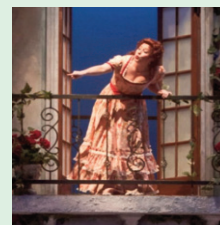


Holidays at the
Ainsley House open
Nov. 16 – Dec. 21

SEE PAGE 4



Opera San José presents
new production
of Rossini's Comedy
The Barber Of Seville
SEE PAGE 8



NOVEMBER 2023 ■ VOL. 19, NO.11

Willow Glen Times

SERVING WILLOW GLEN, SAN JOSE ■ WWW.WILLOWGLENTIMES.COM

Willow Street Pizza to celebrate 30 years with all day anniversary party Weds., Nov. 15

Hisham Abdelfattah, who appears on Food Network's 'Guy's Grocery Games' and 'Battle of the Decades,' is named Willow Street Pizza's new Executive Chef and Partner.

By William Bellou
Publisher

Willow Street Pizza, the Willow Glen restaurant known for its wood-fired pizza, scratch made sauces and Italian pastas is celebrating their 30th anniversary on Wednesday, November 15th at both their Los Gatos and Willow Glen locations with 30% off the entire menu all day!

The Los Gatos location, Willow Street Pizza, will be hosting a community focused party where guests can enjoy live music from "The Joint Chiefs" and other festivities!

In conjunction with its milestone anniversary, Willow Street Pizza has announced the appointment of a new Executive Chef and Partner Hisham Abdelfattah. The chef and experienced restaurant operator, with more than 18 years of experience in the industry, currently owns and heads up culinary at San Jose's lauded Halal Mexican restaurant El Halal Amigos.

Abdelfattah is best known for his dedication to hospitality and charismatic personality, appearing on Food Network's 'Guy's Grocery Games' and 'Battle of the Decades,' and being honored in Silicon Valley Business Journal's 40 under 40 in 2023. He joins the Willow Street Pizza team with a goal of refreshing the brand to continue its legacy but keeping true to its roots that have established the 30-year-old restaurant as a beloved mainstay in the com-



Hisham Abdelfattah, best known for his dedication to hospitality and charismatic personality, appearing on Food Network's 'Guy's Grocery Games' and 'Battle of the Decades,' has been named Willow Street Pizza's new Executive Chef and Partner.

munity.

Giving back to the community

A key part in what's made the restaurant beloved over the past 30 years has been the hospitality of the staff, many of whom have been at Willow Street Pizza since its inception. Willow Street has also cemented itself in the community by giving back and donating over \$60,000 to various organizations and schools in just the last five years.

Founded in 1991

Willow Street Pizza was founded in 1991 by partners Ed Rathmann, Glen Thompson and Miguel Romero, who saw a void for wood

fired fast-casual pizza restaurants in the South Bay. The trio opened the first location in the Willow Glen neighborhood of San Jose, and the second location opened in 1993 in the city of Los Gatos. Known for their handcrafted pizzas, Willow Street Pizza takes pride in making authentic food that the whole family will love. With their wood-fired pizzas, pastas, salads and burgers, their menu offers a variety of classic and unique dishes. Some fan-favorite menu items include their Spicy Steak Fajita Pizza, Willow Burger, Margherita Pizza and

See PIZZA, page 7



Willow Glen resident **Carol Pollard** (center) met the people who made the life-changing device she recently received.

Willow Glen resident Carol Pollard meets the people who made her heart device

By William Bellou
Publisher

As a tribute to World Heart Day recently, Willow Glen resident Carol Pollard met the people who made her life-changing heart device.

Abbott's MitraClip is a device that got its start in the Bay Area which is manufactured just 25 minutes away from Carol's home in Willow Glen, which was used to fix her heart valve without having to undergo open-heart surgery.

"This Abbott event came full circle for me. To come to Abbott and be able to see where my MitraClip was made, how it is made, and who made it was surreal, and very emotional," Carol said. "I got to thank the actual people who made the clip that is in my heart. What an opportunity!"

The MitraClip procedure

The minimally invasive device, MitraClip, was inserted after it was determined that Carol had a

heart condition after she noticed she was having a difficult time breathing.

Carol, 78, figured it was just her age catching up with her. However, doctors determined her declining health was caused by mitral regurgitation (a leaky heart valve).

Mitral regurgitation is a common heart condition that impacts more than 1 in 10 adults aged 75 and older which causes the heart to work harder to pump enough blood to the body. Left untreated, the condition can lead to an irregular heartbeat or heart failure.

MitraClip is a simple procedure in which doctors access the mitral valve with a thin tube (called a catheter) that is guided through a vein in a patient's leg to reach the heart.

A small, implanted clip was attached to Carol's mitral valve to help it close more completely,

See HEART DEVICE, page 5

SEE OUR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE - PAGE 11

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NEWS AND NOTES

City of San Jose opens applications for strategic funding to strengthen affordable housing efforts

Eligible organizations can now apply for funding to build housing

San José Mayor Matt Mahan and the City's Housing Department unveiled a new \$50 million Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) last week.

These dollars are distributed on a competitive basis for qualifying organizations to create affordable housing, support anti-displacement efforts, provide services to vulnerable residents, and serve other community needs.

"We have an opportunity to invest these \$50 million dollars to help those struggling on our streets and those struggling to make ends meet put a roof over their head," said San José Mayor Matt Mahan. "I look forward to ensuring we are doing so in a cost-effective way that makes progress on our acute housing shortage, which has impacted our most vulnerable communities the most."

The NOFA is focused on projects in specified "Continued Investment Areas" and "Affordable Housing Expansion Areas" per the City's Affordable Housing Siting Policy. The funding will go toward the construction of housing for extremely low-, very low-, and low-income individuals and families. Approximately 40% of the funding will be prioritized for extremely low-income housing – households making under 30% of the area median income.

Applications for the NOFA will be scored on project readiness, multiple sources of funding to ensure long-term feasibility, cost effectiveness, and the availability of both supportive and family housing. Projects that include childcare and disability accommodations will receive higher marks.

Organizations have until Nov. 29, 2023 to apply for the funding and must be ready to apply to the California Tax Credit Allocation Committee (CTCAC) and the California Debt Limit Allocation Committee (CDLAC) for a round within two years of the application. Qualifying organizations will receive their awarded dollars in January 2024.

The application for the NOFA is now live and affordable housing developers may apply by visiting <https://www.biddingo.com/san-jose/bid/1/41213543/38937628/verification>

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 San Jose's Willow Glen, Rose Garden and Almaden Valley communities are named semifinalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program.

These 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 around 7,140 scholarships worth nearly \$28 million next spring.

Nearly 95% of semifinalists are expected to be named finalists, and approximately half of those finalists will earn a scholarship.

Over 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.

In the Rose Garden area, the semifinalists from Basis Independent Silicon Valley are Akshaya A. Ajan, Paras Goel, Alina Huang, Robert Ji, Shreyas Kapavarapu, Saanchi Kapoor, Nivedita P. Kripalani, Ethan Y. Liu, Shreyas M. Nanjanagud, Alyssa E. Naoumov, Maggie J. Peng, Max Polosky, Maya Sriram, Anoushka A. Tamhane, Caitlyn N. Tom, Brandon M. Tsai, Shivaani Venkatachalam, Achyuth K. Vivek, Ellie Xi, Paulina Xu, Ivan Y. Zhang and Meryl Zhang.

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.

At Presentation High School in Willow Glen, students named as semifinalists are Anusha S. Jain, Anisha Shukla and Margaret G. Yang.

Valley Currents

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



Holidays at the Ainsley House Nov. 16 – Dec. 21

By William Bellou
Publisher

The Ainsley House is getting ready to open this holiday season with Holiday events for the whole family, including Holiday Teas & Tours, Holiday Boutique, Evening Open Houses, and Photos with Santa Nov. 16 - Dec. 21.

The Ainsley House, located in Campbell, CA, will be decorated with the theme Christmas Cravings. Discover how each room in the House is inspired by favorite Holiday cravings. You will find a gingerbread room, candy cane corner, a Christmas Spice spectacular, and more.

Tours

Tours through the Ainsley House will be unguided and self-paced. The Ainsley House and Boutique will be open Thursdays-Sundays, from 11 am-3 pm beginning Nov. 16; closed on Thanksgiving Day.

Tour admission is \$10 for adults (18-64), seniors (65+) \$8 youth age 7-17 \$6, Museum members are free. The Holiday Boutique is located in the Carriage House as well as in several rooms on the first floor of the Ainsley House.

In the Boutique you will find unique seasonal gifts, ornaments, jewelry, scarves, and much more. The Boutique will be open during public visiting hours.

The Campbell Museum

Foundation's annual Holiday fundraiser: Holiday Teas and Tours will take place December 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, and 10. Seating will take place at 12pm. The tea menu includes finger

sandwiches, champagne, a special Ainsley blend tea, and tasty treats in the Carriage House, followed by a self-guided tour of the Ainsley House. Admission is \$60/ General Public and \$55/ Museum Member.

Admission proceeds go toward supporting education programs and preservation efforts at the Campbell Historical Museum and Ainsley House. Reservations are required for the teas and can be made at www.campbellmuseums.com. Reservations for the Holiday Teas and Tours are open now.

Santa will make a special appearance at the Ainsley House on Saturday, December 2 from 9 a.m.-12pm. He will greet families and kids in the Sunporch room of the Ainsley House surrounded by a decorated Holiday scene. Reservations to take photos with Santa will be 9 a.m.- 10 a.m., 10 a.m., 11a.m. and 11 a.m.-12 p.m.

While families wait to see Santa, there will be hot chocolate and holiday craft tables. Santa reservations can be made at www.campbellmuseums.com and admission is \$10 per family.

One of the best ways to see the Ainsley House decorated for the Holidays is to attend one of two evening Open House events. The Open House events at the Ainsley House offer the public an opportunity to enjoy the holiday decorations at night, with live music in the Ainsley living room and light refreshments in the Carriage House. The Open House events take place 5:30 – 8:00 p.m. on Sunday, December 17 and Thursday, December 21, 2023. Admission is \$15, \$10 for Museum members; children 17 and under are free. Tickets can be purchased at the Carriage House the evening of each event.

The Campbell Museum Foundation, a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, supports the Campbell Historical Museum & Ainsley House and by providing volunteers and financial assistance to support educational programs. The Foundation offers memberships featuring free admission to both museums, invitations to special events and openings, quarterly newsletter, and a discount at the museum stores. For more info, visit www.campbellmuseums.org.

Willow Glen Times

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PUBLISHER / CEO: WILLIAM BELLOU

williamb@timesmediainc.com

STAFF WRITERS: LORRAINE GABBERT, SHUBHI ASTHANA, ANGELA COPELAND, SNIKITHA BANDA, CLAIRE CHEN, KEN DEHART, SEAN EASTWOOD, DENELLE FEDOR, MATTHEW FRAZIER, JANE JOHNSON, KEVIN LARSEN, FRANK SHORTT

ART DIRECTOR: JEFF BAHAM
graphics@timesmediainc.com

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER:
SANDY BELLOU

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Times Local News

Heart device

Continued from page 1
restoring normal blood flow.

Returning to good health

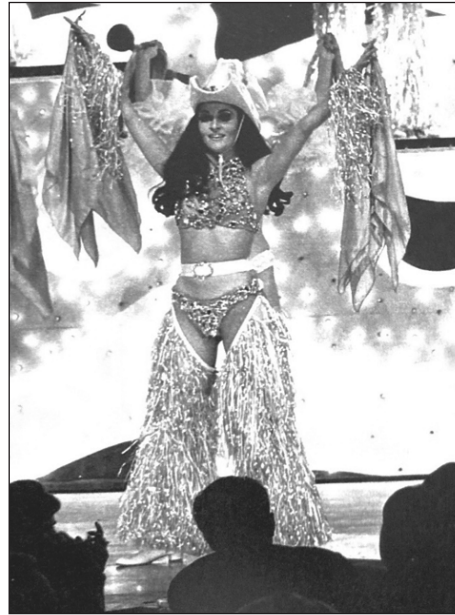
Today, shortly after the implant, Carol can once again take 2-mile walks and lift weights, discovered a love for drawing, and may soon get back on the dance floor.

"If it wasn't for the wonderful people at Abbott and my MitraClip, I would be unable to take long walks with my husband, which we do regularly," Carol explained. "I would have never discovered my love for drawing. After the MitraClip procedure, I could breathe normally again. What a gift!"

Successful dancing career

During her successful dance career in the 60's and 70's, Carol Pollard, known then as Carol Borelli, performed in Vegas shows and had a role in the Broadway musical "Funny Girl." She worked with many celebrities, including Sammy Davis Jr., Jimmy Durante, Jimmy Dean, Phil Ford and Mimi Hines.

"I started dance classes when I was just a toddler and continued dancing right through college. I was in Southern California when I read about an audition for "The Sammy Davis Jr. Show." I just took a



In the late 60 and 70's, **Carol Pollard**, known then as Carol Borelli, performed in several Las Vegas shows with several well-known celebrities. She also had a role in the Broadway musical "Funny Girl."

chance and went to the audition and got the job. I actually went to the audition for "Funny Girl" to support a friend of mine who was shaky about going by herself, and I thought, well, I'm here, I might as well audition, and got in the show. It



The Abbott staff is pictured with **Carol Pollard** (pictured sixth from the left).

starred Phil Ford and Mimi Hines as Fanny Brice, and it played in Las Vegas for four months at the Riviera hotel. It was always exciting to work with famous people that had so much talent. But I must admit my biggest thrill was to call my mom and tell her who I would be working with and what show I was going to do. She always wanted to be a dancer and never had the opportunity in her life."



Carol (Borelli) Pollard with Jimmy Durante.

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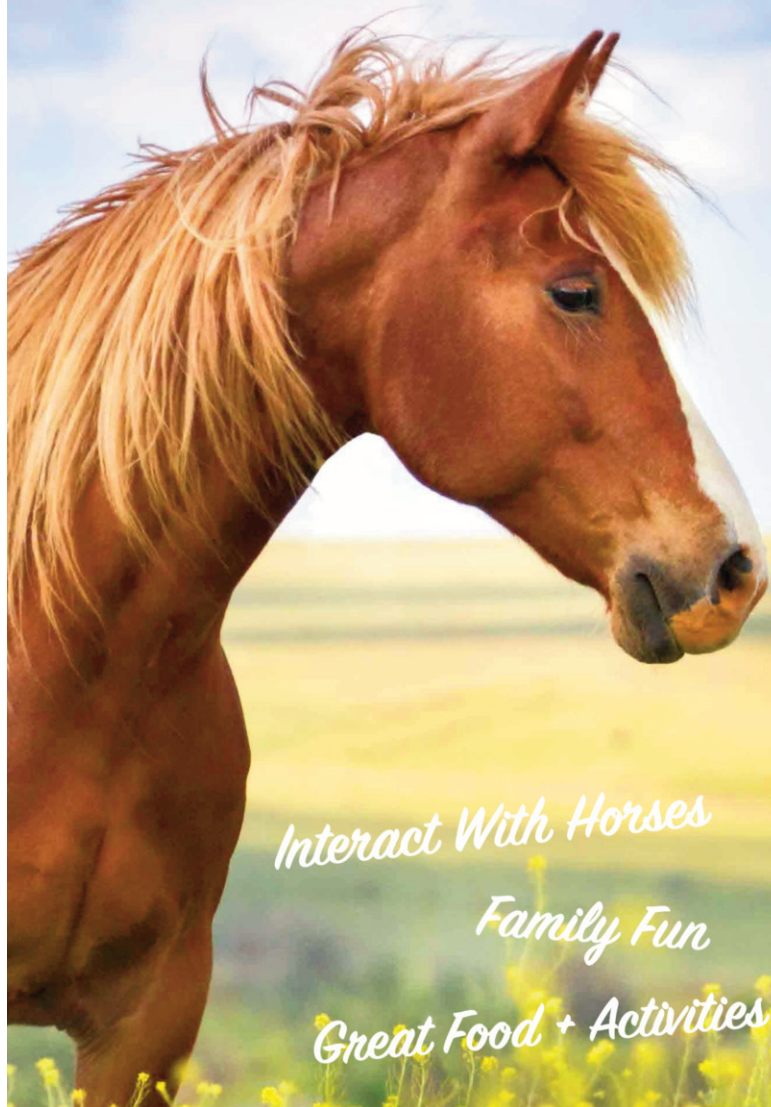
Bay Area Horse Associations Will Host Events



DECEMBER 16

San Martin Horsemen will host in December at Harvey Bear Park: Harvey Bear Ranch entrance at E. San Martin Avenue and New Avenue, San Martin, CA 95046. Ride, lead or join without a horse along a flat, paved 2 mile loop and jingle all the way with bells on the horses! A great time spreading holiday cheer interacting with children and families along the route. Event begins at 12 noon. RSVP or questions: toni.whedon@cbnorcal.com.

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Times **In Memory**

IN MEMORY

Theodore Anthony Lopez

Nov. 9, 1941 - Sept. 29, 2023
Resident of Willow Glen

Resident of Willow Glen on November 9, 1941, Theodore Anthony Lopez entered this world and tragically left us on September 29, 2023. He departed from us due to sudden cardiac arrest, leaving a legacy of love, kindness, and a deep sense of family.



He was a longtime Willow Glen, CA resident, where he attended Willow Glen Elementary, Markham Middle School, and graduated from Willow Glen High School

in 1959.

Ted is survived by his beloved wife Kathie of 47 years, his loving and caring son Ted (Shawn), grandson Landon, daughter Gina (Jeff), granddaughter Paisley, sister Patricia Tappan, niece Alexandra, nephew Carter (Julia), and grand-nephews Jacob and Logan. He was also survived by many aunts, uncles, nieces, nephews, and cousins who all loved and cherished him.

Ted's greatest joy in life was being a father and grandfather to Paisley and Landon. The love of his children and grandchildren showed no bounds, and they created cherished memories that will be treasured forever. Ted also had a deep affection for his "Grand Dogs," recognizing the joy they brought to his family.

During his lifetime, Ted found fulfillment in being a dedicated community member and serving his country.

He joined the Army National Guard at 21

years old where he earned the rank of Sergeant and was honorably discharged after serving 6 years. He joined the Central Fire District as a firefighter and ended his career as a fire inspector in San Jose. His passion for firefighting was evident to all who knew him, and he took immense pride in his service.

Ted was a member of the Santa Clara County Grand Jury and the San Jose Airport Commission, demonstrating his commitment to making a difference in the lives of others. Ted enjoyed serving as a board member on the Santa Visits Alviso Foundation and looked forward to the annual Christmas party, where he took photos of Santa and the children.

In addition to his roles as a husband, father, and public servant, Ted was an avid sports enthusiast. He cheered passionately for the San Francisco 49ers and Giants, finding joy in the victories of his favorite teams. Ted was also an active community

member, belonging to fraternal organizations like The Elks Lodge 522 and Los Pescadores, where he formed deep bonds of friendship.

He was a dedicated photographer and served as the yearbook photographer for the San Jose Fire Department.

In his off time, Ted turned his lens toward wedding photography and was an avid camera collector.

He enjoyed making Christmas fruit cakes, canning of olives, going to garage sales, and could never say no to a New York steak. Ted and Kathie took his last vacation to Hawaii in March where he said it was the best trip he had ever taken and the trip of a lifetime.

Thanksgiving was Ted's favorite holiday. He loved entertaining friends and family with delicious feasts, laughter, and cherished traditions.

Ted will be remembered for his big heart, dedication to family, commitment to service, zest for life, and how he could light up a room with his welcoming personality.

Ted's absence leaves a void that cannot be filled, but his spirit lives on in the hearts of all who knew him.

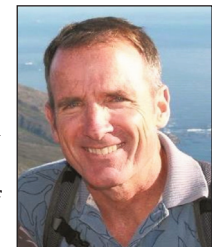
Instead of flowers, the family requests donations to Santa Visits Alviso Foundation or a charity of your choice. <https://www.alvisosanta.com/donate/>. Family and friends attended a funeral service on Saturday, Oct 28th, 2023 at Willow Glen Funeral Home, 1039 Lincoln Ave, San Jose. A reception followed at Three Flames Restaurant in San Jose.

IN MEMORY

Christopher Alan Reid

August 29, 1960 - Sept. 25, 2023
Willow Glen

Christopher Reid, a resident of Willow Glen, known to family and friends as Chris, passed away on Sept. 25th in San Jose, CA at the age of 63.



Chris grew up in Saratoga, attending St. Andrews School, before moving to Los Gatos, attending Los Gatos High School. He went on to get his degree in Business from San Jose State University. He was an extreme sports enthusiast, world traveler, and a generous person.

He is survived by his wife Kristie Kuechler, daughter Harper Reid, brother John Reid, as well as many nieces, nephews and numerous friends. Chris is preceded in death by his parents Barbara and Robert Reid, and sister Susan Reid.

Funeral services were held Friday October 13th at St. Andrews Episcopal Church, 13601 Saratoga Ave, Saratoga. Reception to follow at Shepherd & Sims, 15970 Los Gatos Blvd, Los Gatos. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Alzheimer's Association, or Best Buddies International (www.bestbuddies.org).

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Times Local News

WATER-WISE

Willows of The Glen: The awe of Autumn

By Matthew Frazier

Autumn is underway as we speak as leaves are turning hues and tones that evoke memories and thoughts from youth.

As a columnist-essayist, there is much I recall from childhood. Those are the days and evenings that defined those years.

As a graduate student at San Jose State University, in the MS degree program in Mass Communications, passing through the campus weekdays and weeknights brings the beauty and the splendor of Autumn. My colleagues within the cohort are aware of this as well.

As we speak, my mind ventures to imagery of San Jose and Santa Clara Valley in the mid-1980s when I was in Elementary School. Years when one could still walk to school safely.

Willow Glen High School, September 1993 to June 1997, this was where I invested four years of my life, learning what I could about a variety of subjects. The Willows of The Glen were there to garnish the environs and terrain. These are bold and firm trees, standing with conviction and force against a stark environment of winds.

The Willows of The Glen, as I refer to them, conjured the memories of Willow Glen in those years. Sitting below the willow, working on Math Analysis homework and studies. Dreaming of Calculus and the

frontiers that would follow.

The Awe of Autumn. The ferocity of Fall. These are the terms that come to my mind, as well as those I know and have known. From September 1984 to June 1990, I was at Reed Elementary School here in San Jose, California. The creek behind the school flooded every fall without exception. October 1987 was one such occasion.



Water Wise
Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water
Manager

The Willows of The Glen define the ambiance of Willow Glen. Magnificent and ubiquitous in their stature and tenure, these botanicals command the awe and the reverence of each and all who gaze upon them with longing eyes.

What will Autumn bring us this year? Will The Willows of The Glen speak to us once more of the soon-coming rains for

which we are immeasurably overdue? Will they speak of legacy and the years and decades to come in which San Jose and its valleys will flourish in the waning light and weather of Autumn?

The Awe of Autumn. This is a time of introspection and reflection. These are days, evenings and nights that ask us to be ever so mindful of our surroundings. To be ever so present despite our hectic lives.

I invite you to visit Willow Glen and see for yourselves the magnitude and the majesty of The Willows; the trademarks of a place graced by Antiquity.

Thank you, one and all, for taking the time to read this entry. May Autumn grace your thoughts and sentiments.

Matthew Frazier, *Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper*, can be reached at (408) 656-5622; or send email: kitchenfrazier@hotmail.com

San José Mayor and council members call for audit of San José animal care and services

San José's Animal Care Center (SJACS), which has experienced years of staffing challenges, is caring for a record number of animals amid a nationwide shelter crisis. Community concerns have been raised surrounding animal care and engagement with rescue partners and volunteers.

In response, San José Mayor Matt Mahan, Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei, Councilmembers Bien Doan, Peter Ortiz and Omar Torres are calling for an objective and independent assessment of SJACS.

"Our animals can't speak for themselves – but luckily we have dedicated staff, volunteers, rescue partners and advocates who speak for them," said Mayor Matt Mahan. "This audit will add another voice to the conversation – an independent voice to evaluate concerns, see how our shelter stacks up against industry standards, and make sure we are providing the best care possible while our animals wait for their forever home."

The goal of this audit is to understand where improvements can be made, and ideally result in what staff, volunteers, rescue groups and the community all want: the shelter to be the best that it can be, and provide the best care possible to the animals it serves.

"This audit will ensure that the public can have confidence in the services ACS provides and that we are able to respond to the present crisis judiciously," said Vice Mayor Rosemary Kamei.

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Prompt Engineering

By Shubhi Asthana

Have you ever stumbled into a conversation where everyone is speaking around this "techie" word – and even after you've broken in, it is difficult to understand the unfamiliar jargon and acronyms? Well, there's no need to sweat it. Let me teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:



Prompt Engineering

Prompt engineering is a mode of interaction between a human and a large language model that lets the model generate the intended output. This interaction can be in the form of a question, text, code snippets or examples.

An AI model can provide several outputs based on how the prompt is phrased, which can be as simple as a word or as complex as a paragraph. The prompt's objective is to provide the AI model with sufficient information so it can produce output pertinent to the prompt.

In short, prompt engineering acts as a placeholder where the inputs are fed to generative AI applications, such as chatbots.

Why do AI models need Prompt engineering?

Prompt engineering has relevance across multiple AI use cases like text generation, language translation, providing informative responses to questions. Some of the needs of Prompt Engineering are listed below:

• **Accuracy of responses:** An effectively created AI prompt conveys a user's intent to the AI model, which in turn generates precise, accurate and useful

responses.

• **Enhanced performance:** When prompts are used effectively, it saves time and resources because user tasks are finished quickly, increasing output and performance.

• **Better user experience:** Well-crafted prompts optimize the user experience by letting users easily extract the desired information from the AI model. This improves the user experience and the perceived value of AI systems.

• **Enhanced decision-making:** Users can make informed decisions more quickly if they receive timely and accurate information via effective AI prompts. This can benefit both individual productivity and organizational decision-making processes.

How does it work?

Whenever an AI model is given a prompt, it goes through the patterns it has learned in its training data -- which can include large data sets -- to generate a response that's contextually relevant to the input. This process is referred to as inference and involves computing the probabilities of various word sequences and correlations based on both the prompt and the training data.

For a prompt to successfully generate the desired output, it must be highly specific. For example, a prompt such as "Write an essay" will produce generic results. However, offering precise details such as the essay type, topic, tone, target audience and word count generates the desired output. Specificity in AI prompts also removes the chances of inaccurate responses.

In next week's article, we shall go into the details of creating these Prompts. So stay tuned!

About the Author

Do you enjoy reading this column? Send in your comments or feedback to the author at shub.saxen@gmail.com. Shubhi Asthana works as a Research Senior Software Engineer at the IBM Almaden Research Center, San Jose.

Pizza

Continued from page 1
Chicken Tequila Fettuccine.

"If you look at restaurants in the South Bay that have been around over 30 years, it's a short list, and we couldn't be more excited to celebrate this milestone anniversary with the people of Willow Glen and Los Gatos," said Ed Rathmann. "For years, our focus has been community, community, community. We've been fortunate to serve generations of families, and the restaurants have become iconic landmarks. As we look towards the future, I am delighted that Chef Hisham is joining our team. I have the utmost confidence that he will take Willow Street Pizza to the next level."

The San Jose outpost, located at 1072 Willow Street, is open Sunday-Thursday from 4 PM to 8:30 PM and Friday-Saturday from 4 PM to 9 PM. The Los Gatos outpost, located at 20 S Santa Cruz Ave, is open Sun-



day-Thursday from 11:30 AM to 8:30 PM and Friday-Saturday from 11:30 AM to 9 PM.

To reserve your table for the 30 Year Anniversary Party, or another date, visit www.willowstreet.com Follow @willowstreetpizza on Instagram and Facebook to stay up to date on the latest happenings.

Times Arts

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 Cali-

fornia 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 Löhrner (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 The-



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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BEAUTIFUL DAY - For more than four years, Beautiful Day, sponsored by Westgate Church, has worked to enhance San Jose neighborhoods. The group's final major project is the Camden and Almaden intersection, with enhanced landscaping for improved vehicle and pedestrian visibility, and new paint. Hundreds of volunteers came out to complete the project.

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Times Local News

San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra Season Opener Concert Dec. 2

Orchestra performs Brahms, Wranitzky, Mendelssohn and Blacher; Ticket purchases now available online

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2023-24 Season Opener Concert to be held on Saturday, December 2, 2023, 7 pm, at the Mexican Heritage Plaza Theater, 1700 Alum Rock Avenue, San Jose, CA.

The orchestra will open with Brahms's light and engaging Academic Festival Overture, and close with Blacher's big, beautiful and exciting Orchestral Variations on a Theme of Paganini.

This concert will also feature three winners from the 2023 Young Artists' Competition, proudly sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation*. Outstanding young soloists, Isaac Chan & Dylan Nguyen, violists, will perform Wranitzky's Concerto for Two Violas and Orchestra; and An-Po Chen, violinist, will perform Mendelssohn's Violin Concerto.

Isaac Chan is a high school senior at Milpitas High School and has been playing viola since he was 7 years old. He has been with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2019 and is currently in his third year with the Philharmonic Orchestra.



Dylan Nguyen is also a student at Milpitas High School and started to learn piano at age 5 first and then viola at age 8, with private teacher, Hien Ngo. He has been with the San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra for the past two

years.

An-Po Chen, violinist, is 16 years old and currently attending Archbishop Mitty High School. This is his second season with the San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra.



The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over seven decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

The musicians of SJYS, all school-age youth, are chosen from more than 650 applicants through our annual auditions. The SJYS comprises 12 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras, a Chamber orchestra, two flute choirs, two string ensembles, as well as winds, harp, saxophone, percussion, and jazz ensembles.

To purchase tickets online, visit <https://sjys.org/product-category/tickets>

Senate Bill 10 & unhoused persons discussed by current and former State Senators Dave Cortese and Jim Beall

By Denelle Fedor
Special to the Times

The Almaden Valley Community Association (AVCA) hosted their monthly general meeting Monday, October 9 with keynote speakers - former State Senator representing District 15 and current Santa Clara Valley Water District Board Director, Jim Beall and current State Senator, Dave Cortese who replaced Jim Beall when he was elected in 2020.

Senator Cortese discussed a variety of issues, including the status of the on-going investigation of organized crime that has run rampant which resulted in defrauding funds from the Office of Employment Development Department (EDD) during COVID in 2020 and thereafter.

Senator Cortese spoke about his Senate Bill 10 which he authored which would require all California public schools to provide training to all school employees on life-saving responses regarding the increase in opioid, fentanyl and overall drug use under a formal plan known as the

Comprehensive School Safety Plan (CSSP). Cortese's legislation would also create a state framework for parents and students to be educated about the current and growing risk of fentanyl exposure and use resources to help prevent and stop widespread drug abuse.

Senator Cortese shared that fentanyl deaths have increased 863% from 2018 to 2021 in Santa Clara County. Further, the senator shared that fentanyl was the cause of 20% of the deaths of young adults 25 years of age and younger. SB 10 is named after a 15-year-old young girl, Melanie Ramos who died of a fentanyl overdose in her high school bathroom in Hollywood. Melanie did not know she took fentanyl.

The senator received bipartisan support with 80 votes in favor and 0 votes against SB 10 to move Cortese's bill to Governor Newsom's desk for signature. Governor Newsom signed SB 10 into law on October 13, 2023.

In March of this year, Senator Cortese, called for an audit of the City of San Jose Housing Depart-

ment's Homeless Program. Senator Cortese's request transitioned to a bipartisan proposal co-authored by Senator Rosilicie Ochoa Bogh (R-Yucaipa), Senator Roger Niello (R-Fair Oaks), Assemblymember Evan Low (D-San Jose) and Assemblymember Josh Hoover (R-Folsom).

Cortese shared what prompted his audit request. "I went on a tour of Columbus Park in San Jose with Gail Osmer, a homeless advocate. I saw garbage that was not picked up, rats running around and unhoused people living in tents within the filth," Cortese explained. "I reached out to the City of San Jose City Manager asking her if she would support his request of an audit and she said she would. She also shared that the city has not spent any of the state funding at Columbus Park."

Cortese requested the California State Auditor to evaluate the City of San Jose's spending on unhoused individuals particularly with reports showing an increase in homelessness in San Jose. He shared that, "human suffering on our streets has persist-

ed too long and we need to move unhoused people into shelters and provide supportive services."

Cortese originally asked that the audit be completed by September of 2023 so that any recommendations could be implemented through the state budget or legislation. However, the audit is now expected to be completed in December 2023.

The State of California gives approximately \$20 billion to cities in CA. for homeless resources. It was not known how much of the \$20 billion the City of San Jose receives.

Beall discusses homelessness

Jim Beall, former State Senator representing District 15 who is now an elected Director for the Santa Clara Valley Water District, continued with the topic of homelessness in San Jose.

In 2018, the Martin v. Boise Federal Case passed and preempts all local laws. This case established into law that an unhoused person cannot be punished for sleeping outside on public property if there are not adequate alternatives available.

As a result, the Santa Clara Valley Water Board (SCVB) urged Assemblymember Ash Kalra to introduce

AB 1469 which would allow the SCVB to use Measure S, which is a special tax voters passed in 2020 that provides \$500,000 annually to the SCVB for the cleanup of homeless encampments and debris on the waterways.

Beall spoke about the importance of the governor signing AB 1469 as the passage of this bill will allow SCVB the authority to work cooperatively with the County and City in having designated places for the unhoused to sleep, so that the SVSB can legally and compassionately remove unhoused people from creek beds and waterways. Governor Newsom signed AB 1469 on October 10, 2023. This law goes into effect on January 1, 2024.

This writer asked Director Beall if he would lead a Town Hall Meeting in partnership with Times Media to review the Homeless Audits recommendation regarding the City of San Jose homeless. I suggested that the homeless monies the City of San Jose receives from the state (from the \$20 billion fund) be earmarked to pay for the recommendations put forth in the audit.

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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 at 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.

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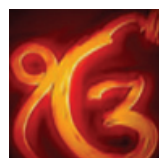


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