San Jose, which manages the city's arts and cultural centers and tourism, reported zero dollars in revenue. While some have been able to recover, the small Tabard Theatre in San Pedro Square couldn't keep up.

There are still two shows residents can catch before the theater closes. "The Super Secret Society" runs until Sunday. Following that, "Once," an eight-time Tony awardwinning musical, will run from March 10 to April 2 as the 22-year old theatre's swan song.

Customers who purchased tickets to the two other productions planned for the year, "Othello" and "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang," will be contacted by the box office about options, Williams said.

"The Tabard Theatre Company has meant so much to many of you as artists, technicians, volunteers, staff, and of course as subscribers, donors and patrons," Williams said. "We thank everyone who has supported us over the past two decades, and particularly through this very challenging last three years." **Tabard mission statement**

The Tabard Theatre Company provided live entertainment experiences that enlightened, appropriate and affordable for audiences of all ages, championing unique works in an inclusive environment, with educational programs and altruistic outreach to the underserved.

Tabard storied history

The Tabard Theatre Company is a 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation that was founded in 2001 by Cathy Spielberger Cassetta to be a "different" kind of theatre company from the more than 450 theatre companies in the Bay Area. For its first seven seasons, Tabard nomadically performed in a variety of venues, not having a consistent venue of its own.

In 2008, Tabard contracted with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency to become the managing and resident theatre company of then-named Theatre on San Pedro Square, the current location. Its charter provided for production of theatrical plays and musicals as well as to be a destination for guest performing arts groups. This venue was formally renamed "Tabard Theatre" in 2018. It blossomed into a multi-faceted theatre arts organization hosting concerts and comedy shows, and a wide variety of corporate, private and public guest events.

Tabard Theatre also continued to be the official Swing Stage of the San Jose Jazz SummerFest. All told, various programs provided the community with over 150 performances per year.

The venue was also home to summer theatre camps for children ages 6 to 16. In its mission to bring outreach to the underserved, Tabard's Youth Performing Arts Programs brought theatre education to a number of schools in the San Jose area.

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Photo Credit: Screen shot courtesy of Disney Concerts and Pixar

Disney and Pixar's Coco in Concert live to film presented by Symphony San Jose

Symphony San Jose will present Disney and Pixar's "Coco in Concert" featuring a screening of the complete film with Oscar® and Grammy®-winning composer Michael Giacchino's musical score performed live to the film.

The concert will be led by conductor Susie Seiter. In addition to the original score by Michael Giacchino, "Coco" also features the Oscar®-winning song "Remember Me" by Oscar-winning songwriters Kristen Anderson-Lopez and Robert Lopez, and additional songs co-written by Germaine Franco and co-director and screenwriter Adrian Molina.

Synopsis

Despite his family's baffling generationsold ban on music, Miguel (voice of Anthony Gonzalez) dreams of becoming an accomplished musician like his idol, Ernesto de la

Cruz (voice of Benjamin Bratt).

Desperate to prove his talent, Miguel finds himself in the stunning and colorful Land of the Dead following a mysterious chain of events. Along the way, he meets charming trickster Héctor (voice of Gael García Bernal), and together, they set off on an extraordinary journey to unlock the real story behind Miguel's family history. Disney and Pixar's Coco is directed by Lee Unkrich (Toy Story 3), co-directed by Adrian Molina (story artist Monsters University) and produced by Darla K. Anderson (Toy Story 3).

Performance Dates: Sat, April 29, 2023 -7:00 p.m.; Sun, April 30, 2023 - 2:00 p.m.; Venue: San Jose Center for the Performing Arts. Price Range: \$44 to \$99. For more information: Email: jmeyers@symphonysanjose.org; Phone: 408.286.2600; Tickets: www.symphonysanjose.com.

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City Council chambers during a priority setting meeting for Mayor Matt Mahan's transition committees on Jan. 14. Photo by Jana Kadah.

How San Jose plans to tackle its worst problems

Mayor Mahan formed five committees to help tackle homelessness, crime, blight, permitting for development and downtown vibrancy

By Jana Kadah

San José Spotlight he San Jose mayor's transition committees have finally made their private discussions public.

Mayor Matt Mahan created five closed-door committees to meet and advise him on the city's most pressing problems ahead of this year's budget process-a move highly criticized because it lacked transparency and potentially flouted the law.

The now-dissolved committees were tasked to create measurable goals to track San Jose's progress on solving the city's top issues. At Tuesday's San Jose City Council meeting, the decisions were made public.

Mahan formed the five committees to help him tackle homelessness, crime, blight, permitting for development and downtown vibrancy. While most of the recommendations are iterations of the city's already identified solutions, there are some unique initiatives. Here are the top takeaways from each committee.

Homelessness

Councilmembers Pam Foley, David Cohen and David Pandori, former councilmember and deputy district attorney, chaired the homelessness committee. The 25-member group was made up of nonprofit leaders and developers, including Huascar Castro, an associate housing and transportation policy director at Working Partnerships USA, Valley Water CEO Rick Callender and Sand Hill Property Company co-founder Peter Pau, but excluded most advocates and individuals with lived experience-a major point of criticism from residents during public comment.

The major goal is to build more housing, particularly interim housing. The No. 1 priority is to complete former Mayor Sam Liccardo's 2021 goal to build 1,000 homes by the end of his term, of which only 317 were completed. Once the rest are finished, the committee suggests the council find more public land to build an additional 1,000 homes.

The committee also recommends reducing barriers for homeless residents to access services by creating sanctioned camps.

The committee's recommendations are not groundbreaking. In addition to hiring more officers, the committee outlined it would like to rely on mental health experts to respond to crisis calls and build out more self-enforcing streets and new designs to reduce traffic fatalities that have increased in the last five years.

The most interesting recommendation is to explore redirecting non-emergency 911 calls away from badged officers to community service officers who perform lower level duties like issuing parking citations and towing abandoned vehicles. This aligns with what the San Jose Police Officers' Association and police reform activists want.

Blight

Councilmember Peter Ortiz chaired this 23member committee with community co-chairs Deb Kramer, executive director of nonprofit Keep Coyote Creek Beautiful, and Helen Brock, founder of Beautify Almaden.

In addition to adding more public trash cans and planting more trees and flowers, the clean neighborhoods committee wants to educate residents on what services exist and how residents can report dumping and graffiti, and properly dispose of their own blight.

The committee focused heavily on expanding the city's 311 mobile application, San Jose's customer service tool to respond to complaints about potholes, abandoned cars, graffiti and blight. The committee wants the city to expand language access, increase marketing and create a mechanism for residents to provide feedback on services they believe are incomplete.

The committee also suggests the "gamification" of the 311 app where council districts compete with each other through the app to increase users and reporting by making it more fun. Downtown vibrancy

The 20-member downtown vibrancy com-

mittee includes leaders from the San Jose Downtown Association, the Jay Paul Company, Sharks Sports and Entertainment and SAP Center, Adobe Inc. and San Jose State University.

It was chaired by downtown Councilmember Omar Torres and developer Gary Dillabough of Urban Community.

The big ticket idea from this committee is to permanently create and fund a team of downtown-focused workers that coordinate between nonprofits, government agencies, the private sector and other local stakeholders. The team would consist of five members who will focus on economic development, cleanliness and safety, create more community engagement in public spaces and create a brand and marketing for downtown San Iose.

The committee wants the city to hire a team of five people by the end of Sept. 30 to serve in these roles.

Planning and permitting

The 28-member planning and permitting committee is predominantly composed of developers, including representatives from Boston Properties, Urban Catalyst, Webcor Builders and the Building Trades Council. Bayview Development Group Chief Investment Officer Ted McMahon served as co-chair along with Councilmembers Dev Davis and Sergio Jimenez.

The group focused on the lengthy building permit process. The committee suggests creating a project manager to assist with five different types of projects: large commercial, large residential, small residential, tenant improvements and affordable residential. Committee members see this as a way to improve communication and expedite the permitting process.

The committee also suggests refining the city's web portal to better keep applicants informed of their project status.



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Times Feature

OpEd

The Federal Government is tracking the unvaccinated

By Dr. Joseph Mercola

he U.S. government has secretly been tracking those who didn't get the COVID jab, or are only partially jabbed, through

▲ jab, or are only partially jabbed, through a previously unknown surveillance program designed by the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS), a division of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The program was implemented April 1, 2022, and adopted by most medical clinics and hospitals across the U.S. until January 2023.

Under this program, doctors at clinics and hospitals have been instructed to ask patients about their vaccination status, which is then added to their electronic medical records as a diagnostic code, known as ICD-10 code, so that they can be tracked inside and outside of the medical system.

These new ICD-10 codes are part of the government's plan to implement medical tyranny using vaccine passports and digital IDs.

They're also tracking noncompliance with all other recommended vaccines using new ICD-10 codes, and have implemented codes to describe WHY you didn't get a recommended vaccine. They've also added a billable ICD code for "vaccine safety counseling."

Racing hearts: The difference between life and death

By County Supervisor Joe Simitian acing Hearts is a life saver. In just 10 years, they've placed more than 1,000 automated external defibrillators (AEDs) within Santa Clara County, and they've made Santa Clara County the first county in California to have defibrillators in virtually all public schools. It's an outstanding exam-

ple of the good that nonprofits and government can do when we work hand in hand.

And what a journey it's been. Two decades ago, Stephanie Martinson was out climbing Yosemite's Half Dome when she suffered an aborted sudden cardiac arrest. She was just 23 years old.

Stephanie was not the first young adult, and she won't be the last, to experience sudden cardiac arrest. We hear too many stories of otherwise healthy people collapsing suddenly. Maybe it's a student at sports practice, or a friend at work, or a neighbor at a farmers' market. It can happen to any-

one, anytime, anywhere.

Sudden cardiac arrest is not the same as a heart attack, but it's just as dangerous. Instead of a blockage, it's an electrical disturbance that stops the heart beating correctly.

After her ordeal, Stephanie was inspired to do something. In 2012, she founded Racing Hearts with a clear mission: to increase the survival rate of people suffering a sudden cardiac arrest. How would she and her volunteer team get that done? By placing AEDs in easy to access locations throughout the community, and by teaching people how to use them.

An AED is a small but powerful device. It uses electrical pulses to reset the heart, like turning a frozen computer off and on again. "Public access" AED models, like the ones placed through our partnership with Racing Hearts, are easy to use and capable of defibrillating a cardiac patient before the ambulance arrives.

There are more than 350,000 cases of sudden cardiac arrest each year in the U.S. — 7,000 of them children under age 18 — and nearly 90% are fatal. The survival rate for those experiencing this kind of cardiac event is 5-8% when traditional cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR) is used but increases to 80% with the use of AEDs. Clearly, having AEDs widely available makes a huge difference — between life and death.

In 2014, I proposed that Racing Hearts part-

ner with our Board of Supervisors, the City of Mountain View, El Camino Health, and local school districts to place 49 AEDs in public locations throughout Mountain View, including schools and recreation/community centers.

Following the success of the Mountain View pilot, in 2015 the Board of Supervisors allocated \$500,000 in matching funds

to get even more AEDs out into the community, including in County park ranger and sheriff patrol cars. Soon after, Racing Hearts, the County, and El Camino Health collaborated with our local state legislators to update California legislation to make it easier to own and maintain AEDs.

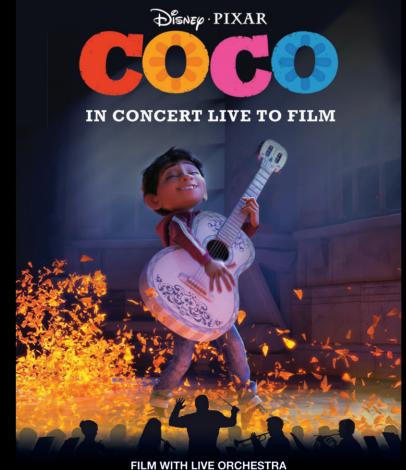
By 2018, Santa Clara County was the first county in California to have AEDs in virtually all public schools, spread among elementary, middle, and high schools. When we started our partnership with Racing Hearts, fewer than 10% of local public schools had access to the equip-

ment.

Racing Hearts has now placed more than 1,000 AEDs in Santa Clara County. In the San Jose area, that includes City of San Jose Parks and Recreation sites including community centers, and San Jose police vehicles.

It's a triumph, to put it simply. After completing their mission to raise awareness and blanket our community with life-saving AEDs, Racing Hearts' journey has recently come to a natural close. I'm honored to have worked with Racing Hearts from day one, and I hope the Racing Hearts story continues to inspire partnerships between non-profits, local organizations, and government.

Thank you, Racing Hearts. You're a life saver. Joe Simitian was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in 2012 and reelected in 2016 and 2020. He represents the Fifth District, which now includes Cupertino, Los Altos. Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Saratoga, Stanford, and portions of San Jose, including Almaden Valley. loe's public service over the years includes stints as a member of the California State Senate, the California State Assembly, Mayor of Palo Alto, President of the Palo Alto School Board, as well as an earlier term on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. He served as an election observer/supervisor in El Salvador and Bosnia and participated in refugee relief and resettlement efforts in Albania and Kosovo.



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County Report

Emerson College student Dellin Zhang of Almaden Valley earns Dean's List for Fall 2022 Semester

merson College student Dellin Zhang (inset) of Almaden Valley earned Dean's List honors for the Fall 2022 Semester.

Dellin Zhang is majoring in Media Arts Production and is a member of the Class of 2023.

The requirement to make Dean's List is a grade point average of 3.7 or higher for that semester.

Based in Boston, Massachusetts, opposite the historic Boston Com-



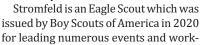
mon and in the heart of the city's Theatre District, Emerson College educates individuals who will solve problems and change the world through engaged leadership in communication and the arts, a mission informed by liberal learning. The College has approximately 4,161 undergraduates and 554 graduate students from across the United States and nearly 70 countries.

Times Feature

Max Stromfeld of Almaden Valley makes Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology

ax Stromfeld (inset) of Almaden Valley has been named to the Dean's List at Rochester Institute of Technology for the fall semester of the 2022-2023 academic year. Stromfeld, a graphic design major, graduated from Pioneer

High School in 2021. He received the California Scholarship Federation Scholarship in June 2021, Sromfeld received the Presidential Service Award Issued by AmeriCorps in 2019.



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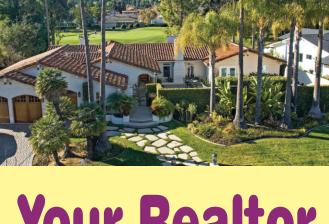
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shops and constructing shed and carts for Joint Venture Churches in Almaden. Stromfeld also was Awarded Bronze level for completion of 159 hours of community service.

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ALMADEN TIMES MARCH 3 – MARCH 16, 2023 PAGE 15

Times Feature

Mayor plans to focus on foundational issues to unlock community's potential

By Mayor Matt Mahan

y inaugural address argued for a return to the basics with the premise that by focusing on fewer—and more foundational—issues our government can deliver better results and unlock our community's full potential.

I believe that when government is at its best, it creates an environment (safe, clean,

healthy, predictable, supported by public infrastructure) that enables our broader community to thrive in myriad ways. I also believe that making real progress requires us to focus on fewer things, measure performance, and be accountable for outcomes.



From the Mayor Matt Mahan Mayor, San Jose

To help us move in this direction,

our team set up five Mayoral Transition Committees consisting of councilmembers, senior city staff, law enforcement, County representatives, and most importantly, community stakeholders, ranging from neighborhood leaders and small business owners to developers and union leaders.

The committees focused on the five areas in which we believe City Hall can have the biggest positive impact in the years ahead, and in doing so, create the most value for our entire city: public safety, homelessness, cleanliness, downtown vibrancy, and planning and permitting.

Each committee was tasked with 1) defining success, including by identifying metrics that will help us measure our progress, and 2) coming up with budget recommendations that can be incorporated into my first budget message, which is due in just two short weeks. I want to thank the more than 100 people from across the city who participated in these committees and generated some great ideas.

The committees presented their reports to the City Council earlier this month, but I'd like to share some recommendations that I believe will start building a strong foundation for our city.

They ranged from re-invigorating San Jose's 311 app in multiple languages to redesignating vacant commercial buildings for homeless facilities, increasing police staffing to hiring project managers to streamline permitting, from activating our downtown storefronts through pop-ups to refining the web portal to share more information about where an applicant's project stands. All the recommendations focus on a customer-centric approach to tackling our basic issues. You too can participate by sharing your best ideas for tackling these core issues. If you'd like to read through the entire report presented to the council, you can find it online, and watch the study session on our website.

If we take these recommendations from the Transition Committees, and get the basics right, many of our other issues will fall into place. We'll attract economic investment when business leaders feel like San Jose is a place employees want to live. We'll move closer to income equality when we house our most vulnerable. We'll reduce our greenhouse gas emissions when our roads are clean and safe enough for biking and walking.

The best thinking from our Transition Committees will be reflected in our March budget message due on March 14. That message, if adopted, will focus city staff on our most urgent priorities and fund the work needed



Photo of San Jose courtesy of the tahoe guy (flickr.com/CC)

to make our city a place we all feel proud to call home. Editor's note: You may send your com-

ments and suggestions to Mayor Matt Mahan via email: mayoremail@sanjoseca.gov, or call 408-535-4800.





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Times **Education**

Notre Dame High School appoints new head of school

Ashley Rae Mathis succeeds Mary Beth Riley, who retires after 37 years

otre Dame High School in San Jose, Silicon Valley's oldest and most diverse Catholic school

for girls, has named Ashley Rae Mathis (inset) as its head of school beginning in July 2023.

The Mathis appointment culminates a national search to identify a successor to Mary

Beth Riley, who is retiring after 37 years at Notre Dame, including 11 years in the school's top leadership role.

Ashley Rae will join Notre Dame from Ursuline Academy in Dallas, Texas, where she has spent the past four years as a senior administrator and director of admissions and enrollment management at the Catholic, collegepreparatory school.

'It's an easy decision to come to Notre Dame," Ashley Rae said. "There's nothing like it. I wanted to make sure, first and foremost, that I could serve them and serve them well. I'm so comfortable thinking that we are mission-aligned."

Said Mary Beth: "When she came to campus, Ashley Rae's warmth and connection to students, faculty and staff were immediate. I felt inspired as she spoke about our students and envisioned the future for them. I know that she will be a passionate, dedicated next leader for our school, and I could not be happier."

A daughter of educators, Ashley Rae identified early in her career a goal of leading a faithbased school community. She was a kindergarten teacher in her hometown of Las Vegas, then served roles in recruiting and enrollment at the University of Nevada-Reno (her alma mater), USC, and the Milken Community School in Los Angeles. Her varied background also includes three years as a recruiting coordinator for international consulting firm Bain & Com-

In addition to her work in enrollment, Ashley Rae has participated in all areas of school administration with an emphasis on faculty hiring, budget management and curriculum design. In 2019, she led the development and launch of the Inclusion and Equity course for 9th- and 11th-graders at Ursuline.

"Ashley Rae brings to the head of school role an impressive array of skills and strengths from both her academic and corporate experience that will enhance Notre Dame's position as the center for women's leadership in Silicon Valley," said Mark Fernandes, chair of Notre Dame High School's Board of Directors. "Her passionate and prayerful style of leadership impressed everyone and is well-suited to our school's needs as we look toward the future."

As part of the interview process, Ashley Rae met with the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, the order that founded the school in 1851. In endorsing Ashley Rae, the Sisters lauded her "ability and willingness to work with a wellestablished school leadership team that participates in the decision-making processes at the school. She seems to have a clear vision of the educational needs for the 21st century, espe-

pany.

cially for young women."

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OSC has opened a new program for women based upon equine interaction and equine-assisted-learning, designed to develop self-awareness and self-acceptance, confidence and resilience, and safe boundaries.

G.R.I.T. is for adult women led by OSC founder Landa Keirstead. The small group meets in 2 hour sessions, once per week for six-weeks

Contact One Step Closer for more information and to enroll one.step.closer@sbcglobal.net 408-778-3567



Times Feature

Just keep swimming...in deadly conditions (Part 3)

How Machine Learning with Remote Sensing can save coastal dead zones By Apoorva Panidapu

n the last two articles, we talked about how human activity is L increasing eutrophication (aka an excess of nutrients), thereby causing the alarming expansion of dead zones (low-oxygen areas of water). This is killing our aquatic life and worsening climate change. But don't lose hope yet! Here comes the good part: we can do something about it.

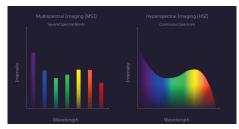
Last column, we discussed how a machine learning approach with remote sensing can improve predictions about how natural systems behave, improve data analysis automation, and use these insights to better manage our resources to stop dead zones. With agricultural activity steadily increasing, it's time to go all in on what's called precision

agriculture to find exactly where we need fertilizers the most and to achieve this ideal fertilization point using machine learning.

How do we do this? Simply put, remote sensing can detect the energy reflected from ground surfaces. The chemical composition of leaves, including their nitrogen levels, changes how much energy is reflected, but we need high sensitivity to monitor this minute change.

Airborne Hyperspectral Sensors to Measure Crop Traits

Introducing: hyperspectral sensors! Operating on the nanoscale, hyperspectral sensors can detect differences as small as 3-5 nanometers across their entire range and offer hundreds of wavelengths across the full range of visible, near-infrared, and shortwave infrared with high spatial resolution (<1 m). For comparison, other airborne remote sensing technologies can only pick up the visible spectrum and potentially near-infrared, i.e., some small number of spectral bands.



Earlier this year, a research team from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign put powerful hyperspectral sensors on a plane and flew it over an Illinois corn field three times. These sensors let them scan fields incredibly quickly, taking only a few seconds per acre. Since the sensors obtain much higher spectral and spatial resolution compared to satellites, the team was able to detect the crops' nitro-





STEM By Apoorva Panidapu



close to "ground-truth quality." So these airborne sensors are not only a powerfully precise tool for remote sensing, they also allow us to monitor larger areas quickly and at low cost, without sacrificing too much accuracv.

gen status efficiency with up to 85% accuracy,

This study by UIUC was the first attempt ever to use full-range (400-2400 nanometers) optical airborne hyperspectral sensors to measure a bunch of important crop traits. like photosynthetic capacity and nitrogen content/concentration, at both leaf and canopy scales. This is science, baby!

For their research, the UIUC team ALSO developed the current best algorithm for detecting nitrogen reflectance data from the hyperspectral sensors, which they expect will be used in upcoming detection

Sheng Wang, assistant professor in the Agroecosystem Sustainability Cen-

"Our approach fills a gap between field measurements and satellites and provides a cost-effective and highly accurate approach to crop nitrogen management in sustainable precision agriculture."

Their end goal is to equip satellites with this technology of hyperspectral sensors, thereby allowing farmers to monitor their fields' nutrient status early on in the growing season to make better-informed decisions about how to use fertilizers sustainably and efficiently.

Okay, so we've talked a lot about crops, crops, and more crops. But we started out this article talking about dead zones, i.e., areas in water. Turns out we can tag team this problem by monitoring nutrients in both crops and coastal waters



Deep Learning for Spatiotemporal Assessments of Nutrients in Coastal Waters

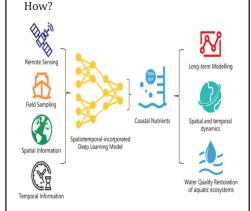
Two important limiting nutrients in coastal waters are dissolved inorganic nitrogen (DIN) and dissolved inorganic phosphorus (DIP). High DIP and DIN can trigger eutrophication and all its gruesome effects that we talked about before, leading to water quality deterioration. To make sure this doesn't happen, we need to monitor DIN and DIP in coastal waters, just like we monitored the nitrogen levels in crops.

Unfortunately, most field survey techniques for monitoring these nutrients in water are expensive and time-consuming. Not only that, current site-based monitoring techniques only really give us the regional water quality status. Considering how much water we would need to monitor constantly, both of these are probably not the Goldilocks monitoring method we want. :(The search continues!

What we do want is a big picture understanding of water quality in the context of both time and space, or what we call its spatiotemporal patterns, at a large scale, but we want to obtain this understanding at a low cost. If we can do this, we can understand our coastal waters and how to effectively treat them.

Wait, why do we want spatiotemporal patterns? Seems like more trouble than it's worth, no? Well, we can intuitively see that water (especially off coasts) is a pretty complex environment. Say we're trying to model a wave and how each of its water droplets behave. We can imagine that this behavior changes depending on the specific location and coast, not to mention the changing seasons. If we only took into account one of these factors, we probably wouldn't get an accurate picture! Indeed, coastal waters usually have highly seasonal changes in short time intervals, and even more complex factors depending on its coast. So, it makes sense that the relationship between nutrients in water and remote sensing varies with space and time. That's why we care about spatiotemporal patterns-they enable us to make better predictions.

To find this big picture understanding, researchers Wu et al. (2022) from Zhejiang University and UIUC developed a spatiotemporal deep-learning model (ST-DBN) to estimate large-scale nutrients. Using remote sensing, they achieved very strong predictions, established relationships between measured environmental factors and satellite maps, and reduced estimation errors by over 40% compared to non-spatiotemporal models!



For their study, these researchers used satellite data to explore the spatiotemporal distributions of DIN and DIP over the region of Zhejiang Coastal Sea (ZCS) from 2010-2018. Using the spatiotemporal patterns of nutrients based on the annual, seasonal, monthly, and 8-day average distributions, they wanted to answer three main questions:

1. Can the long-term and large-scale DIN and DIP distribution be accurately estimated by a nonlinear ST-DBN?

2. How did the spatiotemporal distributions of DIN, DIP, and water quality in ZCS change in the period 2010-2018?

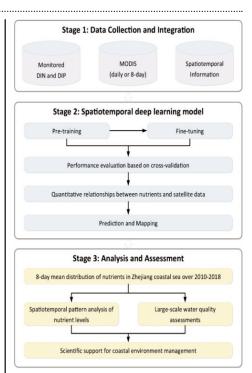
3. How can the government control nutrients and improve water quality in the future? In their study, they found that

- It's a yes to Question #1! We can accurately estimate the long-term and large-scale DIN and DIP distribution with a spatiotemporal model.

- The water quality was better in spring and summer and poorer in fall and winter.

- The concentration of DIN and DIP decreased by 24% and 19% in the period 2010-2018, respectively. But, the water quality didn't significantly improve. Even though the DIN concentration was lower, it still greatly exceeded the worst quality level's critical value.

- DIN contributed 93.9% to the worst quality, while DIP only accounted for 37.8%. This goes to show that the eutrophication of DIP in the ZCS has gotten much better compared to



that of DIN.

The researchers concluded that the Zhejiang Province government should monitor the runoff. velocity, and DIN concentration more frequently in their waters. They should especially try to control DIN more effectively, particularly in fall and winter when the water quality is worse.

This study proves that using spatiotemporal-incorporated deep learning models with remote sensing technology works to monitor nutrients and water quality in coastal areas! But, there's a reason we haven't hit the ground running yet-there's a few challenges left to conquer.

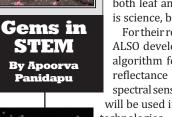
Challenges in the Long-Term and Large-Scale In order to scale and implement these machine learning models to all our coastal waters, we need data. Unfortunately, we can't do much if we don't have accessible and current data sets to train our model. In particular, we would need Analysis Ready Data (ARD) to be readily available, which requires a lot of time and computational power (not to mention smart people) to prepare. We also have technical mountains to climb in preprocessing, extracting, synthesizing, analyzing, storing, transferring, and basically just wrangling these large data sets more efficiently to end up with an accurate and welldeveloped training data set, which can get hard when we're talking about complex environments like coastal waters and multi-scale, multisensor and multi-platform, and multi-temporal earth observation. Phew, that's a lot of multi's.

As our climate changes, accurate projections are increasingly important. With machine learning and close to real-time data from satellites and ocean exploration from remote sensing, we can dive head-first into monitoring dead zones and fertilizer pollutant levels to predict and respond to eutrophication quickly. We can stop the expansion of dead zones, and protect our aquatic life and ecosystems from the doomsday fishbowl

Before you go, I have one last question for vou: Do vou like spatiotemporal patterns? Because I love & appreciate you across space and time. <3

Until next time! If you have any questions or comments, please email me at apoorvapwrites@gmail.com.

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



technologies.

ter of UIUC, savs.

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Times Feature

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Academy

Continued from page 4

a wide selection of challenging coursework, competitive athletes with demanding training schedules and formerly homeschooled families pursuing additional studies, program structure and teacher support. The school's engaging curriculum is designed by online learning experts and gives students the platform to build a lifelong love for learning all the while expanding their opportunities to reach their highest potential. The online school also meets the needs of families seeking a safe learning environment.

"The flexibility at California Connections Academy allowed me to work ahead and dually enroll in my local community college," said Isabelle Bart-Williams, a high school senior at California Connections Academy. "It's given me an increased sense of personal responsibility and confidence and has even changed how I viewed learning." Isabelle received the National African American Recognition Award from the College Board.

California Connections Academy's high school curriculum offers NCAA core courses, career-oriented electives and University of California's "A-G" courses to encourage students to challenge themselves and fulfill their potential. California Connections Academy students also have access to socialization opportunities throughout the school year including optional student clubs, field trips, school festivals, college tours and more. All California Connections Academy students learn to become independent learners and gain invaluable skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving and collaboration that will benefit them beyond their education journey.

Enrollment for the 2023-24 school year is now open for students in grades TK-12. Interested families can learn more about California Connections Academy and the enrollment process by attending an online information session. For more information about California Connections Academy, call 800-382-6010 or visit www.californiaconnectionsacademy.com.

The school's engaging curriculum is designed by online learning experts and gives students the platform to build a lifelong love for learning.

Tuition

Continued from page 1 \$46 per semester unit. SB 629 would exempt the district from doing so. Costs would be

the district from doing so. Costs would be covered through the district's general fund, which relies on local property taxes and revenues, he added.

"Having free community college provides an opportunity for students from our most vulnerable populations who might otherwise be left on the sidelines," Davis told San José Spotlight. "We are uniquely positioned to do something incredibly rare and something that should give the students in our neighborhoods a great deal of hope."

Mission College is one of two community colleges in the West Valley-Mission Community College District. Photo by Loan-Anh Pham.

Davis said the bill opens the door for community college districts that have the means to not charge students tuition and would not cost the state any money. West-Valley Mission Community College District serves more than 13,000 students across its two campuses in Santa Clara and Saratoga.

COVID-19 pandemic funds allowed districts such as the San Jose-Evergreen Community College District to offer free tuition, but those funds may dry up this summer. Other community college districts offer their students grants that waive enrollment fees, but the offer doesn't apply to all students, Davis said.

Johnny Gonzalez, a Mission College business administration student, said he paid more than \$600 for his classes last semester with his family's help. This semester, he said he's paying his own way and works part time as a barista. He's completing as many requirements as possible and hopes to transfer to a four-year university, he added. "I had my parents, but this time I got it by myself," Gonzalez, 19, told San José Spotlight. "There's a lot of people that are low income. I don't see why college shouldn't be free."

Cortese said future laws could make higher education even more affordable, such as eliminating tuition at the California State University schools and tackling student loan debt.

"Community colleges have a very low relative cost compared to UCs or CSUs, or universities in another state, but it's still a cost," Cortese told San José Spotlight.

"This becomes the beginning of what we hope will be incremental change."

Davis said truly free community college goes beyond eliminating tuition fees. Student experiences during the pandemic revealed access to higher education also involves lowering costs related to books, food and housing. San Jose has the highest number of unhoused young adults per capita across the nation's major cities. The district has already worked to waive health service costs and parking fees for students, he added.

"What you're seeing is a lot of the things that we learned during the pandemic being implemented in a post-pandemic world to draw students back into the community college system, and to help them pursue their educational dreams," Davis said.

Nico Escamilla, 19, enrolled in Mission College this semester. Before college, he was in a trade school program and said he's worked plumbing, electrical and retail jobs. He said he's getting help from college staff to look for financial aid as a first-generation college student. Free tuition would be a lifesaver, he added.

"I have to pay bills," Escamilla told San José Spotlight. "It'd be a blessing."

Times Feature



Loan

Continued from page 1

other financing options like WIFIA, EPA's efforts to address critical upgrades to water systems in communities is unprecedented."

The federal loans supplied by the EPA help Valley Water maintain the lowest possible water rates for retailers, which benefits residents, businesses and the agricultural community. The \$727 million commitment is projected to save Valley Water \$256 million over the life of the loans.

The Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act of 2014 established the WIFIA program, a federal credit program administered by EPA for eligible water and waste-

water infrastructure projects.

"The WIFIA program is proud to support Santa Clara Valley Water District as it undertakes these critically important water infrastructure projects with our flexible, innovative master agreement financing frameworks," said WIFIA Program Director Jorianne Jernberg. "With two loans closed, we look forward to continuing our relationship throughout the remainder of the master agreement's financing commitment from EPA."

Additional projects to receive funds from WIFIA include the Sunnyvale East and West Channel Flood Protection Projects and the Upper Penitencia Creek Flood Protection Project.

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Times News

The Almaden Super Lions Club collected donations of eyeglasses at the Winter Walk. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert

Winter Walk

Continued from page 1

"We know that the pandemic had a very, very challenging impact on all of our communities," she said, "in particular those of older age. Thank you so much for coming out here so we can get back to building communities, working together and getting to know each other.'

interact with event sponsors and vendors and bring home information for friends and neighbors. He said residents doing something healthy together like taking a walk

"We all need to take care of ourselves," he said. "Getting out and taking a walk and getting a little exercise, even just stretching...is a good way to stay healthy."

Richard and Jeanne Sanders, members of

Now Open and Enrolling

programs and activities for people age 50+, ran one of the booths at the event.

"We want people to know who we are, check us out and come to our events," Jeanne Sanders said.

The Association holds monthly meetings at the Almaden Community Center and online. It provides classes in badminton, pickleball, table tennis, dance, tai chi, creative writing, watercolor and more. Upcoming events include visiting the San Jose Center for Performing Arts on March 25 to see the Pretty Woman musical and a St. Patrick's Day lunch with Irish music and a sing along.

The Almaden Super Lions Club collected donations of eyeglasses at the Winter Walk. The club does vision screenings in schools and takes donated prescription glasses and readers to various countries for those in need.

Lois Ferber, club past president, said the Winter Walk is an opportunity for residents to know they're part of the community. Continued, next page

Mayor Matt Mahan urged residents to around the mall "is pretty cool."

An abundance of resources

the Almaden Senior Association, which hosts



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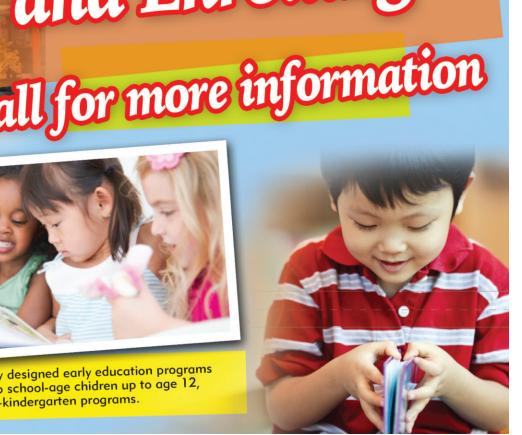
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Times **News**

"We're constantly collecting glasses," Ferber said, adding that Helen Keller challenged the Lions Club to become "knights of the blind in the crusade against darkness."

San Jose Neighborhood Community Emergency Response Team, which has an Almaden Vallev branch, teaches residents disaster preparedness like search and rescue, first aid, small fire suppression and more to help themselves and the community during emergencies, said Board member Julie Miller. She recommends the free training for seniors and anyone 18+.

Star-spangled cowboy boots sprouting plants and bandanas adorned the UC Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County booth. Dennis Norris let residents know volunteers are always welcome at its demonstration gardens and education center at Martial Cottle Ranch in San Jose.

Binh Nguyen with On Lok PACE, who came dressed as a sheriff, said the organization provides lowincome seniors with medical care, meals, activities and transportation.

'This event is a good opportunity for seniors to come out to learn about community resources and community-based organizations." he said.

Appreciative residents

Joyce Armstrong said the Winter Walk introduces seniors to resources they didn't know existed. Darrell Gray agrees. He belongs to a social men's group, Sons in Retirement, which he heard about at a previous Winter Walk.

"The people are very friendly and give us lots of valuable information," said Connie Gray, who picked up information about Meals on Wheels for a 93-year-old friend.

Sonya Williams, who attended the resource fair for the first time. would like to have it held more often.

"I learned so much." she said. Former City Councilmember Johnny Khamis is delighted the Winter Walk, started by City Councilmember Nancy Pyle, continues to serve residents.

"We need to look after our seniors," he said, "and this is a great resource fair on top of great exercise. It's a great way to combine necessity with opportunity."



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Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides Muslims to practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak"" the English meaning is " May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.

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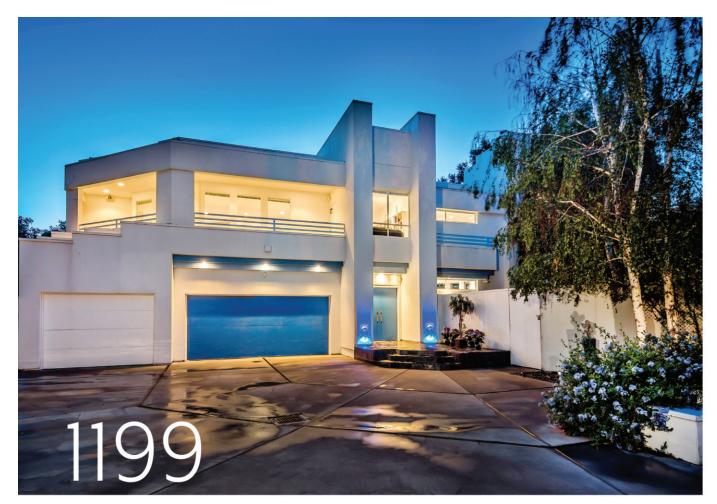
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