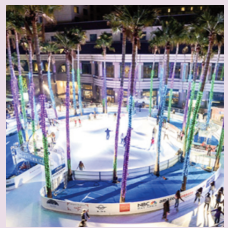


Downtown Ice returns to downtown San Jose holiday season with new operator
SEE PAGE 4



Quick turnarounds
Planning, Building, and Code department is going to improve the permit issuance process – **PAGE 10**

Symphony San Jose presents American Portraits December 2 and 3 at the California Theatre **SEE PAGE 7**



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Times

OCT. 13 – OCT. 26, 2023 ■ VOL. 36, NO. 21

30 years of giving: Unicorn Thrift Shop

By Liz Knepler
Special to the Times

The Unicorn Thrift Shop volunteers recently celebrated 30 years of fundraising for the Pacific Clinics non-profit organization with a festive luncheon at Joint Venture Church.

It all started in 1993 with a tiny store in Almaden Valley and a handful of ladies who wanted to get involved and do something for the community, specifically the organization called Eastfield Ming Quong known as EMQ at that time. Thirty years later that shop has grown to encompass three storefronts with 80 volunteers working in it while the EMQ organization itself has expanded its services and changed names several times to its current Pacific Clinics.

The Unicorn Thrift Shop has gotten bigger and more diversified, but the objective remains the same; donate the entire store profits to Pacific Clinics. Pacific Clinics is California's largest community-based nonprofit provider of behavioral and mental health services and is devoted to helping children and families in crisis.

The Unicorn Volunteers have contributed \$3.8 million to Pacific Clinics during their three decades selling donated collectables, books, jewelry, household items, toys and clothing from their shop at the corner of Redmond Avenue and Almaden Expressway.

Present at the event were distinguished guests from Pacific Clinics: Don Taylor, the Executive Director of the Bay region, Darren DeMonsi, the Bay Area Senior Director of Development and Aviana D'Souza, Director of Fund Development. To commemorate this 30 year milestone, a check for \$30,000 was presented to Pacific Clinics by five of the Unicorn founding members: Cathy Hufford, Kathie Green, Karen Rauen, Connie Green and Janet Fant. These ladies are still volunteering at The Unicorn.



Celebrating Almaden Thrifts' 30 years of serving the community are Don Young, Darren DeMonsi, Cathy Hufford, Karen Draper, Kathy Green, Janet Fant, and Connie Green.

The shop is operated exclusively by volunteers. These special women and men have generous hearts and their service makes a difference in helping the most vulnerable children and their families. Additional

volunteers willing to donate nine hours a month are welcome.

For more information, please contact the Unicorn Thrift Shop at (408) 997-9188 or visit the shop at 1181 Redmond Ave, San Jose.

Musical Oklahoma! back on the Pioneer High School stage after 20 years; October 25-28

By Jane Johnson
Special to the Times

Twenty years ago, "Oklahoma!" graced Pioneer High School's-related Glue Factory's "stage."

Back then, Pioneer's stage in quotation marks, as the beloved original stage had suffered a tragedy burning not only the stage and all related equipment, but also ruining all the beautiful and memory-filled costumes.

Erecting a stage outdoors in the courtyard, creating a theater in the round so to speak, answered

See OKLAHOMA!, page 5



"Oh What A Beautiful Morning" Jacob Johnson (Curly McLain) and Valerie Doyle (Aunt Eller)
Photo: Ashley Coleman

TRAGEDY ON FLEETWOOD DRIVE



Two toddlers drowned and a third injured after being found in a day care center pool in Almaden; license suspended

By Times staff writers

Happy Happy Home Day-care, located on Fleetwood Drive in Almaden Valley, had its license suspended last Wednesday after two 1-year old toddlers drowned in the backyard pool.

A residential day care facility in Almaden Valley on Fleetwood Drive has had its license suspended following the discovery of two 1-year old toddlers drowned Oct. 2 in the facilities' backyard pool and were fined \$11,000.

In a statement, state Department of Social Services spokesperson Jason Montiel said the agency notified Happy Happy Home Day-care that its license went under suspension at 5 p.m. Oct. 4, pending a request by the facility's owners — listed in state records as Nina Fathizadeh and Shahin Shenias — for a hearing.

The department also notified the facility that its license may be revoked, and the license holders could be barred from ever operating such a facility again. The Almaden home daycare was

ordered to shut down immediately in the wake of the infant deaths.

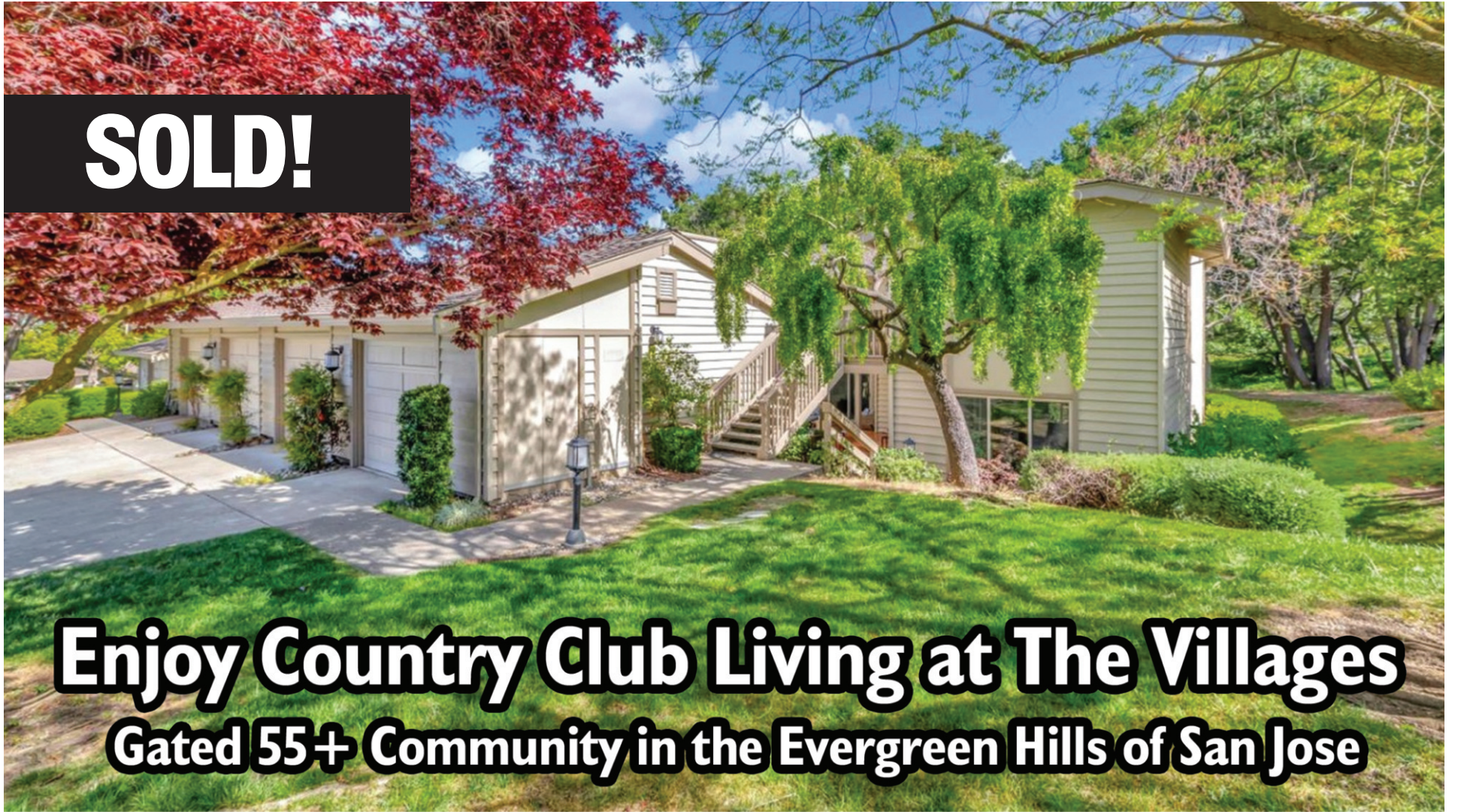
Two 1-year-old girls — identified by authorities Tuesday as Payton Cobb of Hollister and Lillian Hanan, of San Jose — were found Monday morning in a pool at the home and later were pronounced dead after being taken to a hospital. A third child was found in the water with them and survived after being taken to a hospital.

Sean Webby, a spokesperson for the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, said police still were investigating the case and prosecutors were reviewing the evidence for possible charges.

The day care facilities' website states: "Welcome to a Happy Happy Daycare where your child can experience the best that daycare can offer. We have an excellent kids-friendly facility providing safe, clean, healthy and fun environment for children to play, learn and grow."

State regulators said they have issued multiple citations to the facility over the past year.

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Valley Currents

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



Downtown Ice will reopen this holiday season. San Jose Downtown Association File Photo.

Downtown Ice returns to downtown San Jose holiday season with new operator

Outdoor ice skating will return to downtown San Jose's annual holiday celebration beginning Nov. 17.

Special Ice, which operates many rinks throughout the US, has agreed to produce and operate the downtown San Jose skating rink in the Circle of Palms Plaza this season, the San Jose Downtown Association announced Tuesday. The rink will operate from November through mid-January. Downtown Ice is supported by the City of San Jose.

"Downtown Ice is an iconic event that leaves a lasting impression," said Emery Lykins, president of Special Ice, based in Livermore. "We're excited to be a part of the rink's history, to contribute to this amazing city and hopefully usher in a revitalized future for the rink."

"I am thrilled to have our iconic ice rink back alongside all the many fun holiday-related activities in downtown San Jose that enrich families and people of all ages," said Alex Stettinski, San Jose Downtown Association CEO. "More and more, families are looking for things they can experience together. We're in

good hands having the largest producer of seasonal ice rinks in the state on board with us."

"People enjoyed roller skating, but we heard loud and clear that families and friends from all parts of Northern and Central California missed their tradition of coming to skate at our ice rink," said Tricia Lee McNabb, who has managed rink operations since 1997.

"It's increasingly important that Downtown Ice keeps coming back, especially in the wake of Raging Waters' recent closing," McNabb.

Nearly a half million people come to downtown San Jose to enjoy Downtown Ice, Christmas in the Park holiday displays, Winter Wonderland amusement rides, plus performing arts, concerts, Sharks hockey, museums and galleries, restaurants and shopping from Halloween through mid-January.

Downtown Ice is located at 120 S. Market Street, in the Circle of Palms plaza. Construction of the rink begins Oct. 2. Details including tickets, dates, hours and sessions will become available at sjdowntown-ice.com.

Local students among National Merit semifinalists; High school seniors vying for \$28M in scholarships

By William Bellou
Publisher

Dozens of students from public and private high schools in Almaden Valley are semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

The Almaden students are among 16,000 semifinalists across the nation — less than 1% of the nation's high school seniors — who will now be considered for more than 7,000 scholarships worth close to \$28 million next spring. Nearly 95% of semifinalists are expected to be named finalists, and approximately half of those finalists will earn a scholarship.

More than 1.3 million high school juniors in 21,000 high schools entered the competition through the 2022 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, or PSAT, which serves as the initial screening of program entrants. The semifinalists announced last week include the highest-scoring students in each state.

National Merit semifinalists from Leland High School in Almaden Valley are **Claire Chen, Leonard Chen, Justin R. Etter, David Kim, Inseo Kim, Justin Lai, Daniel Lin, Breanna Lu, Sucheer Maddury, Medha Nemani, Sandhya Ram, Ethan Ransing, Imran Shaikh, Norah Shen, Kristie Sue, Anson Ting, Darren Tsai, Lexi Xu and Jeannine Yu.**

Semifinalists from Bellarmine College Preparatory are **Samuel Y. Arthur, Eddie J. Bae, Aneesh Bairagi, Saketh R. Dasaradhi, Gavin L. Griffin, Andrew S. Huang, Surya S. Krishnapillai, Aswin Surya, Andrew Wen and Daniel M. Yim.**

Editor's note: Claire Chen is a contributing writer for the Almaden Times newspaper.

O P E D

Best Picnic by the Lake event in the history of San Jose

By Kevin Larsen

The entire event was a friendly good time get-together.

Our State Senator and his father served in government to help the people. If ever you get the chance to support this man by volunteering or vote, please do. Let me tell you why.

At Hellyer Park, on a potentially rainy last day in September, there was free parking and over 2,000 hamburgers and veggie-burgers were served by brave fire department souls at this truly wonderful annual Picnic by the Lake event. Sunshine prevailed.

Multicultural theme

The multicultural theme worked because presentations were smart, and time flowed smoothly from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. due to the expert DJ playing soft hits to fill in the time gaps between stage presentations.

The toned-down stellar accomplishments of State Senator Dave Cortese spoke loudly. His office is number one in how it assists the people and helps with passing important laws and more. He's a man of the people and beloved by all for he and his wife Pattie are smart and unabashedly humble in their work doing the best they know how in walking with God and finding ways to help all people.

Hundreds ask Dave and wife Pattie to stop a moment to take a photo because they are loved in a genuine way. They exude leadership, class and dignity which helps lift up the status quo. Lord knows this kind of political leader is sorely yearned for in today's political times.

Passing laws in the legislature is tough gritty work and Dave does this with the strength of his wife and family and his office TEAM. He freely announces this at the microphone. Dave works his strength in politics because he likes the way he can enact



Dave and Pattie Cortese

positive change in reaching people and helping others. He could have relaxed and let the family business coast him along, but his calling was to become a State Senator. You might also be surprised to learn all of the work of philanthropy that the Cortese family does and has done. They are extremely well respected by all!

Pumpkin patch doesn't disappoint

Hundreds of pumpkins of all sizes were carried away by little ones in the farmer pumpkin patch. The multicolored gigantic bouncy house entertained too. Some kids soared so high in the air that it seemed as if they were performing a flying eagle off an Olympic diving board.

The backdrop of the event was the lazy not in a hurry lake surrounded by clean fresh air and spacious fields. You just can't have a picnic without a lake.

The thousands who came, gravitated to the hamburgers expertly prepared by the fire department men and women but to get there one needed to traverse through at least 50 information tables. It was a pamphlet paradise. The vast tables and canopies of nonprofit services were there to enlighten and improve the quality of life for visitors. The people behind the tables were so kind and offered great hospitality to any question given. After the event was over, it was clear that it was time to look forward to next year to look again at the vast booth information.

The unruly handled with class by law enforcement

Brave law enforcement and secret security with their immaculate shirts,

See PICNIC, page 6

Almaden Times

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Times **Local News****Oklahoma!***Continued from page 1*

the call "the show must go on!" Out of the ashes, literally, rose the drama program, fueled by the funding arm known as the Glue Factory. This opened a new chapter of the program, staging "Oklahoma!" to not only help rebuild the actual stage but to restore a community.

Fast forward to today... Steve Dini, the storied Pioneer High School drama teacher who shepherded the program for more than 20 years, moved away to Texas. He's gone on to co-write and even make a cameo appearance in an upcoming film, to grace theaters this Thanksgiving. (More on that in a future edition).

Through an amazing staff including Ashley Coleman, the current PHS Drama Director; Diane Zlotziver, Assistant Director and Costuming co-leader with Kyla Bili; Marissa Bacon, Vocal and Tech Director; Lorie Biviano, Set Designer and Props Mistress; and Jim Wolk, Set Construction; Dini has continued leading the program from afar, moving temporarily back to the Bay Area in October to lead in person through closing night. And what production did they choose to open this new Glue Factory chapter? Well, "Oklahoma!" of course.

Revival of the musical theater

Rodgers & Hammerstein are often credited with reviving the musical theater genre and helping to usher in its Golden Age. "Oklahoma!" was their debut musical, gracing the stage in 1943 at the height of World War II. A needed distraction, it was beloved by professionals and audience members alike, running at the time an unprecedented 5+ years.

As Coleman describes, "This 'integrated musical' marked a revolution in American theatre. By using a complete synthesis of music, libretto, lyrics, dancing and staging, Oklahoma was the first musical of its kind and paved the way for what most of us now picture when we think 'Musical Theatre.'" Oklahoma! tells the story of American settlers of the Oklahoma Territory, not yet a state in 1906, through the main female character, Laurey Williams, and her suitors from rival factions - one a cowman (Curly McClain), the other a farmer (Judd Fry).

"Oklahoma!" is a snapshot of people and culture at a time when the state was first forming. We get to see heartfelt relationships form between cowmen and farmers daughters and those who are trying to challenge these unions," said Vanessa. "One of the great things about 'Oklahoma!' is how the music, story and humor have stood the test of time."

The Glue Factory

Another institution standing a test of time is The Glue Factory itself. The Glue Factory is filled with actors and theater lovers alike, from newbies to the stage through extremely well-trained and accomplished actors.

Vanessa Scoffone, who plays Ado Annie, left the program in 2017, going on to graduate UC Irvine with a BS in Biological Sciences and an interest in veterinary medicine. She returned to the Bay Area pursuing this passion, finding her way back to another passion along the way.

"I remember hearing about the Glue Factory when I was a student at Pioneer, and thought it was amazing that strangers in the community would dedicate their time and talent so that we could continue to have our beloved program," Vanessa said. "When the opportunity presented itself, I could not say no. After two shows with the glue factory, I am here to stay. It cultivates a love and passion for performing, providing a wide range of wonderful people an opportunity to push themselves out of their comfort zone for a wonderful cause. In our cast, we have current students, alumni, community and staff members."

Jordan Spalding-Correia, who happened to graduate the same time as Vanessa, plays Judd Fry.

"I've worked my way into a great position professionally and have still been able to be in The Glue Factory and show some love back to the program here at Pioneer," said Jordan.

Jordan experienced much the same welcoming environment years ago and has six years of Glue Factory participation to his credit.

"After volunteering for Glue factory's tribute to (Mr. Dini), I had the feeling that the environment was just as welcoming as it was during my time in his class as a student," Jordan said. "After returning to do one of my favorite shows while attending my freshman year at a nearby community college, I was sold."

Jordan was initially a reluctant drama convert. During high school he pursued athletic interests, and as he says he "tried to generally stay out of trouble." But he happened upon Mr. Dini's drama class, and his life was forever changed for the positive.

Diane Zlotziver, a Glue Factory staple with 20 shows to her credit both on and off stage, has a rich theater history herself. Graduating UCLA with a BA in Theater, she spent many years performing in local Los Angeles productions.

"My work career took me through two (plus) decades in sales and marketing before mak-

ing a career change," Diane said. "I went back to school for a teaching credential in English which enabled me to teach Drama and Language Arts at Castillero for 17 years."

Once a drama aficionado, always a drama aficionado, Diane found her way back and then extended her many talents in an understated, unassuming, and humble way for the Glue Factory.

Joining these experienced Glue Factory alumni are newbies including parents and staff, and fellow Pioneer High School Drama program alums in chorus through lead roles. Many names including Julene Johnson, Jacob Johnson, Connor Henry, and Valerie Doyle will be familiar to the community.

Returning drama alumni

What does it mean to have Drama Alumni return to the stage? "I think I can speak for both Mr. Dini and me when I say it's like welcoming your family home. To have alumni return to our stage after 5, 10, 15, 20 years... it's a tremendous gift, and a testament to the environment we have worked to create and maintain for decades. Once a 'Mustang,' always a 'Mustang,'" said Coleman. "One of my favorite elements of the Glue Factory musical is the opportunities for mentorship it creates. Adults working with students in a capacity that is rare to come by. Parents perform alongside their children. Teachers perform alongside their students. Drama alumni perform alongside their former classmates. The adults-- comprised of staff, parents, and alumni-- provide guidance on and off stage; using their expertise, and knowledge to work collaboratively with the advanced drama students."

To bring a musical of this caliber to life requires skills ranging from the most obvious to the subtle. Acting is shaped and inspired via the directing and choreography talents of

Steve, Diane and Ashley. Obviously culling the vocal talents of the assembled cast into a cohesive and pleasant sound falls to Marissa. Then there's the visual side of the house. Each piece you see on stage has been artistically created and/or sourced by the creative Lorie and Jim team. The costuming team of Kyla and Diane and their student assistants work just as diligently to address every detail. "As a costuming team, we look at everything that is available for inspiration. That includes films and photographs of past productions as well as the history of the time period of the play," shared Diane. "We strive to create looks that are colorful, evocative, easy to move in, while also helping to further define each character. This involves finding the best accessories, hairstyles and makeup to complete each look. Sometimes the smallest addition to a costume makes a big difference to the audience."

Each and every member of the cast, crew and staff volunteer their time to bring a yearly major musical production to the community. Many, who work in full time positions, roll straight into a three-hour rehearsal four nights a week. Some volunteer much more than that. All of this to support a drama program which is welcoming to all students meeting them where they're at and providing skills of poise and communication globally necessary in all future professional pursuits. All that investment brings with it hopes for the musical's outcomes.

Shared Jordan, "I hope to leave this production with the confidence that I can help make a difference for those who have helped and worked with me along the way. I hope to once again sharpen my acting skills, and to get better with my approach. I think it's a treat to get to admire live theatre and have a smaller idea of what it's like being on stage. And

See PIONEER, page 10



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EVENT: Thanksgiving Celebration: Saturday, November 18th 3-5pm at the Almaden Community Center. Turkey Buffet dinner. Performance by the "With a Twist" singers. Tickets on sale, Wednesday, October 25th every MWF 8-10am in the Almaden Community Center lobby.

For more information, go to Almadenseniors1@gmail.com, or call Events: Jeanne @408-425-5723
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Times **Local News**

Two local residents named to Dean's List at Biola University

Sandee Carlson and Emily Starke of Almaden Valley have been named to Dean's List at Biola University.

Biola students are placed on the Dean's List to honor those with a GPA of 3.6 or higher while enrolled in 12 or more credits and whose cumulative GPA is at least 3.2.

Carlson is working towards a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology and a double minor in Biblical Studies and Spanish. Her passion is to walk alongside others and cultivate meaningful relationships, so she said she chose Psychology to better understand people and how they operate. Carlson worked for three consecutive summers in youth ministry,

Starke said, "I have been fascinated by infectious disease. After getting a master's degree, I look forward to a career in epidemiology, and hope to specialize in Disaster Management and Preparedness." Starke is currently working toward proficiency in



Sandee Carlson (left) and Emily Starke

French to translate several articles written during and about the 1918 flu pandemic.

"Inclusion in Biola University's Dean's List is reserved for students who demonstrate exceptional performance in their academic studies. This honor signifies hard work, engagement, and investment in scholarship," said Dr. Tamara Anderson, Tamara Anderson, Senior Associate Provost.

Biola is a nationally ranked Christian university in the heart of Southern California. It was recently recognized as one of America's best colleges, earning a spot in the higher tier of the "Best National Universities" category of U.S. News and World Report's Best Colleges 2024 rankings.

Picnic

Continued from page 4

protected us and a few crazies were expertly corralled by those who have keen knowledge in ways to diffuse the scant few who have legal lit firecracker personalities. Maybe such incidents act as reminders for cognitive individual self-defense awareness.

We're all family

What surprised me most was the good-natured people I encountered at the event. These are the same people who we occasionally get upset at when we drive but not on this day in the park for this day it was proclaimed that we are all family.

Such events remind us to get outside and have fun communing with nature and other people.

More reflections

The day was vibrant from start to finish. This use of the expansive city park educated all of the American multicultural tradition. Family and individuals should never be alone and instead welcomed.

My high school history teacher Mr. Bryant, once said, "We in America are not a melting pot of people instead America should be referred to as a tossed salad." I began at this event to understand that we are not a soup of races that boils down to one bland flavor, instead we are a multicultural tossed salad where each person contributes their unique proud cultural heritage to bring about the essence of our American family. This is what America is all about!

Mental health is all about getting out and making new friends

The thing I learned is that if you plan and take the time to attend such events you might be lucky enough to meet new friends so it's good to get in the mix and toss yourself into the city and county events.

When the event concluded I reflected that perhaps the best thing about this day was what I did not see and hear. No horns, cars, construction, ad signs, arguing nor internet, instead, just nature combined with children laughter and welcoming music with merry performers from the cozy stage.

Parks offer meditational time as one walks. Usually the car takes us to the glass doors of any supermarket and we strive to park up front but at the park one must walk long open distances to get from one place to another. Today I happen to notice the ducks follow each other as they make perfect v-line mini waves from behind as they scooter away atop the lake. Some residents sit in benches and just watch for hours.

It's a good thing nature is free for your visit to a city park surpasses any Meta Universe experience and no goggles are necessary either.

It's time to take a moment to thank this man and his



San Jose East/Evergreen Rotarians joined California State Senator Dave Cortese at his inaugural Picnic by the Lake Multicultural Festival and Resource Fair on Saturday, September 30th, 2023 at Hellyer County Park.

family for their unselfish giving to our community.

Our state Senator and his TEAM brought our community together as a multicultural family which is why everyone loves the Cortese name.

Thanks Dave and Pattie.

*Editor's note: It takes vast planning and orchestration to make an event such as this one come about. With monies well spent, time and love, please support these kind people, corporations and non-profit event partners for their help in contributing to the annual Picnic by the Lake event; This event would not have been possible if not for the hard work of Mario Lopez, Zachary Contini, Estefany Meza, Suzanne Wheaton, Natasha Waxman, Tara Sreekrishan, Phuong Nguyen and all others from Senator Dave Cortese's Office, County Parks Director Don Rocha and all other Santa Clara County Parks workers, Santa Clara County Firefighters, Orrin Mahoney, with the Rotary District Foundation, Rotary Club of San Jose East/Evergreen, President Deepali Sinha, Nick Leon, Marianne Ezell, and the entire Rotary Club of San Jose East/Evergreen, Times Media; publishers of Almaden Times, Evergreen Times and Willow Glen Times. **Gold Sponsors:** San Jose Water, Google, California Nurses Association, AT&T, Applied Materials, Silicon Valley Community Foundation. **Silver Sponsors:** Trader Joe's, Nob Hill Foods, Valley Water, Silicon Valley Clean Energy, Santa Clara and San Benito Counties Building Trades Council, County Employee Management Association SEIU-UHW, Kaiser Permanente, Excite Credit Union, eBay, Office of Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Safeway, Republic Services, SMW Local 104, Nor Cal Carpenters Union, ATU Local 265 and Teamsters Local 350. Also, special thanks to D.J. Bob Nguyen for spinning the greatest hits and the incomparable performances by MiFaSol Band, El Grito de la Cultura Academy, Folklorico Nacional Mexicano, Viet Steps, Pilipino Association of Workers and Immigrants (PAWIS), Kaisahan of San Jose, and Kuumba and all volunteers for the event!*

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Symphony San Jose presents American Portraits December 2 and 3 at the California Theatre

Symphony San Jose presents five musical postcards depicting the vast beauty and diverse character of our nation December 2 at 7:30 p.m. and Sunday, December 3 at 2:30 p.m. at The California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San Jose.



The program includes Ives' patriotic celebration from New England, Still's soulful southern soliloquy, Midkiff's Blue Ridge Mountain tribute, Shaw's homage to the fragrant orange groves of our home state, and Copland's famous western masterpiece.

This is the first appearance of a mandolin as a solo instrument on the series, and Midkiff's concerto (performed by the composer (Jeff Midkiff)), is full of foot-stomping, toe-tapping, virtuosic electricity that's just great fun to hear.



Soloist: **Jeff Midkiff**, mandolin
(photo courtesy of Facebook)

Midkiff's Mandolin Concerto, "From the Blue Ridge," was composed and premiered in 2011 for the Roanoke Symphony and their Music Director David Stewart Wiley. The piece has been performed by the Rochester Philharmonic, Jacksonville Symphony, Boulder Philharmonic, Knoxville Symphony, Lancaster Symphony, Champaign-Urbana Symphony, Shreveport Symphony, Williamsburg Symphony, Bryan Symphony, Northwest Florida Symphony, Symphony of Southeast Texas, Ohio Northern Symphony, Cal Poly Symphony, Carmel Symphony, Signature Symphony at TCC, Oak Ridge Symphony, Bryan Symphony, Lancaster Symphony, and the Yale Concert Band. Midkiff will make his Boston Symphony Orchestra debut performing the Concerto on July 23, 2023 at the Tanglewood Music Festival, Thomas Wilkins conducting.

THE PROGRAM

Charles Ives: Variations on "America"
William Grant Still: Darker America
Jeff Midkiff: Mandolin Concerto (From the Blue Ridge)

Caroline Shaw: Valencia
Aaron Copland: Rodeo

ARTISTS

Christopher Rountree conductor

Soloist: Jeff Midkiff, mandolin

TICKETS: Phone: 408.286.2600; Website: www.symphonysanjose.org

Email: jmeyers@symphonysanjose.org; Walk-Up Box Office: 325 South First Street, San Jose, 95113. Located between San Carlos and San Salvador Street next to the California Theatre. Ticket Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

American Portraits artwork (left) courtesy of Symphony San Jose.

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Opera San José presents new production of Rossini's Comedy The Barber Of Seville November 11–26

Opera San José will continue its 40th anniversary season with an upbeat comedy for operagoers of all ages with Gioachino Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

This new production by internationally acclaimed director Stephen Lawless, making his Opera San José debut, is subtitled, "The Useless Precaution." This opera buffa introduces the rascal barber Figaro (Ricardo José Rivera) who uses all his wiles to assist the love-struck Count Almaviva (Joshua Sanders) in liberating his true love Rosina (Nikola Adele Printz) from the clutches of her guardian, Dr. Bartolo (Dale Travis).

Conducted by OSJ Director of Music Joseph Marcheso, this comic masterpiece fizzing with entertaining hijinks and memorable melodies will play at the historic California Theatre in downtown San Jose for six performances. Filled with incomparable Italian

music, a story featuring matchmaking, mistaken identities, and love at first sight.

"This classic comedy features some of the most iconic music in the world and has introduced millions of people of all ages to the joy and depth of opera, yet it remains a perennial favorite for the seasoned operagoer," said Opera San José General Director / CEO Shawna Lucey. "The story of the barber Figaro, and his schemes in smoothing the course of true love, returns with a splendid ensemble cast and whimsical production. This is an appointment with the barber you don't want to miss."

The vibrant cast of talented singers also includes Courtney Miller as Berta, Vartan Gabrielian as Basilio, Joshua Hughes as Fiorello and Michael Kuo as Officer. The chorus is comprised of Carter Dougherty, Andrew Fellows, Andrew Green, Glen Hall, Michael Kim,

Eric Mellum, Michael Mendelsohn, Joshua Porter, and Nicolas Vasquez-Gerst.

The creative team for this production is Joseph Marcheso (Conductor), Stephen Lawless (Director), Adrian Linford (Scenic Designer and Costume Designer), Thomas Hase (Lighting Designer), Y. Sharon Peng (Hair and Makeup Design), Johannes Löhner (Assistant Conductor and Chorus Master), and Michelle Ainna Cuizon (Assistant Director).

The Barber of Seville will be sung in Italian with English and Spanish supertitles, November 11-26, 2023 (performance dates/times below, including an added family-friendly matinee) at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street, San Jose.

For more information or to purchase tickets (\$55-\$195), the public can visit operasj.org or call 408-437-4450 (open Monday through Friday, 9:00am–5:00pm).



Opera San José presents a family-friendly production of Rossini's "The Barber of Seville," Nov. 11 – 26, 2023 at the California Theatre. Seen here in OSJ's 2011 production (L-R): **Torlef Borsting** as Dr. Bartolo and **Cathleen Candia** as Rosina. Photo by Bob Shomler

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PIONEER DAY 2023

Saturday, October 14, 11:00 am

Casa Grande, New Almaden

Times Feature

What the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement Dept. is doing to improve the permit issuance process

By Arjun Batra

I am thrilled to report that it is now possible to get a Building Permit for certain renovation, remodel, and/or extension projects in less than five business days in San José!

Acting upon your feedback regarding the slow building permit processing times, my office has been actively providing feedback and suggestions to the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement (PBCE) Department on the launching of new, modernized, and digitized programs that will expedite and streamline the permit issuance process.

The Best Prepared Designer Program (BPD) is a new initiative aimed at accelerating the permit issuance for eligible projects by allowing professionals who enroll in the program to take full responsibility for building code compliance, thus bypassing the Building Division's standard plan review process. Depending on the scope of the project, building permits can be issued in as few as three to five business days. The best part is that enrollment in this program is entirely free of charge.

To date, 44 professionals have already enrolled in the program, and five projects have been submitted.

In addition to the Best Prepared Designer Program, the city is also launching SJePlans on October 13th.

Recognizing the need for a faster permit process, the city has developed SJePlans as a solution to streamline the review of building plans. Starting mid-October, customers with projects requiring plan review can initiate the building permit



District 10 Report
Arjun Batra
Councilmember,
District 10

process online and directly upload their plans to SJePlans. This online portal facilitates plan review by City staff, offering the following benefits:

- **Submit Your Plans and Respond to Reviewer's Comments:** You can easily submit your plans and respond to any comments or queries from your plan reviewer online.

- **Track Review Status:** SJePlans provides a convenient way to track the status of your plan review, allowing you to stay informed at every stage of the process.

- **Permanent Plan Storage:** Rest assured that your plans will be stored securely and permanently within the SJePlans portal for future reference.

Many customers who have already used SJePlans have expressed their satisfaction with its speed and user-friendly features. To ensure a smooth transition to this new approach, short guides and videos will be provided to assist you. Please note that a few project types, including those utilizing our Express or STI/ITI programs, will not be eligible for this system.

For customers who have appointments booked between now and mid-October, there is no need to make any changes to your existing plans.

To stay up to date on what the Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement department is doing to improve the permit issuance process, and provide more efficient and responsive services to our community, stay connected with their newsletter.

I want to thank the PBCE department for their exceptional efforts in launching these forward-thinking programs designed to expedite the permitting process. These new programs strive to further the city's effort to deliver high-quality service. I encourage everyone to spread the word and let my office know of your experience(s) with these programs as we work to continuously improve all city services for our residents. Your valuable feedback and support are essential as we strive for continuous improvement.



Valley Water groundbreaking: South County Recycled Water Pipeline Project completion acknowledged

Valley Water held a groundbreaking event Oct. 4 to acknowledge the completion of the South County Recycled Water Pipeline Project.

The project expands the distribution of recycled water service to new customers in South Santa Clara County and supports future system expansion opportunities. The additional 3.5 miles of pipeline constructed will also serve as backup to the existing system to help ensure recycled water deliveries during emergencies or outages.

The United States Bureau of Reclamation awarded Valley Water a \$5.7

million grant to help reduce the project's \$23 million cost.

With a hotter and drier climate and extended droughts, water supplies are becoming scarce. Recycled water is a drought-resistant supply of water used for landscaping, agriculture and industrial needs, which helps increase drinking water supplies in Gilroy, Morgan Hill and the unincorporated area of San Martin.

Valley Water was joined at the groundbreaking event by its partner agencies, the South County Regional Wastewater Authority, the City of Gilroy and the City of Morgan Hill.

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Pioneer

Continued from page 5

lastly, I hope for the future of this program, from its parents to its contributors to be blessed and rewarded in every facet of life. I hope the audience can watch and reflect on what this program brings to its community. It's gold if we can help the audience reflect on our current times, and pay homage to one of the greatest running shows in the art."

Diane agreed, "We hope that our production of Oklahoma will delight and entertain everyone. It has been a pleasure to work with a talented and dedicated cast and crew in bringing this Rodgers and Hammerstein classic to life."

"I hope audiences take away joy and appreciation for a Broadway show that reimagined what musicals could be," said Ashley.

"I believe that people will be leaving joyful, impressed and pleased," predicted Vanessa. "As Steve Dini always said, 'if the audience can forget everything else in their lives and be entertained and transported away, we have done our jobs.'"

Support for advanced drama productions

Community patronage directly supports upcoming Advanced Drama productions licensure, including "Harvey" and "West Side Story," this academic year. Pioneer High School's Drama Program is completely and solely funded by the community's generosity and attendance of Glue Factory shows.

"Oklahoma!" runs 7 p.m. each evening Wednesday through Saturday, October 25th to 28th at Pioneer High School's Performing Arts Center, 1290 Blossom Hill Road, San Jose.

Visit phsdrama.ludus.com to order tickets online, or in person starting at 6:30 p.m. each evening at the door.

Times Classifieds



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The word Sikh (see-kh) means "disciple" or "student." A Sikh is a practitioner of the faith founded in the 15th century by Guru Nanak in Punjab of old British India. A Guru who is a "teacher" or "enlightener" completes the relationship of teaching and learning. Sikhism is monotheistic and stresses the equality of all men and women. Sikhs believe in three basic principles; meditating on the name of God (praying), earning a living by honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor with others. Currently there are close to one million Sikhs living in the USA and Canada and 25 million Sikhs living around the world. Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world. At the Gurdwara (House of God) in San Jose we welcome all. We pray daily for peace and prosperity for everybody in the world. Come to visit and enjoy Langer (food) in our kitchen which is open 365 days of the year and serves complementary vegetarian meals. We also encourage you to enter our history room

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St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
Sunday 9:30 AM
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday

8:15 AM
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!



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