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San Jose urges drivers 'slow down' in face of record traffic fatalities

New safe driving campaign, 'Slow Down, San José,' officially unveiled

By William Bellou
Publisher

"Slow Down, San José" is the urgent request of a new safe driving campaign unveiled by City officials May 9.

Mayor Matt Mahan, joined by councilmembers Pam Foley and Bien Doan, officially kicked off the new campaign along Tully Road, one of the city's Priority Safety Corridors and site of an upcoming safety improvement project.

The behavior-change campaign will appear on billboards, posters, See *SLOW DOWN*, page 20

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Silver Creek High School students create non-profit group providing opportunities for local refugees

Kashvi Jain and Neha Parthasarathi, both juniors at Silver Creek High School, have raised over \$10,000 for refugees in Silicon Valley as well as positively impacted over 500 individuals through their 501c3 nonprofit: Voiceopedia.org.

As both the co-founders and co-presidents of Voiceopedia, they strive to advocate for equity within the refugee community through providing equal access to welfare and education. Through garnering the power of social mediums, Voiceopedia members create content about the humanitarian crisis occurring globally spanning from women's rights in Iran to even the Ukraine War. They not only educate youth populations through platforms like Instagram and Facebook, but also host webinars, podcasts, and even projects to

expand their target reach.

With the breakout of current crises such as the Afghanistan ban on girls' education and the Ukraine War, Voiceopedia is one of the sole organizations which works to address the current influx of refugees in times of war. They have interviewed entrepreneurs and leaders of our community such as Dr. Robert Burns and Rachel Holmes to get their insight into human rights and why they strive to benefit their community. In their interview with Robert Burns, Director of Coaching at SVUDL (Silicon Valley Urban Debate League), Voiceopedia team members educated individuals by spreading awareness regarding different experiences and walks of life of many immigrants in our community.

Social media is quintessential to Voiceopedia's mission, spreading



Kashvi Jain at right and Neha Parthasarathi at left, co-presidents and co-founders of Voiceopedia California.

awareness for humanitarian issues. Being a catalyst for change, media

allows awareness to spread as well as access to educating our intended target demographic, youth. Voiceopedia has published over 100+ literary works throughout our blog posts. They hope to help refugees reach the same level as mainstream citizens, creating equity throughout. "When the community comes together, even one voice rises and becomes powerful," says Kashvi Jain, founder and co-president.

The organization has helped over 150+ refugees by providing refugees with backpacks containing school supplies such as pens, markers, erasers, and rulers in their school supplies drive. Additionally, they donated care packages with food, clothes, and undergarments in their partnership with the International Rescue Committee. They conduct bimonthly bake sales at Evergreen Village Square where they all work together to bake delightful desserts and interact with their community to raise funds for supporting their projects. They have even received donations from large corporations See *VOICEOPEDIA*, page 21



Speaking easy

English Learner students attended an Evergreen School District's Re-Classification Ceremony as 320 students were re-classified to English Proficient. "It was so beautiful to be with them and their families for one of many accomplishments they will celebrate on their education journey," said Evergreen School District Trustee **Jeremy Barousse**.

SEE OUR LISTINGS OF LOCAL REALTORS, CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING AND HOME IMPROVEMENT ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THE BACK COVER



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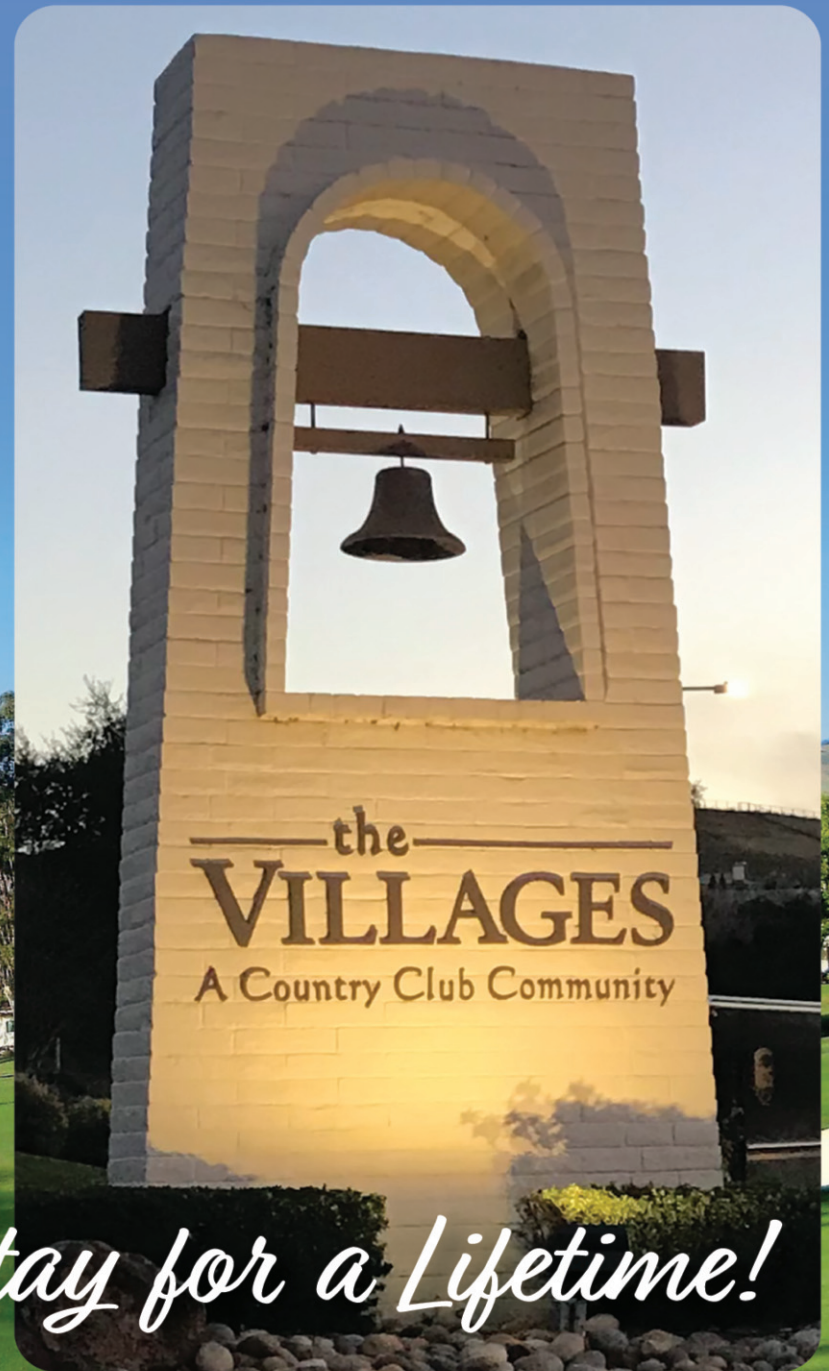
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NOTEBOOK



Miranda A. Lu, Leland High School (left) and Annmaria K. Antony, Harker School (right).

Two San Jose students named 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona announced the 59th class of U.S. Presidential Scholars, recognizing 161 high school seniors for their accomplishments in academics, the arts, and career and technical education fields.

Among the California scholars residing in San Jose are: Annmaria K. Antony, Harker School; and Miranda A. Lu, Leland High School (*U.S. Presidential Scholar in Arts).

“U.S. Presidential Scholars have always represented the future of our country and the bright promise it holds. I want each of these remarkable students to know: your passion and intellect, pursuit of excel-

lence, and spirit of service are exactly what our country needs,” said U.S. Secretary of Education Miguel Cardona. “On behalf of President Biden, I am delighted to join your family, friends, and communities in celebrating your accomplishments. Aim high, share your talents, and continue embracing opportunities to lead as your exciting future unfolds.”

The White House Commission on Presidential Scholars selects scholars annually based on their academic success, artistic and technical excellence, essays, school evaluations and transcripts, as well as a demonstrated commitment to community service and leadership.

Of the 3.7 million students expected to graduate from high school this year, more than 5,000 candidates qualified for the 2023 awards determined by outstanding performance on the College Board SAT or ACT exams or through nominations made by chief state school officers, other partner recognition organizations and YoungArts, the National Foundation for the Advancement of Artists.

As directed by Presidential Executive Order, the 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars are comprised of one young man and one young woman from each state, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, and U.S. families living abroad, as well as 15 chosen at-large, 20 scholars in the arts and 20 scholars in career and technical education.

Created in 1964, the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program has honored over 8,000 of the nation’s top-performing students. The program was expanded in 1979 to recognize students who demonstrate exceptional talent in the visual, literary and performing arts. In 2015, the program was again extended to recognize students who demonstrate ability and accomplishment in career and technical education fields.

The Presidential Scholars Class of 2023 will be recognized for their outstanding achievement this summer with an online recognition program.

A complete list of 2023 U.S. Presidential Scholars is available at <http://www.ed.gov/psp>

Valley Currents

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



Members of Evergreen Valley College and Indigenous residents rallied against the San Jose-Evergreen Community College District board hiring someone who isn't Native American for a class focused on Native American studies. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

Evergreen Valley College delays ethnic studies hire after protests

By Joan-Anh Pham
By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

Nearly 600 community members signed an online petition within days of its launching to oppose the hiring of a non-Native instructor for Evergreen Valley College’s first full-time Native American studies teaching position.

Indigenous students, faculty and residents with feathers and ceremonial drums protested at the San Jose-Evergreen Community College District meeting on Tuesday, with signs reading “Nothing about us without us is for us.” The board was set to approve the hiring of ethnic studies instructor Ryan Tripp at the meeting, but unanimously voted to put the decision on hold. Advocates said the hiring of a non-Native instructor furthers the discrimination that Indigenous communities have faced for generations.

“We have the opportunity to bring somebody in to give representation to the Native American students we have on campus, and we dropped the ball,” Professor Arturo Villareal told San José Spotlight. He teaches ethnic studies at Evergreen Valley College.

Villareal said ethnic studies is meant to directly highlight the experiences of students of color, and a core tenet is to hire instructors from marginalized communities. The Evergreen Valley College ethnic studies department had no say in the final hiring decision, he added. Ethnic studies examines the histories, issues and struggles of different ethnic groups in an effort to address current-day experiences.

Tripp, a history and ethnic studies adjunct professor, said he declined the job offer via email Tuesday night after attending the meeting remotely and hearing opposition from the local Native community for the first time. He said he identifies as multiracial and does not identify as Native American, but has personal ties to the Native community due to his father’s family roots in 20th century Andean Indigenous cul-

ture.

Tripp said Native American studies is a subject he’s researched throughout his academic career, including his doctorate program.

“If the Native community does not support not just me, or any given individual in a Native American studies position, I don’t believe that the person should be teaching Native Studies at that college,” Tripp told San José Spotlight.

Data from the National Indian Education Association reveals 0.5% of teachers nationwide are Indigenous, with Indigenous students making up 1% of the student population. In Santa Clara County, the Indigenous population makes up 1.2%, according to census data.

Maria Fuentes, vice president of the San Jose Evergreen Community College District board, said board members are listening to students and residents.

“The community and our educators have asked us to look at this and to take this very seriously,” Fuentes said. “If we table it, we can figure out how to resolve it.”

Evergreen Valley College student Marcus Rodriguez said students should be taught by an instructor who has endured the trauma and daily struggles of Indigenous people. He told the board it was offensive not to hire someone from the community.

“I don’t want a non-Native teaching what my ancestors have lived through,” Rodriguez said

Data from the National Indian Education Association reveals 0.5% of teachers nationwide are Indigenous, with Indigenous students making up 1% of the student population. In Santa Clara County, the Indigenous population makes up 1.2%, according to census data.

Resident Ray Techicuahtli Baeza said there are plenty of qualified Indigenous educators to fill the role, and fixing the hiring process requires input from Indigenous students and staff.

“It’s more than just having a degree from a college or university,” Baeza told San José Spotlight. “It’s also living in the communities, understanding what life is like, understanding the ceremonies, understanding the songs, understanding the history, the way of life that we live.”

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Silicon Valley Healthy Smiles to offer free dental clinic at San Jose Convention Center

Sponsored by Santa Clara County Dental Foundation

By William Bellou
Publisher

The San Jose Convention Center will be transformed into Silicon Valley Healthy Smiles, for a two-day FREE dental clinic on Saturday and Sunday, May 20-21, sponsored by the Santa Clara County Dental Foundation.

The 100-chair clinic will provide pro bono dental care to an expected 1,500 low or no-income, uninsured Santa Clara County residents. The Foundation's mission is to increase the overall health of individuals and families by eliminating infection and relieving pain.

"Santa Clara County is overwhelmed by the unmet dental needs; there are not enough providers to meet the demand. Poor oral health leads to a myriad of negative academic, physical, socio-emotional, and economic consequences," said Dr. John Pisacane, President of the Santa Clara County Dental Foundation.

The Santa Clara County Dental Foundation (SCCDF) is dedicated to increasing access to dental care for Santa Clara County residents. They do this by providing resources and funding for programs operated by volunteer dentists from the Santa Clara County Dental Society (SCCDS).

The Foundation is raising \$400,000 to cover the costs of this event. The funding covers the cost of materials, equipment,

the Convention Center, food, and more. The clinic is completely run by volunteer dentists and community members.

Dr. Ken Wallis, the SVHS Committee Chair shared that "cleanings, fillings, extractions, root canals, stay plates and dentures will be available at the clinic and patients will be connected to an ongoing source of dental care."

There are no qualifiers to be able to receive FREE dental care (income, residency, etc.) at this clinic. People looking for dental services can show up and wait in line on the dates below.

"The community must work together to ensure that low-income residents, including the un-or-underinsured, and Medi-Cal members have equitable access to the dental care they need when they need it, where they need it, and how they need it," said Dr. Steve Beveridge, Executive Director of the SCCDF.

Patients will be pre-screened on Friday, May 19, 2023, 2 p.m. - 5 p.m. to return on Saturday, 5/20 for treatment. Clinic is open Saturday, May 20, 2023, 6 a.m. - 4 p.m.; Sunday, May 21, 2023, 6 a.m. - 3 p.m.

The San Jose Convention Center, South Hall (big, blue tent) is located at: 435 South Market St., San Jose, CA 95113. For more information visit: SCCDF.org/SVHS.

Editor's note: The SCC Dental Foundation is issuing a "Call for Community Volunteers" for duties on Saturday and/or Sunday. Volunteers can sign-up online at <https://volunteers.healingca.org>.

Councilmember Domingo Candelas

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OP-ED

Cal Fire 2881 comment on Governor Newsom's budget

It would have been easy to be lulled by the very wet winter to put fire suppression and prevention on the back burner and make cuts to CAL FIRE. Instead, the rains mean the fuels present an even greater danger than what we've seen during an era of historic fires.

Governor Newsom embraced an aggressive approach and made sure the

resources CAL FIRE needs will be in place to confront the harsh summer ahead of us. No Governor has had to endure more disasters in their tenure than Governor Newsom, and he has emerged from it all as a voice of reason, judgment and a leader uniquely suited to assess planning for a crisis.

Tim Edwards

President, CAL FIRE LOCAL 2881

Editor's note: CAL FIRE is the largest fire department in the United States. Mr. Edwards is a career firefighter for CAL FIRE who was elected president by his peers.

Times **Community News**

Valley Water Youth Commission seeks new members

By John Varela

Board Chair, Valley Water District 1

Valley Water Youth Commission is seeking new members.

The Youth Commission, which is made up of 21 high school students throughout Santa Clara Valley, is shaping the future of local communities.

The organization is looking for students interested in getting involved in water-related issues and those who have an interest in speaking up on how public policies affect water supply, conservation, flood protec-

tion, environmental justice, and climate change issues.

Valley Water is now accepting applications for the Youth Commission's vacant seats in districts 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. To find out which district you reside in, visit valleywater.org, scroll to the Valley Water in Your Area section map and input your home address in the Near Me search window provided.

You can find more information about the Youth Commission, including the application at www.valleywater.org/youthcommission

The application period closes Monday, June 19, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.

Please help Valley Water get the word out about openings on our Youth Commission by sharing it with high school students who may be interested. We look forward to their participation.

The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi inducts three new members from Evergreen Valley

Three residents of Evergreen Valley were recently initiated into The Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi, the nation's oldest and most selective collegiate honor society for all academic disciplines.

New Phi Kappa Phi members from Evergreen include: Hediye Royatvand Ghiasvand, San Jose State University; Ryan Jensen, San Jose State University; and Wasil Rasuli, University of the Pacific.

Phi Kappa Phi membership is by invitation only and requires nomination and approval by a chapter. Only the top 10 percent of seniors and 7.5 percent of juniors are eligible for membership. Graduate students in the top 10 percent of the number of candidates for graduate degrees may also qualify, as do faculty, professional staff and alumni who have achieved scholarly distinction.

Phi Kappa Phi was founded in 1897 under the leadership of undergraduate student Marcus L. Urann who had a desire to create a different kind of honor society: one that recognized excellence in all academic disciplines. Today, the Society has chapters on more than 325 campuses in the United States, its territories and the Philippines. Its mission is "To recognize and promote academic excellence in all fields of higher education and to engage the community of scholars in service to others."



Hediye Royatvand Ghiasvand

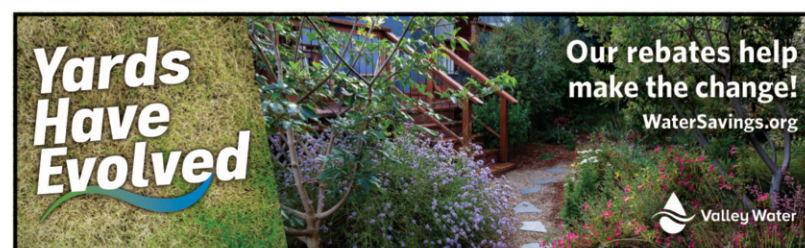


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Ryan Jensen

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As you walk through your neighborhood, you may have noticed that a growing number of homes in Santa Clara County have already traded their front lawns for a gorgeous water-wise landscape. Residents in Santa Clara County are discovering the many benefits of replacing lawns with the help of Valley Water's Landscape Rebate Program. In fact, nearly 13,500 residents and businesses have already participated in the program!



Our Landscape Rebate

Program can help you transform your thirsty yard into a beautiful water-wise landscape and make your irrigation equipment more efficient.

Get \$200 for every 100 square feet of lawn you convert, for a maximum of \$3,000 for residential sites, and \$100,000 for commercial and institutional sites.

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Visit WaterSavings.org, to learn more about our rebate programs, book an inspection for pre-approval of a rebate project, or request water-saving equipment. To inquire about how you can save water in your home and landscaping, email conservation@valleywater.org or call 408-630-2554.



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San Jose Police Chief **Anthony Mata** at a 2022 press conference. *Facebook Screenshot*

San Jose Police, CHP defend decisions to divert traffic during Cinco de Mayo

Critics say decision to close highway off-ramps were ‘racist targeting’
By **William Bellou**
Publisher

San Jose police officials are defending their “zero tolerance” policies enforced over the Cinco De Mayo weekend following criticisms from community leaders. In a statement released by Police Chief Anthony Mata, he said, “Police Department’s “proactive policing” in place for 20 years continues to boost public safety and minimize criminal activity.

Mata included crime statistics that identified 115 arrests, 407 citations and seizure of six firearms associated with patrols during the May 5-7 Cinco De Mayo weekend.

The report followed complaints from two local legislators that decisions by Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol to close multiple highway off-ramps in San Jose during the weekend were “racist targeting” and unnecessary violations of citizens’ constitutional rights.

State Senator and Assemblymember disagree with shutting down highway off ramps

Sen. Dave Cortese, D-San Jose, and Assemblymember Ash Kalra, D-San Jose, said in a statement: “Normal traffic controls are one thing -- but shutting down major highway access on the pretense of fear of multicultural celebrations of Cinco de Mayo is racist targeting, and blatantly unconstitutional.”

Caltrans and the CHP said the Friday through Sunday morning closures were necessary to shut down the ramps for traffic control and public safety during an organized Cinco De Mayo march through downtown San Jose.

The ramps were northbound and southbound U.S. Highway 101 at McKee Road, Julian Street, Santa Clara, and Story Road;

southbound Interstate Highway 280 at McLaughlin Avenue; northbound I-280 at 10th and 11th Streets; and northbound state Highway 87 at Auzerais Avenue, Santa Clara Avenue, Julian Street and Taylor Street. The action, according to police officials, was taken to ensure “public safety” due to “significant pedestrian and vehicular congestion.”

Selected city streets closed

City street diversions, according to police officials, only occurred when it was deemed necessary to lessen the impact of vehicular traffic in areas already impacted with significant pedestrian and vehicular congestion.

“Due to ongoing staffing shortages to the department, operational plans also included leveraging the use of road closures and other traffic diversions to limit further traffic congestion and to prevent delays in response times to address any criminal activity,” Matta said. “Similar closures and diversions have been utilized during other major events that draw large crowds throughout the city. The purpose is to ensure traffic continues to flow and community members can celebrate these events safely.”

The Police Department report said they have been closing streets and diverting traffic to manage Cinco de Mayo traffic and crowd control for nearly 20 years.

“Although the deployment of these measures are not new, the department recognizes the need to communicate these closures earlier,” the report said. “In the future, we will strive to announce any planned responses to large scale events with enough advanced notice to ensure that the community and our elected officials have adequate notice to prepare accordingly.”

May 5-7, 2023 police statistics included:

- Total Calls for Service: 2,642
- Total Arrests: 115
- Total Vehicle Impounds: 30
- Total Citations Issued: 407
- Total Reports Taken: 352
- Total Firearms seized: 6



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San José Mayor champions speed safety cameras to save lives

AB645 calls for drivers to slow down and reduce traffic accidents and fatalities

Last year, San José had its deadliest year for traffic deaths, with 65 fatalities in 2022—largely surpassing the number of recorded homicides.

San José Mayor Matt Mahan, alongside the Vision Zero Task Force Chair, Councilmember Pam Foley (D9) and Vice Chair, Councilmember Bien Doan (D7), and City Councilmembers Omar Torres (D3), San José Police Chief Anthony Mata, and members of the community on May 10, called for support for Assembly Bill 645 (AB645), urging drivers to slow down and save lives.

"Traffic deaths are outpacing homicides in San José. While speeding may save a minute, following our traffic laws can save a life," said San José Mayor Matt Mahan. "It's past time we use speed safety cameras, which have been deployed effectively around the world for years, to ensure drivers put their neighbors' lives first."

If passed, AB645 would authorize a pilot program in San José, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Long Beach, Oakland and Glendale, to install speed safety cameras on Priority Safety Corridors—streets that experience the highest num-

ber of fatalities and serious injuries—school zones, and streets with a history of speed racing and side shows, until 2032. This monumental traffic safety legislation was first introduced by Assembly Transportation Chair Laura Friedman, and co-authors include Assemblymembers Alex Lee and Marc Berman.

"Speed is a factor in 31% of all fatal traffic accidents. There's so much more that we can do to make our roads safer for everyone, and AB645 is a strong first step," said Assemblymember Laura Friedman (D-Burbank) and Chair of the Assembly Transportation Committee. "Around the world, speed safety cameras have been proven to reduce fatalities on roadways by as much as 71%. It's time for California to implement proven strategies to save lives by authorizing San José and other cities to use speed safety cameras while directing the revenue towards building safer streets."

According to the Federal Highway Administration, speed cameras can reduce crashes on urban streets by 54% and reduce speeding in school zones by 63%. For example, in New York City, intersections with speed cameras reduced speeding by an average of 73%, as of December 2021. In San José, from 2018 and 2022, speeding was a contributing factor to 33% of traffic fatalities. Overall, the reduction in speeding can save countless lives.

If AB645 passes, San José will purchase 33 cameras. Prior to installation, there will be extensive community involvement to help select locations to place the speed safety cameras.

"We are working diligently with our Mayor and Council to increase our Department staffing, and as we grow, our Traffic Enforcement Unit

will also grow," said Chief of Police Anthony Mata. "This Speed Safety technology will assist the Department and the City with enforcing speed violations which have been a factor to many traffic fatalities."

"When it comes to traffic accidents, speed kills. Whether in a vehicle, on a bicycle, or on foot, too many San Jose residents are seriously injured or killed every year in traffic collisions, and traffic accidents are typically the second-highest cause of death for police officers nationally," said Sean Pritchard, President of the San Jose Police Officers' Association. "Speed cameras are an effective solution to save the lives of our residents and our officers."

"While the bigger goal remains infrastructure improvements that bring about maximum safety for all roadway users year-round, these changes cannot be made overnight," said Sandhya Laddha, Policy Director, Silicon Valley Bike Coalition. "The Automated Speed Enforcement Bill would be a great interim solution, and when coupled with ongoing infrastructure improvements, can help the City achieve its Vision Zero goal faster."

Though some have expressed concerns about privacy, the cameras will target rear license plates of vehicles traveling 11 miles per hour or more over the posted speed limit, not the windshield or face of drivers, and measures to safeguard the public's data and privacy will be taken in accordance with the City's Digital Privacy Policy. Captured footage will only be retained for 5 days if no violation is issued, 60 days if a violation is issued.

"From my work as Chair of the Vision Zero Task Force, I know that speeding is the number one cause of severe and fatal crashes," said

Councilmember Pam Foley (D9), Chair, Vision Zero Task Force. "Automated speed enforcement is a proven technique to slow drivers down. AB 645 is lifesaving legislation."

"I want my residents to all come home safely at the end of the day to see their family members and loved ones," said District 7 Councilmember Bien Doan, Vice Chair, Vision Zero Task Force.

Beginning with drivers going 11+mph over the speed limit, will result in fines that increase based on how fast drivers were going. While most speeding tickets cost hundreds of dollars, fines for a speed camera citation would start at \$50. If a driver is unable to pay due to economic hardship, the City will offer a 50-80% fine reduction, or opt to pay through community service. The goal of these tickets is not to generate income, but to change and encourage safer behavior.

"As the councilmember representing the district with the most crashes since 2017 due to speeding, installing automated speed safety cameras is a necessary step toward promoting road safety and crash prevention," said Councilmember Omar Torres (D3).

Funding for the speed cameras comes from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and fines collected from tickets will also contribute to cost recovery for their installation. Revenue generated will also help fund other traffic calming measures.

"It's distressing to hear, month after month, about the record-breaking number of pedestrian and auto-related fatalities occurring in our city. We need this added tool in our toolbox to help keep our residents safe and alive," said District 6 Councilmember Dev Davis.



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Times **Local News**

Mahan, along with Police Chief **Anthony Mata**, right, is calling for doubling the rate of hiring police officers in the city. *Photo by Joseph Geha.*

San Jose calls for more police amid staffing shortages

114 positions currently unfilled

By **Jana Kadah**

San José Spotlight

San Jose is planning on funding 31 new positions in the police department despite struggling to fill more than 100 existing vacancies.

The city manager proposed last week spending \$2.9 million in the next fiscal year to create 31 new staff positions within San Jose Police Department, ranging from regular beat cops and community service officers to specialized investigative positions. The city is looking to spend \$1.3 million on hiring bonuses as well as other incentives to recruit and retain officers.

If approved, these new vacancies would add to the already 114 unfilled positions in the police department, which have fluctuated over the last few years. Although the overall goal of staffing up sounds simple, SJPD has historically failed to do just that.

The hope this time around is that by adding these new positions, it will signal to residents and visitors that San Jose is committed to supporting and growing the police department, Heather Randol, deputy chief of the SJPD bureau of administration, told San José Spotlight.

"That in turn creates excitement for not only people who work here, but also people considering coming here," Randol said.

These new hiring efforts align with Mayor Matt Mahan's March budget message, where he said increasing police staffing is his "top priority" for the department.

"We have to recruit and hire faster, and ensure that we retain the officers we have. This budget does just that," Mahan said. "We're a big city and we need our police department's staffing levels to reflect our size and needs so that we can fulfill government's basic responsibility for keeping residents safe."

San Jose has struggled to expand the police department and efforts have been made over the years to remedy ongoing staffing issues. Last year, the city budgeted millions to create 20 more positions in the department, though it's still uncertain how many have been filled. The city also announced a lateral hiring bonus program last fall, which gives \$10,000 to officers who transfer to San Jose from another police department. And just a few months ago, officers saw an 3.85%

increase in their base wage salary plus other benefits.

Randol said one of San Jose's main selling points for prospective officers is the opportunity to work in a more specialized field. In the upcoming city budget, opportunities for new hires include 17 regular officers, two sergeants, six community service officers, three crime data analysts, a new position to protect the department from hackers and a detective in the family violence unit.

"People aren't coming to San Jose because we make more money than everybody else around us, we don't make the most," she said. "They come here because of the opportunity they have within this agency for specialized units or more promotional opportunities."

San Jose is believed to have one of the smallest police departments of any major U.S. city, with just 1,173 sworn officers for a city of approximately 1 million residents. By comparison, San Francisco employs 2,100 sworn officers with a population of about 875,000.

But SJPD still wrestles with the lingering problem of how to not just staff up, but retain its officers. With only 1,059 positions currently filled, San Jose Police Officers' Association spokesperson Tom Saggau said the shortage has had profound impact on slowed police response times and overall public safety. He said the ultimate goal is to get San Jose back to the 1,400 officers it had before pension reform struggles.

"It's going to take years, but it is a wise investment," Saggau told San José Spotlight. "We're in a scrub for qualified applicants, so you only have a couple of levers to pull and one of them is more money."

But not all residents believe more police officers equals safer city streets. Kianna Simmons, cofounder of local mutual aid nonprofit Hero Tent and member of the city's Reimagining Public Safety Community Advisory Committee, said there are hundreds of police alternatives suggested by the 31-person committee in a report to councilmembers—and the council still hasn't considered them. The report was published in April 2022 and she said no action has been taken since. An overarching theme of the recommendations is narrowing the scope of police activity to crimes and leaving other issues to trained civilian professionals.

Simmons said she wished the city council would listen to residents instead of "throwing more money to police."

"It really seems like every month there's like a new scandal with SJPD and it's been like that for years," Simmons said. "We have a very flawed department and it won't get better if we give them more money and power."

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Philharmonic Orchestra performs Elgar and Britten in a concert dedicated to youth and families

By William Bellou
Publisher

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2022-23 Season Finale Concert to be held on Saturday, June 3rd, 2023, 2 p.m. at the California Theatre, 345 S. 1st Street, San Jose, CA.

This premier orchestra, made up of the most advanced students in the San Jose Youth Symphony, will open the concert with Elgar's Wand of Youth Suites, which feature his earliest musical works composed for a family play, spirited and live-



ly, and full of childlike charm. The orchestra will also perform Britten's The Young Person's Guide

to the Orchestra, an intricate theme and variations, that is meant to teach children about all the different instruments of the orchestra, as a narrator takes the audience through this instrumental journey.

The performance culminates in a musical work of extreme power as all the instruments join to play together at the end. This is a great treat for the whole family!

Editor's note: Tickets now on sale online, visit: <https://sjys.org/product-category/tickets> You can also purchase tickets on Concert Day at the Box Office, one hour before the concert at 1 p.m.

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Times Feature

'Do You Know the Way to San Jose' project

History Park San Jose to host exhibition of Quimby Oak students' projects June 1

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

By In the spring of 2023, students from Quimby Oak Middle School's Lobo School of Innovation (LSI) set out to answer the driving question: "How can we continue to advocate for individuals and groups that have made significant contributions to the prosperity of San Jose, California?"

To answer this thoughtful question, students had to research individuals or groups of their choice from the past and present who made/make significant contributions to the City of San Jose. Their research topics were entirely up to students to propose, but were guided by their World Arts teachers, Mr. Trinidad and Mr. Rivas.

In addition, their work was greatly encouraged, inspired, and directed by Dr. Monica Pelayo Lock of History Park San Jose, who also requested the students to design and create museum exhibit plaques and promotional videos for the park based on those they've researched.

Dr. Lock offered to host an



Quimby Oak students can't wait to see what this year holds for this project, but one thing they do know, it's going to be another great success!

evening exhibition for all of the students' projects on June 1, 2023. This would be the second year we and History San Jose worked in a partnership for this project, as the first resulted in a huge success.

Success in 2022 came in the form of students presenting physical installations that an audience could view and interact with, while students gave formal presentations.

One audience member, San Clara County Supervisor, Cindy Chavez, spoke at the exhibition, noting how the county was looking for ideas for statues that could better rep-



resent the residents or major contributors to the area, especially after the concern for historical statues arose during the pandemic.

Chavez was later awarded the Lobo School of Innovation a coun-

try award for their students' work. In the summer after, it was announced by the mayor of San Jose, Sam Liccardo, that the school and History San Jose would receive a \$30,000 grant to build official installations of the top two projects that year. These official forms were built by a local artist from San Jose State University and will later travel from place to place in San Jose to show the hard work of the students city-wide before making their homes in History San Jose.

One installation that will be

unveiled revolves around advocating for the founders of Lee's Sandwiches.

This group created a promotional video for their topic and the second installation currently being made is in honor of Janet Gray Hayes, the first female mayor of San Jose.

The artist rendition of it will be completed sometime next week, but the students' video can be found here: <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TwilqDKHgZ7924XfxLlBb6Jh484RgHya/view>

We Want to Hear from You!

You are invited to provide input on 2016 Measure B Program expenditures and the results of the annual performance audit at the 2016 Measure B Citizens' Oversight Committee's (MBCOC) public hearing:



**Wednesday,
May 24, 2023, 12pm**

- In-person: Conference Room B-106, VTA Administrative Offices, 3331 N. First Street, San Jose California. (This location is served by VTA Light Rail and Bus Line 20.)



- Zoom videoconference: <http://santaclaravta.iqm2.com/Citizens/default.aspx>

Input can be provided during the meeting, or written comments for the hearing will be accepted until 10:00 a.m. on 5/24/23 at board.secretary@vta.org.

Further information on the public hearing is available at vta.org/2016-measure-b-citizens-oversight-committee. Contact the Office of the Board Secretary at (408) 321-5680 or board.secretary@vta.org for questions. Sign language and interpreter services will be provided upon request by contacting VTA Customer Service at (408) 321-2300 or customer.service@vta.org at least five days prior to the meeting.

Background

In November 2016, Santa Clara County voters approved Measure B, a 30-year, half-cent countywide sales tax devoted to enhancing transit, highways, expressways, and active transportation (bicycles, pedestrian, and complete streets) within Santa Clara County.

Voters entrusted the MBCOC, comprised of fellow community members, with performing oversight to ensure that 2016 Measure B funds are being spent consistent with the intent of the ballot and to also inform voters on Program compliance.

The Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) continues its delivery of the projects and programs contained in the 2016 Measure B Program. Examples of the many projects/programs underway include local streets/roads repair and improvements, highway interchanges, Caltrain corridor capacity improvements, and bicycle/pedestrian projects. More information on 2016 Measure B projects/programs is available on VTA's website: (1) vta.org/2016measureb; and (2) 2016measureb.vta.org/.

Audit Results

The MBCOC commissioned the annual independent audit of 2016 Measure B Program revenue and expenditures for Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 (July 1, 2021 – June 30, 2022). Moss Adams, LLP, completed this audit and presented its findings at the 3/22/23 MBCOC meeting, indicating its conclusion that VTA complied, in all material respects, with the requirements for the 2016 Measure B Program as defined in the ballot. Every annual audit of the 2016 Measure B Program since inception have received this same conclusion.

Audit reports and other information on 2016 Measure B are available on VTA's website at vta.org/2016measureb and at the VTA Administrative Office at 3331 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95134 in the Building B Main Lobby between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. weekdays.

Join the Conversation



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Times Career Corner

You are valued

By Angela Copeland

For most people, switching jobs is not something they plan out in much detail. For the majority of job seekers, they have a personal connection to the job opening.

The process is fairly straightforward and relatively painless. Most people tend to assume that's what job seeking is like. This all changes when a job seeker is forced to proactively find a new job with no connections. Ask anyone who has landed a job completely on their own, and they will very likely have a harrowing story to share.



When a job seeker is searching on their own, the process can easily take anywhere from two to six months. This length of time is normal. It is not a reflection on the person's abilities or worth. But, it certainly doesn't feel that way. The issue is that the search process is completely different than when you know someone. There are examples of difficult job searches shared every day on LinkedIn. Recently, a job seeker applied to 600 jobs. These applications led to 30 interviews. The 30 interviews ultimately led to one job offer. This job seeker had many years of experience and multiple advanced degrees. The entire process took three months. And, a job search can often become elongated. The reason is that 570 rejections is emotionally exhausting. On top of this, friends and family judge the job seeker at how "difficult" their

search is. It leaves the job seeker feeling worthless, and wondering if they're even in the right career field. Dear job seeker, please remember: it's not you. The application process is broken. You are competing against hundreds of online applicants. You are also competing with the friends of the hiring manager. And, you are contending with less than ideal economic conditions. But, you are prepared for this. The key is to not lose hope. It's to realize that the system is broken; not you. You are the same talented, hard-working professional that you were before you started this search. You will find your path back. Set goals for yourself. Keep doing your best to meet the goals, even when things feel difficult. In the example above, the job seeker applied to approximately 200 jobs per month, or 50 per

week, or 10 per business day. This process is a lot of work, but it will result in success. In addition to applications, sit down and write a list of all of the great things about your background. Perhaps you have fifteen years of experience in project management. You are great at organizing teams. You have advanced knowledge in specific topics. Once you have your list compiled, keep it handy. Each morning, read the list. Remind yourself of who you are. You are valued. You are needed. You are the same person that you were before the economy started to turn. Outside factors changed, but you have not. You remain the same person you always have been. Angela Copeland, a leadership and career expert, can be reached at www.angela-copeland.com.

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The Meadowverse - Return of the wren

By Matthew Frazier

CLCA Expert Certified Water Manager

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With the return of No-Mow May here in San Jose and The Bay Area, there has been an influx of wildlife here throughout Santa Clara Valley, where I reside.

The dandelion is a beneficial weed

Right here in our front yard, the dandelions are emerging faster and faster with the passage of each day and week. It is something to observe. In addition to the native beneficial weeds, native insectary plants, and native beneficial predatory insects, there has been much flurry with both migratory and native birds. They perch on the stalks of the dandelions and forage for the seeds buried deep within the fuzzy globes. One of these bird species is the wren.

The wren is agile and musical

Though quite small, the wren is agile and musical at once. Appearing in troupes as time passes throughout spring, these beautiful birds bring an element of majesty to the landscape. There are many birds to observe. The wren is but one. But ... each morning, when I leave the house for a consultation, I have the distinct pleasure of hearing their calls and watching them scurry about in search of food.

The Meadowverse® thrives right here in Santa Clara Valley and beyond. Travelling through Evergreen Valley, on my way to Silver Creek Valley Outdoor Supply Hardware, there are many wonderful birds and environs to observe. The myriad colors and plethora species of wildlife is quite abundant and vibrant. The Wren makes its home in the small specialty birdhouses hanging from defoliated deciduous trees throughout the valleys of Santa Clara County and throughout the many gardens and landscapes of the valleys.

Evergreen Valley College is alive with birds, from all angles and locations. Evergreen Val-

ley itself captured my imagination years ago when I nearly enrolled at their local college to pursue an AS degree in Civil Engineering. The environs of Evergreen Valley are ripe with opportunity for these birds to thrive.

Back to the wren ... This small bird has found its way to our garden and our yard throughout the years. With the decision to let our front yard turf lawn grow wild and unencumbered by a mower, their return and proliferation has been one of wonder. Small though they are, the wren brings an element of beauty to the local environs of the valleys and so too in Evergreen Valley. Seeing them increase in number this season, and over the years, is evidence of a changing climate and a changing terrain.

There are exciting ways to attract wildlife

For those of us who cannot resist the splendor of migratory and native bird species here in the county and its valleys, I encourage you to create the conditions for these small musical birds by hanging the small specialty birdhouses from your posts and trees and letting

nature take its course.

We are most fortunate here in these valleys to have such abundant wildlife.

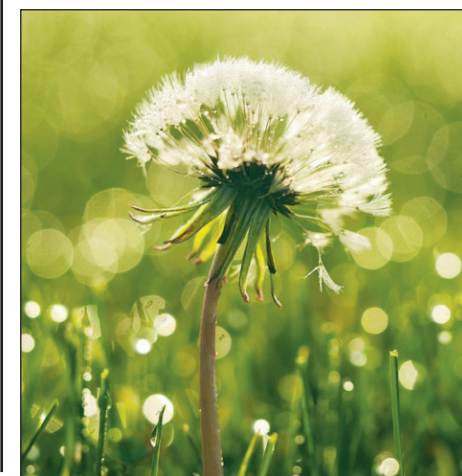
Happy birding to one and all, and thank you!

Editor's note: Matthew Frazier is a Certified Water Manager, Qualified Stormwater Manager, and Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper. You may contact Matt at (408) 656-5622 – Mobile; or by email: kitchenfrazier@hotmail.com



Water Wise

**Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water
Manager**



Times **Feature**

Miami is the city where inflation is rising the most.



Report: Cities where inflation is rising the most

With the year-over-year inflation rate at 4.9% in April, the personal-finance website WalletHub just released its report on the Cities Where Inflation is Rising the Most, as well as expert commentary.

To determine the cities where inflation is rising the most – and thus is the biggest problem – WalletHub compared 23 major MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) across two

key metrics involving the Consumer Price Index, which measures inflation.

The website compared the Consumer Price Index for the latest month for which BLS data is available to two months prior and one year prior to get a snapshot of how inflation has changed in the short and long term.

Rising the Most Rising the Least

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| 2. Detroit, MI | 20. Philadelphia, PA |
| 3. Phoenix, AZ | 21. Riverside, CA |
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Times Cover Story

Slow Down.

Speed limits save lives.



Slow Down

Continued from page 1

yard signs, buses and bus shelters, and digital ads. Videos will be shared online and radio ads will be broadcast in multiple languages. The straightforward goal: get drivers to realize they can take a simple step to become part of the solution to San José's growing problem of traffic deaths.

"Speeding can save a minute, but slowing down can save a life," said Mayor Matt Mahan. "With traffic deaths far outpacing homicides in San José, this new campaign reminds us that the safety of the community is in all our hands."

"This safe driving campaign couldn't come at a more crucial time in our city's history," said District 9 Councilmember Pam Foley, who chairs the City's Vision Zero Task Force. "We lost 65 neighbors last year. Those tragedies leave families and friends with holes in their lives that can never be filled."

It's time we all took responsibility for our actions behind the wheel."

"Traffic fatalities afflict my district more than any other in San José," said District 7 Councilmember Bien Doan, who serves as vice chair of the Vision Zero Task Force.

"I'm happy to see major safety improvement projects happening, like the Tully Road project coming this summer. But we don't have to wait for construction to start to improve traffic safety. Let's all slow down to protect our families."

"Reducing and eliminating traffic fatalities is a top priority for the City administration, but we need the public's help" said City Manager Jennifer Maguire. "While our Department of Transportation builds more safety improvements and our Police Department focuses on traffic safety hot spots, we need individuals to join us in tackling this urgent problem. We can all decide to slow down on the road and perhaps save a life."

The campaign runs for three months. Materials are available at www.visionzerosj.org.



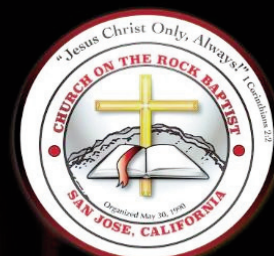
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Voiceopedia

Continued from page 1
such as Nvidia and Google, as well as from the 2022 RSVP Challenges Fitness Group.

While there are several organizations that advocate for refugee rights, Voiceopedia accomplished their goal by supporting other local nonprofits focused on legal advocacy for fleeing refugees. Recently, they have launched a literary program with a global refugee nonprofit, Light and Sal Academy, to teach displaced youth English. Neha Parthasarathi, one of the co-presidents, even states, “Education is a basic right that every individual must possess. Literacy enables one to be a self-advocate and express their opinions in this free world. Through empowering youth, Voiceopedia members aspire to uplifting these disadvantaged communities through equitable systems.” With support from companies, media, and sponsorships, Voiceopedia is looking to launch a community project to build libraries for refugee schools with a lack of access to literacy and books.

But, you may be wondering, how did Voiceopedia form? Let’s rewind to the summer of 2020. Voiceopedia was born from the burning passion of 5 freshmen in high school. Although they were all young and constantly second-guessing themselves, they knew the cause they wanted to advocate for was dearly important in the current humanitarian climate. What could they do as 5 young women? At the time, they didn’t really know the answer to this question, and they are still figuring out what they can do to be a catalyst in our communities. Every single day, human rights abuses occur, simultaneously creating tremendous impact on the livelihoods of millions. As youth, they desire to advocate for current issues many are not aware of. Social media allows them to spread important information regarding these respective crises.

Fast forward to now, February 2023, three years later. They have grown to achieve a 501c3 status as a student-led organization. Crises have further exacerbated globally, impacting our country. Several refugees are being taken into the arms of our sanctuary state, California. Together as a team, supporting refugee youth in the Bay Area was of utmost importance to them. Raising over 10,000 dollars, they began simply donating funds to local organizations to orchestrate the donation of school supplies to refugee children that migrate from regions all around the world. “We hope to help hundreds, thousands, millions more one day. We hope you support our cause and help the world become a better place.” - Voiceopedia Team.

To learn more about Voiceopedia and their cause, visit voiceopedia.org and follow them on [@voiceopedia.ca](https://www.instagram.com/voiceopedia.ca).



Kashvi Jain and Neha Parthasarathi with their admin team, Pictured (left to right) are: Ava Rejaie, Roshni Gundavelli, Chau Nguyen, Meghana Pavuluri, Anaya Jain, and Paavna Rangarajan. The right picture is from their care packages drive with the International Rescue Committee.



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SAN JOSE GURDWARA

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word Sikh (see-kh) means
"disciple" or "student." A
Sikh is a practitioner of the
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Punjab of old British India.
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or "enlightener" completes
the relationship of teach-
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stresses the equality of all
men and women. Sikhs
believe in three basic prin-
ciples; meditating on the
name of God (praying),
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means and sharing the
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Offered at \$1,899,000

4 Bed | 2.5 Bath | 2213 Sq Ft | 9770 Sq Ft Lot

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THERESE SWAN

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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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