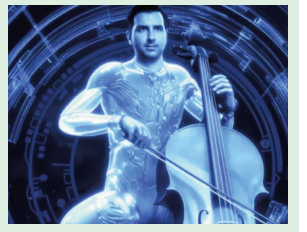


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Symphony San Jose presents 'AUTOMATION' January 27 and 28
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SJ Police Chief Mata retires to take job with DA

By William Bellou
Publisher

San Jose Police Chief **Anthony Mata** (pictured) announced he's leaving his post in March to join Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen as head of the DA's Bureau of Investigation.

Mata has served 28 years with the San Jose Police Department, including three years as chief. He began his stint as police chief in the wake of protest and allegations of unnecessary police violence during protests, and continued during the Covid-19 pandemic, a succession of police misconduct scandals, and calls for reform. Mata supervises 1,700 employees, of which nearly 1,200 are sworn officers.

"This is my community and my honor to continue to serve it with a mission to protect public safety," Mata said. "This decision was not easy, but after careful consideration, I believe it is the right time for me to embark on a new role with the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office," he said in a statement. "I am incredibly grateful for the support and encouragement I have received throughout my career."

"I want to thank Chief Mata for the years he has given to San José," said San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan



in a statement. "Safety relies on mutual trust and respect between law enforcement and the community — and during his tenure as chief, Tony has won both the trust of the neighborhoods he protects and the respect of the force he leads.

He strived to build a more transparent and accountable police department."

Mata started his career as a San Jose police officer in 1996, working his way up the ranks to become chief in 2021.



Hermelinda Figueroa, 80, works on an assignment during an English as a second language class at the San Diego Continuing Education Mid-City campus. Photo by Adriana Heldiz - CalMatters

Enrollment increases at community colleges after dropping during the Covid-19 pandemic

By Adam Echelman
CalMatters

When students started leaving college during the COVID-19 pandemic, California's community colleges feared losing state funding, which is based partly on enrollment. But now, one group is offering hope: students over the age of 50.

The state's 116 community colleges recently saw an 11% increase in students over the age of 50 compared to the previous year - the

highest percentage increase of any age group and just above the rate for students under 20. In contrast, students 20 to 29 continued to leave.

Upswing in older adults' enrollment

The enrollment numbers represent a shift for older adults, who left college at record rates during the start of the pandemic. By fall 2021, California's community colleges had lost roughly 20% of their
See COLLEGES, page 2



Candidates for D8 City Council vie for votes

By William Bellou
Publisher

In just six weeks, San Jose residents will go to the ballot box to pick their next councilmembers and mayor.

While the city's top seat is up for grabs, most of the money and focus will be on city council races this election season.

Four candidates are vying for San Jose City Council District 8 seat (Representing Evergreen Valley). Domingo Candelas was appointed to the District 8 seat when former city councilmember Sylvia Arenas was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

The top two vote-getters will head to a runoff in November, unless one candidate wins by more than 50 percent of the vote on March 5.

Here's a roundup of San Jose candidates running in the primary.



Domingo Candelas

Councilmember Domingo Candelas is running to keep his District 8 seat after being appointed in January. Three other candidates would like to take his spot.

Domingo was born and raised in District 8, has set his priorities in increasing the city's affordable housing stock, expanding public transit, providing more childcare services, and improving public safety. He also wants to secure funds to improve local parks. He has labor's endorsement.

See DISTRICT 8, page 12

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Times **Community News**

Colleges

Continued from page 1

students compared to fall 2019, bringing the system to its lowest enrollment figures in decades.

College administrators say the rising number of students over 50 is a result of many factors, but they often point to the return of in-person classes after the end of pandemic-era restrictions.

In general, student opinions are divided about online education. About 15% of California community college students surveyed in 2022 said they wanted more online classes, while 12.5% said they wanted more in-person classes, according to data from the Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. But for beginner-level students taking English as a second language at San Diego's College of Continuing Education, many of them older, the preferences are clear.

"I come to these English classes because here, I don't feel alone. I chat with my classmates, and they greet me back," said Hermelinda Figueroa, 80, who comes to her two-hour class three times a week.

The San Diego College of Continuing Education lost about half of its English as a second language students during the pandemic, but most of the students who left were beginners, said Jan Jarrell, a dean at the college. She said many beginner students were uncomfortable with technology or lacked reliable access to it. Teachers struggled to adapt, too.

"It's all about person-to-person for me. When I use computers, I feel like I've lost an eye. I just don't get it," said Figueroa, squinting as if to emphasize the way she might look at a screen. She enrolled last year when more in-person classes became available.

Sitting behind Figueroa in class, Estene Petit-Homme, 50, is part of another demographic that's boosting enrollment: recent immigrants. He traveled from his home in Haiti to the San Diego-Tijuana border, where he asked for asylum in February.

His application is one of a record nearly 1.6 million asylum cases on backlog in the immigration court system, according to a nonprofit research group associated with Syracuse Uni-

versity. While he waits for his day in court, he said he wants to learn to speak English better.

This fall, the San Diego College of Continuing Education has just shy of 6,700 English as a second language students — more than before the pandemic. Many of these students are over 50.

In Lake Tahoe, the local community college saw a nearly 60% increase in students over the age of 50 in the 2022-23 academic year, compared to the previous year. The main driver isn't English; it's two classes that focus on health and fitness for older adults, especially retirees.

"We were surprised by how well the Zoom classes did, but it's not nearly as good as what we're seeing now that the doors are fully open," said Lake Tahoe Community College President Jeff DeFranco, speaking of the wellness programs.

Improving online skills

Other students in the same age group are still working but use the community college as an opportunity to improve their on-the-job skills. DeFranco said about 35% of the college's students over 50 are firefighters, emergency medical technicians or police officers who study at Lake Tahoe Community College because it has an established program focused on public safety. These students take classes as a way to get a job, to gain the skills needed for a promotion, or in some cases, because the classes are required by their current employer.

As the number of students older than 50 fluctuated in the past few years, other trends emerged. More community college classes are now held in person than at the peak of the pandemic, but about half of classes are still online, according to Chancellor's Office data from the 2022-23 academic year. Before the pandemic, about 21% of classes were online.

For years, the percentage of part-time, degree-seeking students rose. Today, it's about two-thirds of the student population, according to data from the chancellor's office. These part-time students are more likely to juggle work and family obligations, in addition to school.

To lure students back and encourage them to take more courses, colleges and lawmakers have spent millions in COVID-relief dollars on marketing campaigns and incentives.

Last year, the number of students under the age of 20 increased at a rate just below that of students over 50, driven mostly by high school students who take community college courses. These youngest students now represent the plurality on campus.

While the growth is uneven, the total number of students increased by about 5% in the 2022-23 academic year compared to the year prior, according to data from the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. It marks the first year of enrollment gains since the start of the pandemic. Official statewide data from the current fall semester is not available yet, but individual districts are already predicting more gains.

Incentive program for books and tuition

The San Jose Evergreen Community College District reported enrollment for the fall was up nearly 20%. The district could only provide preliminary data across age groups, but a spokesperson said the "biggest growth" came from students over the age of 40.

"These enrollment numbers reflect a lot of hard work by a lot of people," wrote Interim District Chancellor Beatriz Chaidez. "They also indicate that our community continues to see the value of its local colleges."

Data reporter Erica Yee contributed to this reporting.

Editor's Note: To find out more about the opportunities for enrolling in the San Jose Evergreen Community College District go to; <https://sjeccd.edu>

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Times **Local News**

San Jose lawsuit sparks legislation to bolster government transparency

By **Ramona Giwargis**
San José Spotlight

From Stockton to Anaheim and San Jose, government officials across California use personal email accounts and texts to do the public's business—and those messages often never see the light of day because public agencies can't access them.

Now, a San Jose legislator is working to change that.

State Sen. Dave Cortese on Monday introduced a bill that would require public officials to forward communications on personal accounts and devices that deal with public business to an official channel. If approved, it would ensure there's a record of those messages that can be accessed and publicly released when requested. It was inspired by San José Spotlight's recent successful public records lawsuit against the city



State Sen. **Dave Cortese** is pictured in this file photo.

and its former mayor.

Senate Bill 908 applies to local and state appointed and elected officials, as well as public sector employees. Officials would have 20 days to forward the communications to a government account or server.

"I authored this bill because I know we can do better in providing the transparency and integrity in our democracy that our constituents and taxpayers deserve," Cortese told San José Spotlight. "Our children, grandchildren and future generations will benefit from our efforts."

The San Jose lawmaker's bill comes after his city faced significant controversy and legal trouble for the second time in six years over the misuse of private email and texts to avoid disclosure.

San Jose first made national headlines after it was sued for

refusing to release emails about a publicly funded development proposed by former Mayor Tom McEnery. The case, filed in 2009, rose to the California Supreme Court which made a landmark determination in 2017 that communications on personal accounts or devices are public records if they deal with city business. The high court suggested officials use or copy a government server—mirroring Cortese's bill—when communicating about public business.

Despite that ruling, former San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo—a councilmember when the case was filed—primarily used his Gmail account for city policy and government work. He deleted a public record and encouraged a resident to email him on his personal account to circumvent the law. Many emails and texts from his personal account could not be found when requested by this news organization.

San José Spotlight and the First Amendment Coalition sued the former mayor and city in 2022. A judge in August ruled that Liccardo failed to adequately search for public records on his personal accounts and that the city violated the California Public Records Act.

Preserving public records

SB 908 would effectively create a statewide process for preserving records from personal accounts and ensuring agencies have a way to access them and comply with the law.

The bill is patterned after federal regulations that prohibit the use of personal electronic accounts for public business unless messages are copied or forwarded to an official account. It's sponsored by San José Spotlight and the California News Publishers Association and has earned support from the California Broadcasters Association and First Amendment Coalition.

Karl Olson, a prominent media law attorney who represented San José Spotlight in its 2022 lawsuit, co-litigated the pivotal 2017 case before the California Supreme Court. As an attorney with three decades of public records experience, he said the abuse of private email and texts is widespread across the halls of power in California.

"We've seen up and down the state that a lot of politicians are not taking that ruling seriously and there's extensive use of texting about public business which makes it harder to retrieve the records," Olson said. "I strongly believe in Liccardo's case; it was intentional. But I think there are some public officials who might do it for reasons of convenience. There is absolutely no reason that California should not do what the federal government does."

Anaheim policymakers last September cracked down on using private phones or devices for city business after an investigation found officials used them to skirt the state's public records law. Councilmembers voted to require the use of government phones and forbid city business on personal accounts. They will also mandate officials to forward messages to official accounts. The policy is in response to reports of heavy influence from lobbyists and Disneyland resort interests inside Anaheim City Hall.

Brittany Barsotti, general counsel for the California News Publishers Association, said Cortese's bill is about more than expanding access for journalists—many of whom frequently call her association's legal hotline about public officials across the state using private email to skirt the law. It's about the conduct of government officials who have the power to make decisions that affect residents for decades to come—from policy decisions to budgetary and fiscal issues.

As in Liccardo's case, emails released from his personal account after the lawsuit was filed involved significant policy decisions that affect the livelihoods of San Joseans. The former mayor, who's now running for Congress, repeatedly used Gmail to discuss Google's massive downtown development, a growing homelessness epidemic, economic development and other critical city issues.

Barsotti emphasized that Cortese's bill simply clarifies a process to preserve what the courts have already determined are public records.

"The majority of CNPA's legal helpline questions are about access to public records," Barsotti told San José Spotlight. "Without a process to preserve these records the public misses out on important information. Otherwise, officials are free to say they have no records, when they know that is not the case. There is no independent third party like a city clerk who is even able to search to see if there are responsive records."

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Silicon Valley innovation should extend to city government

By **Matt Mahan**
Mayor

Innovation is what our region is known for and what we do better than any place in the world. So, it's just common sense that our spirit of innovation should extend to city government.

And when civic innovation meets willing partners — anything is possible. This week, we announced a first-of-its-kind project that by the end of this year will house 72 homeless neighbors in interim housing, and eventually provide 500 units for people with varying economic backgrounds.

Currently known as the Pacific Motor Inn, this new downtown development will leverage private developer dollars with state funds in a mixed-income project for the first time in California. Historically, the State's Homekey funds have been used exclusively by local governments and nonprofit partners to build interim and supportive housing for homeless individuals with all subsidies coming from taxpayers.

For this project, we were able to engage a private developer to deliver on the supportive housing component of the project using the state grant AND add both market rate and affordable housing into the future private development. This hybrid, or public-private approach will maximize the impact of this precious downtown parcel by creating more housing overall and reducing the burden on taxpayers for providing affordable housing.

In the meantime, before the future project breaks ground, the motel will be converted into interim housing to immediately help 72 individuals move out of encampments and indoors where they will be connected to supportive services, such as job training and mental health treatment.

This is a win-win for our city, thanks to an innovative partnership with Westbank, a well-known private developer, People Assisting The Homeless (PATH), a nonprofit that operates our Evans Lane Quick Build Community for homeless families, and the City of San Jose.

If successful, the Pacific Motor Inn redevelopment could become a model for cities across the state that are working to build housing and reduce homelessness in more responsible and cost-effective ways. My team and I will be work-

ing closely with the partners on this project and hope to see more partnerships between government, nonprofits, and the private sector as we fight to end unsheltered homelessness with the limited resources at our disposal.

Today, in San Jose, 4,500 people still live



From the Mayor
Matt Mahan
Mayor, San Jose

in unmanaged, dangerous conditions on our streets — it's going to take all of us working together quickly and efficiently to make sure everyone has a safe place to call home in our city. Stay tuned as we share updates on this project in the year ahead.

The Pacific Motor Inn development will leverage private developer dollars with state funds in a mixed-income project for the first time in California.

Op Ed

In memory of 'Mr. Road Show' Gary Richards

By **Mike Hennessy**

"Mr. Road Show" Gary Richards recently passed away.

Gary's articles covered many of our bay area traffic, road conditions, local automotive travel and safety, with auto related answers from readers. Gary was also just honored at city hall. I loved the part that he always kept it interesting.

Gary and I hosted a few events together with the Mercury News, Bay Area News Group, "Hybrids to Hot Rods." This was a successful event for all. We always had fun poking at each other about his slow-going Toyota Prius and my gas eating street rods.

Gary got the last word in on me, when he found out I picked up a Tesla, Gary wrote "the most unlikely person to buy an electric car was Mike Hennessy." It was all in fun and good taste.

We had stayed in contact for many years and supported each other in automotive questions he would get now and then.

Gary was a good friend and will be missed. RIP old friend!



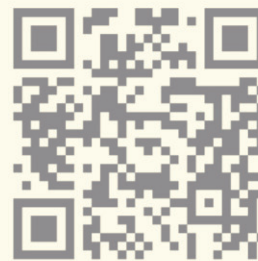
Gary Richards "Mr. Road Show." Photo by Mattish.

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SJ Chamber of Commerce names Toeniskoetter new CEO and Adams new Chairman of the Board

The San Jose Chamber of Commerce has selected **Leah Toeniskoetter** (pictured) as its new president and CEO, and Nicholas Adams Chairman of the Board.

Toeniskoetter is the founding director of public policy think tank SPUR San Jose, as well as a senior manager at Deloitte and daughter of prolific developer Chuck Toeniskoetter.

She is the third CEO for the group in three years, in the wake of the chamber—formerly known as the Silicon Valley Organization—dissolving its political action committee and losing hundreds of members after it ran racist campaign ads in 2020.

“Leah Toeniskoetter has significant experience successfully launching new initiatives and organizations, shaping public policy, and fostering community impact, making her an exceptional choice to lead the Chamber into a new era,” the chamber said in a statement.

Toeniskoetter succeeds Derrick Seaver, the chamber’s most recent CEO, who resigned in August.

“The Chamber of Commerce supports and speaks for a wide spectrum of businesses, from our favorite locally owned stores that are core to our neighborhoods to Fortune 500 enterprises that drive global change,” Toeniskoetter said in the statement. “It is an honor to step into this leadership role in service of our diverse community and to advance the economic vitality of San Jose and beyond.”

The chamber said Toeniskoetter’s experience aligns with its “commitment to advance economic growth through convening, collaborating and championing the San Jose

business community.”

Toeniskoetter did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

Rev. Reginald Swilley, a partner at the Minority Business Consortium in San Jose, said the chamber has long been doing the bidding of large, multibillion-dollar corporations, by taking their money and donating to politicians who write policies to benefit big business. All the while, Swilley said the chamber claims to benefit all businesses, while supporting policies that make it harder for small businesses to thrive and contributing to a massive wealth gap.

“The new CEO of the chamber should commit to working for the economic strength for the bottom 50% of our community, because that’s where the small businesses are,” Swilley told San José Spotlight. “I would like for the chamber to actually make sure that its policies help build the economic structures of our communities, and our small businesses. If you have an economic system where the regular people have enough, then everybody benefits.”

Swilley said the chamber has shown the community what it stands for by previously spreading racist ads through its political arm, and by its continued opposition to measures to increase worker wages and hours, which he said would benefit San Jose businesses by giving residents more money to spend locally, but which have been staunchly opposed by large corporations.

“This is who they are, they will use anything they can for

another dollar,” Swilley said.

Silicon Valley Business PAC Director Victor Gomez, who previously led the chamber’s political action committee before leaving to start his own in 2018, said he hopes Toeniskoetter isn’t afraid to make enemies.

“You better be hated by some on the other side of the issues, because if you’re not, then you’re probably not doing your job,” Gomez told San José Spotlight.

Gomez added that even if the chamber decides not to revive its political action committee, the chamber itself needs to revive its advocacy and muscle.

“It’s going to be very important for the chamber to show up to every single City Council meeting and Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors meeting, and for them to deliver a message that this business community is hurting right now and the city and county need to step up and take action,” Gomez said.

Nicholas Adams becomes Chairman of the Board

The chamber also announced that **Nicholas Adams** (inset left), the chamber’s vice chair who San José Spotlight reported was one of two finalists for the CEO role, has been elected chairman of the board. Adams is president and CEO of a public relations firm called NINICO Communications. Adams is a fourth generation San Josean. He has been involved with award-winning work for brands from Fortune 50 to local small businesses.

“It’s an honor to be elected chairman of the board to serve an organization that has had a successful impact on my business and our region,” says Mr. Adams. “I look forward to working with our board and my friend of over 15 years – Leah – to usher in a new chapter for the Chamber, putting our members first.”

Contact Joseph Geha at joseph@sanjosespotlight.com or @josephgeha16 on Twitter.



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Times Feature

South New Hampshire University announces three Evergreen residents to Fall 2023 President's List

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) announces that three Evergreen Valley residents on being named to the Fall 2023 President's List. The fall terms run from September to December.

Full-time undergraduate students making the President's list from Evergreen include Nathaniel Gallegos, Donald Zeller, and Zheng Luo.

Each resident earned a minimum grade-point average of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Southern New Hampshire University (SNHU) is a private, non-profit institution with a 91-year history of educating traditional-aged students and working adults. Now serving more than 225,000 learners worldwide, SNHU offers approximately 200 accredited undergraduate, graduate, and certificate programs, available online and on its 300-acre campus in Manchester, NH.

Valley Water Board of Directors appoints Nai Hsueh as 2024 chair

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

Valley Water Board of Directors elected **Nai Hsueh** (pictured below), District 5 rep-



resentative, as board chair in 2024. **Richard Santos** (pictured above), representing District 3, was elected vice chair last week.

The board vote launches Director Hsueh's third tenure as chair. Director Hsueh served as board chair in 2013 and 2020.

Chair Hsueh, a registered civil engineer in California, worked at Valley Water for three decades. Chair Hsueh takes the leadership role as Valley Water faces challenges such as climate change, inflation, and aging infrastructure.

"We are here to do good things for the community," Hsueh said. "I see the role of the chair not as a person with more authority than other board members, but as the coordinator and doer for the board, working with everybody to make sure things happen. With a functional board, we will continue to be a high-performing organization, which will benefit the community."

Hsueh was first elected to the Valley Water Board of Directors in November 2012 to represent District 5, which includes the cities of Cupertino, Saratoga, areas of Sunnyvale and southwest San Jose. She was re-elected in 2016 and 2020.

Vice Chair Santos is embarking on his fourth tenure as Vice Chair, previously serving in 2004, 2009 and 2017. Vice Chair Santos, a retired firefighter and native of Alviso, represents District 3, which includes Alviso, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, Milpitas and Berryessa/Alum Rock.

Immediately following the handing over of the gavel, board members praised outgoing chairperson John L. Varela for his leadership as Chair Pro Tem in 2022 and Chair in 2023. Director Varela's service was highlighted with a video featuring some of the agency's key achievements during his tenure as board chair.

"We are here to do good things for the community," Hsueh said.



ELECTION 2024

San Jose City Council District 8 candidate **Sukhdev Baniwal** held a meet and greet at the Bonfare Market just outside the Villages Golf and Country Club. More than 100 resident attended the afternoon event on January 11.

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By Matthew Frazier

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As I began to write my column at 3 a.m. and drink my citrus tea, I want to share with readers of the *Evergreen Times* the majestic mysteries of Evergreen Valley.

These are days and nights of early wintertime, but soon begins the Spring, which bring to life the beautiful rolling hills that glow with hues and sheens of emerald when sunlight strikes them at an optimal angle.

The glow gives wake to sunrise and sunset hues of amber and gold. The scene is much to be admired. A glean of green can be seen when sunlight melds with the ambiance of the hills of this majestic valley.

From South San Jose, there is much to be admired and observed here in Evergreen Valley; not the least of which are the hues and sheens and tones of green.

There have been several occasions where I drove us to the very end of Capitol Expressway and found a vantage point off Eastridge Avenue or one of the other artery streets and watched a sunrise or a sunset, where hues of green abound.

Sitting atop the rolling hills of Evergreen Valley,



Water Wise
Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water
Manager



we listen to the ebb and flow of water as impromptu rain-induced streams make their way toward larger water bodies. These are moments that compose and comprise memories. We welcome you to venture deep or at least deeper into this valley and find these elusive and evasive waterways and photograph them in all their splendor while making yet another entry in your journal.

To essay, journal, and memoir here is a gift. Unhampered by the rigid and tumultuous events of Silicon Valley, Evergreen remains one of the last outposts for creativity here in this region. Come now, each and all. Listen to water as you take in a glean of green.

May Winter bring you closer to your aspirations and dreams of water gardens bathed in hues of green.



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Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?
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practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak" the English meaning is "May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.



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God is One
ੴ ਇਕ ਹੈ
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SAN JOSE GURDWARA
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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

on site and walk the beautiful grounds. Learn more about us and community events we sponsor by visiting our website; http://www.SanJose-Gurdwara.org

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St. Francis of Assisi Chapel: Saturday 5:00PM, Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM (Mass in Vietnamese), 6:00 PM Youth Mass
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District 8

Continued from page 1

Domingo's parents immigrated to San Jose from Zacatecas Mexico and started a small HVAC business in 1989 that helped raise their family of seven in San José. He attended John J. Montgomery Elementary, Chaboya Middle School, and graduated from Evergreen Valley High School.

Dedicated to public service, Domingo received his Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, and later a Master's in Public Administration from San José State University. He went on to work for California Senator Jim Beall from 2012 - 2019, where he developed and implemented policy objectives, strategies, and operating plans for the Senator's office. Domingo assisted in the passage of Senate Bill 1, the Road Repair and Accountability Act of 2017, where billions are allocated annually to fix and repair roads and bridges across the state, including San José. He also worked at Valley Water (formerly the Santa Clara Valley Water District), where he tackled various water and environmental issues.

Domingo has been involved in various trail advocacy boards, including Friends of Five Wounds, Save Our Trails, and Santa Clara County League of Conservation Voters.

Public Safety

Domingo's top priority is fixing our recruitment and retention issues to ensure that San José has enough firefighters and law enforcement officials to protect our community.

"I'm committed to restoring services and funding programs that achieve the highest impact possible for street safety and traffic improvements to curb sideshows and reduce speeding," Domingo said. "An important key strategy is supporting our public libraries and youth centers to ensure we are investing in our children and reaching them before they slip through the cracks and end up as a statistic."

Domingo is focused on working with emergency responders to reduce 911 response times, maintain neighborhood safety, and ensure everyone has access to our most vital city services.

"As your current councilmember, I've taken a community-driven approach to public safety; working with the San José Police Department to organize public safety meetings like the National Night Out, holding Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) meetings to improve disaster preparedness, as well as organizing fire safety workshops to educate our community on proper fire safety and prevention.

Homelessness

Domingo believes that homelessness goes way beyond housing; more broadly, there is a desperate need for proper mental health and substance abuse treatment.

"I've advocated for improvements to San José's interim housing program and for additional steps to be taken to engage healthcare providers to offer preventative strategies for emergency calls - helping reduce the stress they put on our essential emergency services," Domingo said. "We need to address short-term solutions while we prioritize the building of permanent solutions."

Housing Affordability

On City Council, Domingo approved the partnership with VTA to place up to 200 tiny

homes on a VTA yard in North San José and was able to successfully secure additional State funding for the project. He also helped cut red tape and allow for faster housing construction by working with the City's Planning Department to launch the Best Prepared Designer Program, which will help allow new housing.

Economic Development

Domingo is laser-focused on economic development in San José, and particularly in our commercial corridors in District 8. His priority is to support small local businesses, create more jobs, and implement equitable contracts to provide quality employment opportunities for residents. His aim is to create a thriving economic environment that benefits both workers and business owners to ensure a prosperous future for Evergreen, East San José, and the entire region.

Environment

Domingo is determined to preserve San José's open spaces, parks, and lakes which he says is crucial for our community.

"I value open spaces and understand their significance to our community," Domingo explained. "I'm fully dedicated to ensuring their maintenance and safety. These areas play a vital role in enhancing our community's well-being and help foster a strong sense of belonging among both new and long-time residents. Additionally, we need to safeguard and expand our open spaces, prioritizing their protection and accessibility to cultivate a healthier, more connected community."

Community Engagement

Domingo is for strong neighborhoods, which he says are the cornerstone of a vibrant community.

"Through community events like town hall meetings, social gatherings, and collaborative events, they help us create an inclusive environment by fostering connections among neighbors," said Domingo. "I'm dedicated to supporting community-led efforts that celebrate our community's diversity and will always be a pragmatic voice in City Hall, who listens to the concerns of all District 8 residents."



Sukhdev Bainiwal

Sukhdev Bainiwal is an electrical and software engineer, former city airport commissioner, former member Network for Hate Free Community, and on the board of SiVIC (Silicon Valley Interreligious Council). He is a husband and father of four who says he wants to make San Jose the best place to live, work and raise a family.

Sukhdev's top priorities are addressing homelessness, affordability and economic vibrancy, and public safety. He has won the endorsement of Silicon Valley Biz PAC.

Sukhdev, a long-time resident of Evergreen Valley, since age 11, says many of our Evergreen neighborhoods have been in decline over the past few decades; therefore, he is determined to change course. Topping his priority list is resolving the numerous issues that plague his favorite neighborhood.

Public Safety

First on Sukhdev's agenda is public safety.

"I want to improve public safety through neighborhood watches and press for beefing up the police force," Sukhdev said.

"The other issues I wish to tackle are homelessness through interim housing construction, increasing affordable housing stock by streamlining the city's permitting process, and revitalizing the commercial centers to support small businesses," Sukhdev said. "I want more investment in our local parks, in particularly the polluted Lake Cunningham."

Sukhdev states, "I've been in the community for more than 20 years. In addition to taking care of my family, and a full-time job, I'm also involved in the community a lot, whether through the city or the Indian community, Sikh community. I always try to stay involved to connect with the community and help them with any services they need in the city or the county."

Sukhdev attended Evergreen School and Quimby Oak Middle School. While at Silver Creek High School, he started his own business delivering newspapers in the area.

"During my childhood we were always outdoors playing, and we never felt unsafe," Sukhdev explained. "All us kids played with each other in the parks or the streets. We rode our bikes, and our doors were left unlocked. We never thought about any of the public safety issues that we are now experiencing in District 8. Now most parents are concerned for their children's safety and about the frequent burglaries and mail theft. We need to create a safer environment for our residents.

Sukhdev believes that the liberalization of some of the laws has hastened the deterioration in the law-and-order situation of Evergreen. Bainiwal feels that Proposition 47 is the root cause behind the increase in retail thefts and petty crimes throughout California.

"When somebody is caught committing crimes, such as retail thefts and auto break-ins, the perpetrators need to be prosecuted," Sukhdev said. "They need to pay for what they did. Unfortunately, they feel they are immune from prosecution due to the passage of Proposition 47."

Homelessness

Regarding homelessness, Sukhdev stated, "They've been trying to put the unhoused into permanent shelters, but they're not making much headway. We need to provide cheap, prefabricated shelters where they can be connected to the services and be able to get on with their lives. And we need to increase the stock of homes in San Jose so people can afford to live here, rather than having to move away."

Business revival

Bainiwal also wants to revive his district's commercial centers by creating programs to support small businesses to open in the Evergreen Shopping Center. His goal is to bring new restaurants and shops to the Eastridge Center, so residents don't have to travel to

other malls across the city.



Surinder "Suri" Kaur Dhaliwaness

Surinder "Suri" Kaur Dhaliwal, also known as Surinder Kaur Sagha, is a retired executive assistant for major tech companies and mom whose priorities are curbing city vices, such as smoking and gambling, improving public safety and addressing unsheltered homelessness.

Surinder, 48, says she is being catapulted into this race by her deep-rooted faith in Sikhism and love for her community.

Surinder moved into the Evergreen area as a teenager, graduating from Mount Pleasant High School and then Heald College with an accounting degree. She worked for tech giants such as Meta and Google before leaving last year to focus on her faith and family.

Dhaliwal's life hasn't been easy. She said she is still dealing with the ramifications of leaving an abusive marriage and is fighting to get her son back into her custody.

"If nothing changes (or improves), it's time for change," Dhaliwal recently told San José Spotlight. "I'm hoping this will bring more of a voice to a lot of the parents that I've now created a network with (who) are going through a lot of the same things I'm going through as well."

In a positive light, Surinder's struggles inspire her to invest in her community, she said, especially those facing similar hardships.

Public Safety

"If elected, I want to focus on public safety, curbing vices that are plaguing the city—like smoking and gambling—as well as unsheltered homelessness," Surinder said. "To do this, I want to increase the number of temporary supportive housing sites and eventually move people into permanent housing."

When it comes to public safety, Dhaliwal said the police department needs to be reformed.

Laws broken

"I've seen officers violate laws they are hired to defend like speeding through city streets or running red lights, which makes residents like me feel unsafe," explained Surinder. "I've had several instances of police officers almost hitting my car going double the speed limit on Quimby Road and have reported those for internal investigation. "We need to weed out some of the officers that are supposed to be there protecting us, but they're not."

Dhaliwal said she also wants to restructure the rules around liquor and smoke shop licenses.

"I would like to decrease the number of

Times Local News

smoke and liquor shops in San Jose, but also increase the distance between them and our schools,' Surinder said. "Some say smoke shops are hubs for illegal marijuana sales. We must look into implementing a moratorium on smoke shop licenses.

Vape and alcohol use

Dhaliwal says she wants to carve out time to work with school leaders in Santa Clara County to curb vape and alcohol usage with the city's youth.

"I want to focus on helping parents deal with their children who might have a video gaming addiction," Surinder said.

Liz Chaboya, a retired physical education teacher and sixth generation San Josean, said she is supporting Dhaliwal because her honesty and candor on issues the city is facing is refreshing. Chaboya has known Dhaliwal from when she taught her as a freshman in high school.

"She's a real honest person and she tells you how she feels, and she doesn't try and blow smoke anywhere," Chaboya recently told San José Spotlight. "She's forthright and does a lot of volunteer work. We need more of that (honesty) in council and government everywhere."

**Tam Troung**

Tam Troung, San Jose Police Department sergeant who is not backed by organized labor or business, said he's concerned about homelessness and traffic-related fatalities.

"District 8 is my home; it's the community I was raised in," Tam said. "It's where my wife and I are raising our two young children, so I'm passionate about making our neighborhood even better for them and for all the children living in our community."

After immigrating to Evergreen Valley at a young age, Tam attended Chaboya Middle School and graduated from Silver Creek High School. His educational journey continued at San Jose State University, where he earned his Bachelor's degree in Administration of Justice, and later earned his Master's degree in Business Administration.

"My career in Law Enforcement started over 20 years ago as a Santa Clara County Sheriff's Deputy," Tam said. "For the past 15 plus years, I've had the honor of serving the community of San Jose as a police officer. From working as a detective, then a field training officer, to working in the Chief's Office as a Community liaison and now as the Sergeant in our District 8. I've learned the importance of community policing."

Tam believes that community policing is about building relationships with youth, residents, families, small business owners, the religious community, and city leaders. "These connections are the backbone of effective

law enforcement."

Priorities

Tam's priorities include improving public safety by providing the right tools for our unhoused neighbors to transition into a path of self-sufficiency.

"As a police officer, I understand the challenges our police department faces – recruiting and retaining officers, reducing response times, and strengthening community relationships. We need effective solutions," Tam emphasized. "I've experienced homelessness at a young age; it was traumatic. Our unhoused neighbors are suffering, and they need compassion, services, and the right tools to get them off the streets. My commitment goes beyond providing shelter. I'm dedicated to helping individuals from the beginning to the end of their journey, fostering independence and self-sufficiency."

Economic development

"To foster economic development and attract additional employment opportunities to San Jose, it is imperative to establish a solid foundation by addressing public safety issues, tackling homelessness, and fostering an environment conducive to high tech industries, San Jose can position itself as a hub for economic prosperity and job creation. With economic growth, we can create more job opportunities for all levels of experience. Members of our workforce community should be able to afford a comfortable living space," said Tam.

I have spent my career as a frontline public servant. I have first-hand knowledge of what programs and services work in our neighborhoods and our city. Unfortunately, laws are passed that look good on paper but do not work on our streets and for our communities. I will bring my experiences working in our communities to bring changes that help us build a safer and a cleaner San Jose.

San José Chamber Orchestra presents FANTASIA, Feb. 11 at St. Francis Episcopal Church

San José Chamber Orchestra (SJCO) continues its 33rd concert season with FANTASIA in Willow Glen at St. Francis Episcopal Church on Sunday, February 11 at 3 p.m.

The program features the West Coast Premiere of conductor Alyssa Wang and soloists James Blanchard on flute and Matthieu Cognet on piano.

"SJCO is looking forward to conductor Alyssa Wang making her SJCO debut with the program FANTASIA, featuring four unusual, yet complimentary musical works from two esteemed composers of the past and two composers of the present," said Music Director, Barbara Day Turner.

The evening promises to be uniquely satisfying and entertaining."

Music by Daniel Kidane, Germaine Tailleferre, Dobrinka Tabakova, and Benjamin Britten.

The Program

- Daniel Kidane: Be Still
- Germaine Tailleferre: Concertino for Flute, Piano and Strings featuring James Blanchard, flute and Matthieu Cognet, piano
- Dobrinka Tabakova: Fantasy Homage a Schubert
- Benjamin Britten: Young Apollo featuring



Symphony San Jose presents 'AUTOMATION' January 27 and 28

Yves Dhar performs with holographic A.I. counterpart

Symphony San Jose presents "AUTOMATION" Jan. 27 at 7:30 p.m. and Jan. 28 at 2:30 p.m. at the California Theatre in downtown San Jose.

Automation is a cinematic concerto that explores the conflicts and connections between man and machine.

Technology is part of our daily lives, but this program reminds us of the awesome power we have unleashed. Adams' piece depicts a ride in a terrific sports car quickly regretted.

Dukas' setting of the Goethe poem sees a young wizard meddling in things he doesn't understand; Schoenberg's new work includes a battle between cello soloist and hologram; and Strauss' epic tone poem was featured in the original A.I. gone wrong movie, 2001: A Space Odyssey.

Watch and listen as cellist Yves Dhar and his holographic A.I. counterpart interact on stage in a groundbreaking composition by Grammy-nominated, Emmy-winning composer Adam Schoenberg that features cello, halldorophone, electronics, orchestra, and projected visuals.

Program:

• **The Sorcerer's Apprentice** was featured in Disney's 1940 film Fantasia. Mickey Mouse starred in the title role.

• The opening to **Also Sprach Zarathustra** was made famous in Stanley Kubrick's movie 2001: A Space Odyssey. So much so that Elvis Presley began opening his concerts with the

intro.

A panel discussion will be held prior to the event, featuring none other than the Grammy-nominated and Emmy-winning composer Adam Schoenberg, and the brilliant Computer Science Professor Kathryn Leonard, who collaborated with him on this awe-inspiring piece.

This engaging panel discussion will delve deep into the captivating realm where artificial intelligence and music intersect. Join us as these experts unravel the mysteries behind the creation of this remarkable composition, while shedding light on the cutting-edge advancements in A.I. that are revolutionizing the music industry.

Discover the fascinating process of how A.I. is introduced into musical composition, working in harmony with brilliant human composers like Adam Schoenberg. Gain insight into how algorithms and data-driven approaches are shaping the future of music, resulting in innovative and evocative compositions that captivate the minds and hearts of audiences.

This exclusive panel discussion is a rare opportunity to engage with the creative minds behind Automation, offering a deeper appreciation for the artistry and technical brilliance that will unfold during the concert.

To purchase tickets, visit: <https://www.tickets.symphonysanjose.org/Online/mapSelect.asp>

Matthieu Cognet, piano

Tickets: Online: <https://sjco.org>

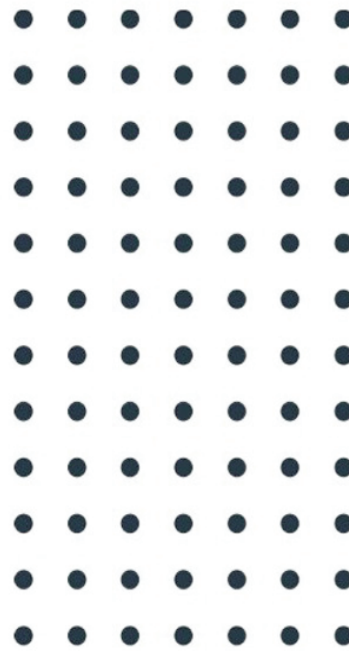
Phone: 408.295.4416; Box Office: sjcorch@gmail.com Tickets also available at the door Feb. 11, 2024.

SINGLE TICKET PRICES: \$15 to \$75: Adults: \$65/\$75; Seniors: \$55/\$65 (Age 62 and above); Students: \$15/\$25

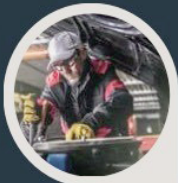
Photo of conductor **Alyssa Wang** by Robert Torres.



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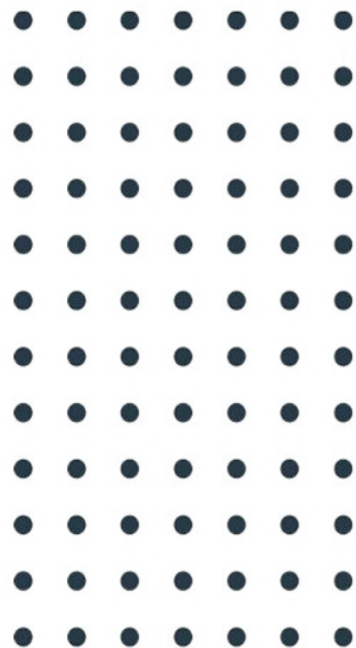
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