

Presentation Field Hockey Team celebrates becoming SCVAL Champions **SEE PAGE 4**



**75th anniversary**  
History San José celebrates local heritage and the story of the city  
— **SEE PAGE 5**

Symphony San Jose presents From Screen To Stage March 23, 24 at the California Theatre **SEE PAGE 8**



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# Times

FEB. 2 – FEB. 15, 2024 ■ VOL. 37, NO. 3



Performers of the Hip Hop Dance Medley (Tony Dung, Isaac Jin, Rei Wang Charles Li, Yifan Li, Ethan Yin; photo credit: J. Xie)

## Joyous annual fundraising event for Leland High School students Feb. 3

Leland Bridge Night will be held this Saturday, Feb. 3, 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the Leland High School Cafeteria.

The event will feature a variety of student performances and raffles, Leland Bridge Night is an excellent way to celebrate Chinese culture and the school's talented students, with the chance to win some prizes.

Leland Bridge Night is the annual fundraising event hosted by the Leland Bridge Parents Group, a non-profit organization made up of Chinese American parents whose goal is to foster communication between Leland High School and the surrounding Chinese American community and raise money for the school.

Since 2018, this event has consistently sold around 300 tickets and helped achieve a fundraising goal of \$20,000 for Leland High School each year.

Proceeds generated from Leland Bridge Night are used to fund various projects and initiatives at Leland, such as renovating the Media Center, Cafeteria, and providing financial support for course instructors.

See *BRIDGE NIGHT*, page 3



## Summit victory

An Almaden Valley family reached the Mount Kilimanjaro summit on January 30, 2024, after a grueling seven day hike.

A father and his two adult sons celebrated their climb with their favorite team by placing a San Francisco 49ers flag at the mountain's peak.

Praveen Chopra along with sons Ankit and Arsh Raj Chopra fulfilled their dream of climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro. Ankit and Arsh are students of Graystone, Bret Harte and

Leland High school.

Praveen says he loves to hike with his Almaden hiking group, as well as some other friends.

Ankit and Arsh have gone through Boy Scout training and Arsh is an Eagle scout. Both children developed outdoor interests and did many hikes and activities with their father, Praveen.

This was an epic Father and son adventure. Hopefully their favorite football team can also reach a summit as well in less than two weeks!

## Richmond Ranch purchased by The Conservation Fund and to be acquired by Habitat Agency and County Parks

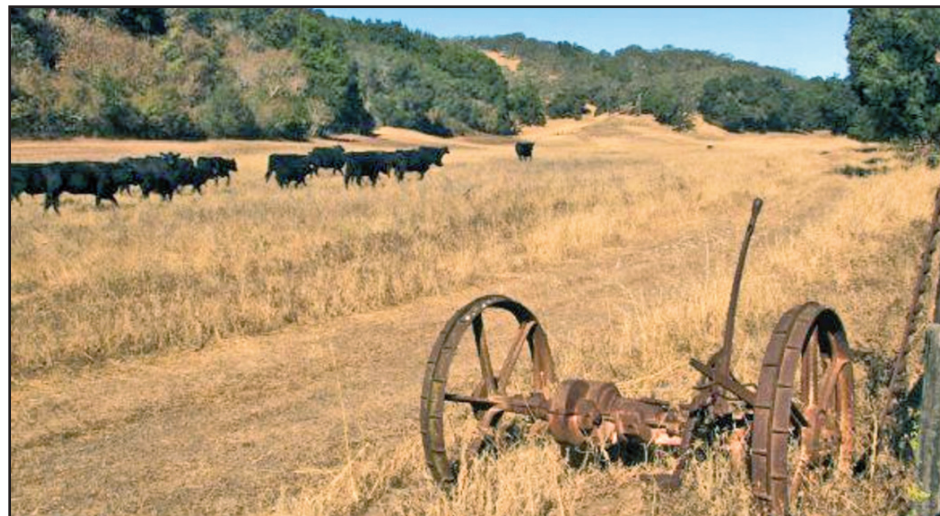
By William Bellou  
Publisher

The 3,654-acre Richmond Ranch, located near San Jose, has been acquired by The Conservation Fund (TCF), a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving land and water in the United States.

The huge ranch, with its ten individual parcels, will be acquired by the Santa Clara Valley Habitat Agency and Santa Clara County Parks.

Z&L Properties, a China-based residential property investor and developer, sold the ranch for \$16 million. Despite an appraisal value of \$35 million dollars for the property, Z&L Properties chose to sell at a discounted price.

Situated along Coyote Ridge, which is home



The 3,654-acre Richmond Ranch has been acquired by The Conservation Fund for \$16M. File photo.

to numerous endangered species, Richmond Ranch has long been a conservation priority for various nonprofits and government agencies.

The Habitat Agency and County Parks will work together to determine appropriate areas for recreational trails and public access, as well as areas for critical habitat restoration. Richmond Ranch is a vital connection point between Grant County Park, San Felipe Ranch, and open space on Coyote Ridge and in Coyote Valley. The acquisition opens the possibility of future continuous trail connections between the East Foothills, Coyote Valley, and the Santa Cruz Mountains – and is a critical step forward for expanding the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

See *RICHMOND RANCH*, page 3

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Please note: I have not and will not be verifying or investigating any information supplied by others.

Times **Community News**

## 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 Matthieu Cognet, piano

Tickets: Online: <https://sjco.org>  
 Phone: 408.295.4416; Box Office: [sjcorch@gmail.com](mailto: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.*

## Richmond Ranch

*Continued from page 1*

Santa Clara County Supervisor Sylvia Arenas and District 8 Councilmember Candelas said, in a joint statement:

"Preserving open space is paramount for the well-being of both the environment and communities. Open spaces, natural reserves, or greenbelts, are important for our urban landscapes, purifying air, and providing habitats for diverse ecosystems. These areas also offer recreational spaces for our residents, fostering physical and mental health. This will contribute to biodiversity conservation, mitigates the impact of climate change, and enhances overall quality of life. We recognize safeguarding these open spaces becomes crucial for sustainable development, resilient ecosystems, and the collective well-being of present and future generations."

District 8 Community Roundtable Land Use Committee Chair Robert Reese said "Preventing sprawl and preserving Richmond



Ranch for public use has been a critical priority of the Evergreen community for a generation. Today we celebrate the permanent preservation of these lands."

Alice Kaufman, Green Foothills Policy and Advocacy Director said, "Development on this property would have seriously impacted wildlife habitat and connectivity between the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range, so this acquisition is cause for real celebration. Green Foothills applauds the work of the Habitat Agency and urges the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to move quickly forward on Tuesday to direct staff to begin the County Park's land acquisition process."

## Bridge Night

*Continued from page 1*

Proceeds are also used to improve several programs such as Speech & Debate, Music, Journalism, Robotics, and college applica-

tion essay reviews. The funds also help with Leland's landscaping and recycling efforts.

To purchase tickets, visit: [www.leland-bridge.org/lbn-2024](http://www.leland-bridge.org/lbn-2024)

For more information, contact Leland Bridge Treasurer by email, [finance@leland-bridge.org](mailto:finance@leland-bridge.org)

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<https://www.lelandbridge.org/>

# AlmadenTimes

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## Presentation High School Field Hockey Team celebrates becoming SCVAL Champions

By Sean Eastwood  
Times staff writer

The Presentation High School field hockey team experienced great success recently in becoming the Santa Clara Valley Athletic League (SCVAL) El Camino Division Champions.

Even though the season had a happy ending, players aren't quite ready for the season to be over.

"I would be lying if I said I'm happy the season is over because I really loved playing on this team," said Kat Kowalski, grade 12. Mike West, the Athletic Director at Presentation, enjoyed witnessing the team's success this season.

New and returning players benefitted from the guidance of coaches who know what it means to be a Panther. West heard daily from officials, opposing coaches, other athletic directors, and fans about the remarkable sportsmanship and character of the Pres community.

"Thank you to the field hockey program for infusing our fall with such positive energy, it helped our other teams to feed off your success," said West. "I love my job, and all the student-athletes and coaches make this a special



Presentation High School's field hockey team are Santa Clara Valley Athletic League (SCVAL) El Camino Division Champions.

place to serve as AD."

While the players, coaches, and athletics faculty worked hard to achieve this level of success, it wouldn't have been possible without the support of the school community as a whole and students' families, who cheered the players on

and helped them find a balance between athletics and academics. The athletics department faculty makes it evident that they want to see each player grow as an athlete and student.

The team looks forward to celebrating and carrying their success into future years.

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**Graton Casino:** Tues., March 19, \$50. \$20 back in Free Play

Come with us to **Graton Casino** in Marin County for a day of gaming. Depart by bus in the early AM from the Almaden Community Center and return around 6:30pm. Enjoy lunch on your own at the casino with old and new friends. Price \$50. You get back \$20 Free Play Rich at 408-219-8641

**For more information, go to <https://almadenseniors.org>**

Almaden Senior Association  
at the Almaden Community Center  
6445 Camden Avenue, San Jose, CA 95120

Times **Local News**



**Op Ed**  
**Happy 75th Anniversary to History San José (San Jose Historical Museum)**

By **Bill Schroh**

As most of you know, History San José was established in 1949 to commemorate the centennial of California statehood. Initially, a replica of California's first State House was constructed on the grounds of City Hall (now Plaza de Cesar Chavez).



Originally intended as a temporary structure to be removed after a year, the public's enjoyment of the museum experience led the city to relocate the State House to the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, where it proudly stands today. I just recently found out that the Fairground Heritage Foundation is planning to restore the State House to showcase the history of the Santa Clara Fair. New life for an old building; how great! I wish them luck and of course, HSJ will help them in any way we can.

In the coming year, you'll notice a few subtle changes at HSJ. Our logo will proudly showcase the anniversary, and we're planning special museum programming to celebrate our 75-year milestone. We are also

proud to announce that we have published our 2022-2023 annual report.

About a year ago, WCBS Radio approached me with a fascinating proposal—they wanted to establish a radio studio at History Park. While it might sound crazy, there's a historical tie.

Charles Herrold can be seen in the doorway of the "Arc Fone" radio station in the Garden City Bank Building, circa 1913. Photo via History San José.

One of the first radio stations in the country began in San José in 1912 when Charles "Doc" Herrold initiated broadcasts. A quirky tidbit: the "first" DJ was his wife, Sybil, who played records on a phonograph over the airwaves. If you follow Doc Herrold's history, it leads us to today's KCBS Radio, which proudly claims the title of the "world's oldest broadcasting station." Welcome home, KCBS! Be on the lookout for the radio studio right in the lobby of the Pacific Hotel, set to begin broadcasting this spring.

Looking ahead to the 2024 calendar, I see exciting new festivals, community events, and captivating family programming. We'll keep embracing fresh opportunities and partnerships to celebrate the vibrant cultural heritage of the Santa Clara Valley!

Looking forward to seeing you at History Park once the rainy season is over.

*Editor's Note: Bill Schroh, Jr. is President & CEO, History San José.*

**2024's Best & Worst States to Start a Business**

With around 20% of new businesses failing within one year and inflation making entrepreneurship even more difficult, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on *2024's Best & Worst States to Start a Business* to showcase the most fertile grounds for planting and growing new ventures.

WalletHub compared the 50 U.S. states across 25 key indicators of startup success. The data set ranges from financing accessibility to labor costs to office-space affordability.



**Starting a Business in California (1=Best; 25=Avg.):**

- Overall Rank for California: 13th
- 12th – Avg. Growth in Number of Small Businesses
- 47th – Office-Space Affordability
- 46th – Labor Costs
- 1st – Availability of Human Capital
- 44th – Avg. Length of Work Week (in Hours)
- 49th – Cost of Living
- 6th – Industry Variety

For the full report, please visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-to-start-a-business/36934>

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Times **Local News**

**IN MEMORY**

**Cynthia Anne Besmer Miller**

**1960 – 2023; Resident of Almaden Valley**

Cynthia Miller left this world and entered heaven peacefully on Thursday, December 21, 2023, at the age of sixty-three after a courageous 13-year battle with cancer.

Cindy was born on July 1, 1960 in San Jose, California to Thomas Besmer, Sr. and Dovaleen Gross Besmer. She was the fourth of eleven children. Growing up in this large family formed Cindy's personality. She was funny and had a huge heart. She possessed a sharp wit, always ready with the perfect comeback. She attended Del Mar High School in San Jose where she dove competitively and was elected Homecoming Queen in the fall of

1977.

After High School, she obtained her Paralegal Certificate and worked as a paralegal before getting her real estate license. Cindy was a realtor in Santa Clara County for over 30 years weathering many bad market conditions while still having consistent success. She was smart, driven and organized in her professional and personal life.

She was a woman of great Christian faith which sustained her throughout her cancer diagnosis and treatment.

She was frequently comforted while listening to her praise music while reading her Bible.

She met the love of her life, Jim Miller at work, in the real estate office for which they both worked. They married in October of 2000. Cindy and Jim resided in Almaden Valley where they created a family home to coparent Jim's three children, JamieLee, Connor and Sarah.

Cindy was always very generous and hosted many gatherings and



parties for her large extended family and friends whether it was for Christmas, Easter, the Fourth of July, or an impromptu pool party on a hot day. She loved spending time with her daughter, Peyton Lynn and her five grandchildren, and the many nieces and nephews. She also treasured time at her condominium at Seascapes Resort where she often invited friends and family members to the beach, followed by fun back at the pool and some Scrabble. Her Scrabble exploits were many and

she won most of the games she played. Above all, Cindy was strong and was loved and admired by her family and friends, and all who knew her.

Cindy is survived by her loving husband, Jim Miller of 23 years, her daughter Peyton Lynn, her stepchildren, JamieLee ( Joe) Sykora, Connor Miller and Sarah Miller.

She is also survived by her mother, Dee Jackson, her siblings, Michelle Besmer, Tom (Barb) Besmer, Maureen (Ken) Shilling, Kathy (Glenn) Walker, Dan (Desiree) Besmer, Eileen ( Jim) Shydrowski, John Besmer, Sharon Dauskardt, Joan Evans and Marianna Newsam as well as her five grandchildren, many nieces, nephews, and grandnieces and grandnephews, and many friends. We will all miss her joyful spirit in our lives.

She will be remembered by all who knew her as a woman of strength, love, empathy, generosity, and faith.

A celebration of Cindy's life was held on Saturday, January 20, 2024,

at Holy Spirit Catholic Church, 1200 Redmond Ave, San Jose, CA 95120 at 12:30 pm. Reception followed at the Tarkington Home, 5929 Weimar Ave, San Jose, CA, 95120.

In lieu of flowers please donate to The American Cancer Society at Cancer.org, donating in her name.



**Report: 2024's Best & Worst States to Retire**

With more than 3 in 10 Americans feeling anxious about retirement, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on 2024's Best & Worst States to Retire, as well as its 2024 Retirement Savings Survey.

To help retirees find a safe, enjoyable and wallet-friendly place to call home, WalletHub compared the 50 states across 46 key metrics. Our analysis examines affordability, health-related factors and overall quality of life. Below, you can see highlights from the two reports, along with expert commentary.

**Retiring in California (1=Best; 25=Avg.):**

- Overall Rank for California: 17th
- 48th – Adjusted Cost of Living
- 47th – Annual Cost of In-Home Services
- 12th – WalletHub 'Taxpayer' Ranking
- 36th – Elderly-Friendly Labor Market
- 45th – % of Population Aged 65 & Older
- 42nd – Property-Crime Rate
- 2nd – Life Expectancy
- 36th – Health-Care Facilities per Capita

**Retirement Savings Survey**

- Americans worry about retirement. More than 3 in 10 people feel anxious when thinking about retirement.
- Too many people lack a plan. More than 1 in 3 Americans don't have a retirement plan.
- Nearly half the nation lacks confidence. 46% of Americans are not confident they will have enough money to retire.
- Many people may never retire. 39% of people say they expect to work until they die.
- Debt takes precedence. More than 3 in 5 Americans think paying off debt is more important than making retirement contributions.
- Many people are obsessed with retirement. 31% of people think about retirement all the time.

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Times Local News



Above left: Conductor, Sarah Hicks. Above right: Violinist, Sandy Cameron.

## Symphony San Jose presents *From Screen To Stage* March 23, 24 at the California Theatre

Performance includes violin concerto by Oscar nominee Danny Elfman

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Symphony San Jose is getting ready to present *From Screen To Stage* Saturday, March 23 and Sunday, March 24 at the California Theatre in San Jose.

Many classical composers have been seduced by cinema. Among them, Erich Korngold and Dmitri Shostakovich.

Korngold was the first composer with international stature to compose for Hollywood. In Russia, Shostakovich was having similar success with the new medium.

There have also been film/tv composers lured to the concert hall. Known for his iconic scores for *The Simpsons*, *Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Batman*, and much more, Danny Elfman is a four-time Oscar nominee and one of the most revered composers in Hollywood.

Elman's violin concerto was written especially for Symphony San Jose soloist, Sandy Cameron, who herself can be heard on numerous Hollywood soundtracks.

Whether writing for stage or screen, these composers tell a story with their music.

Convenient, inexpensive parking is available at a city-owned garage one-and-a-half blocks from the theater at San Carlos Street with entrances on Second and Third streets.

**The Program:**

1 hour 50 minutes, with intermission.

**Erich Korngold: Overture to The Sea Hawk**

**Danny Elfman: Violin Concerto**

**Dmitri Shostakovich: Symphony No. 1**

**Tickets:** Phone: 408.286.2600; or visit: [www.symphonysanjose.org](http://www.symphonysanjose.org) ; or email: [jmeyers@symphonysanjose.org](mailto: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, 10am to 5pm.



**AUTOS**

## 2024 Mazda CX-30 agile, sporty SUV

By Sean Eastwood  
Times staff writer

The 2024 Mazda CX-30 qualifies. It's an agile, compact sport utility vehicle with a big presence. Most of the eight trims are powered by a 2.5-liter inline four-cylinder engine with 191 horsepower and standard all-wheel drive.

The 2.5 Turbo Premium Plus is only available with a turbo engine. It includes much of the other trims' equipment but adds plenty. It has a turbocharged, 2.5-liter, four-cylinder engine with 227 horsepower and a six-speed automatic transmission.

The Carbon Turbo trims get a new 10.25-inch

infotainment touchscreen, while Carbon Edition and higher trims have wireless Apple CarPlay/Android Auto and a wireless charging pad.

Blind-spot monitoring and a rear seat reminder is now standard. The CX-30 Premium Plus gains adaptive cruise control with lane-centering.

The turbocharged trims deliver the kind of driving experience Mazda buyers have come to expect. However, regarding sheer value, you can't go wrong with the CX-30 2.5 S Preferred or, if you need more flash, the Carbon Edition.

The interior design, material quality and use of cupholders, pockets and other small openings give the CX-30 a dose of European pizzazz. The look and feel are further attractive with the contrasting dark gray-and-tan interior.

Top competitors include the Subaru Crosstrek and Hyundai Tucson.

The CX-30 is the sportiest among the trio. It's more styled like a coupe, rather than an SUV.



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Times **In Memory**

# 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 representative, 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 Sunny-



vale 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.

**Almaden Times**  
SERVING ALMADEN VALLEY SINCE 1986 ■ ALMADENTIMES.COM

City leader scalini age of 101 SEE PAGE 6

ELECTION 2024 Here's who's running for San Jose City Council and mayor SEE PAGE 10

The Bay Area presents pianist Janice Carissa SEE PAGE 8

NEWS

**THANK YOU**

for being a longtime reader of this paper

We appreciate your continued support of our local journalism.

**Almaden Times**

**IN MEMORY**

## Christine (Kris) Rosendin

May 4, 1962 - January 14, 2024  
Resident of San Jose

It is with a heavy heart that we say farewell to a most beautiful soul and beloved daughter, sister, auntie, godmother, loyal friend, and doting cat mom to Coco and Midnight.

Kris was born May 4, 1962, in San Jose California to loving parents Louis M. and Joanne (Shafer) Rosendin. She passed unexpectedly after a lengthy hospital stay on January 14, 2024.



Kris' early life was busy with a household of siblings, a neighborhood of friends, and plenty of holidays with extended family. Always quick to pack her bags for vacation, she enjoyed frequent trips to Aptos, Graeagle, Lake Tahoe, Cabo San Lucas and Hawaii (which remained her favorite destination). She loved the "three generations" cruises, spending time with everyone she loved most - her parents, siblings and plenty of nieces and nephews.

Kris was a longtime volunteer at Sacred Heart Community Service. She later joined the Gifts for Teens Project helping homeless, foster care and low-income teenagers in San Jose. She served as an upbeat, enthusiastic committee member for the last 12 years, donning a red Santa hat for every meeting and event. Kris was happiest when she was helping friends and family - someone needing post-surgery assistance, another needing kitchen help for catering, or just taking charge to set up for one of the many family events.

She played Bunco and Mexican Train with the "elders" as she jokingly called them, a vibrant group of ladies who were happy to have this youngster join their group. We laugh remembering Kris' unparalleled ability to keep tabs on everyone and everything!

She was very clever at deflecting conversation away from herself as she'd rather know what was important in YOUR life.

She persevered to be the best version of herself and knew that family was everything and good friends were irreplaceable. She was always loving, always kind, always generous.

Kris is survived by her loving parents Louis and Joanne Rosendin, her sisters Karen, Kathy and Julie Melendres (Robert), and brother Michael (Teresa). Kris was granddaughter of the late Moses L. Rosendin, founder of Rosendin Electric. She will be lovingly remembered by nieces Allison Walewski-Sullivan (Ryan), Nicole Prades (Max), Courtney Little (Bentley), Carly Kolb, Lexie Gallop (Ned), Matisse Melendres, and Anna Robinson (Christopher); nephews Ryan Rosendin (Heather), Brandt Chacon (Tara), Andrew Chacon, Matthew Rosendin, Christopher Kolb, Gregg Gallegos (Natalie), Tom Gallegos and Nick Rosendin. She was a proud great-aunt to 9 beautiful children, and cherished by Courtney Christensen, Whitney Heu-Weller and Dan Gallegos.

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**TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK**

# Top Tech Trends of 2024

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:



**Top Tech Trends of 2024**

In 2023, we saw a lot of innovative, tech ideas emerging this year. From Generative AI to Metaverse, groundbreaking innovations in foundational models, there has been no shortage of impressive AI ideas to drool over. Let’s analyze the new trends and solutions that may have the significant impact on technology success.

**1. Sustainable Technology**

With the rise of AI Everywhere, CIO organizations want to tie in their performance metrics with the sustainability of IT organizations. In 2024, we will witness continued growth in sustainable technology. Electric vehicles, public transportation, green energy solutions, and the circular economy will all gain momentum. Designing products with durability, recyclability, and reusability in mind will become the norm.

**2. Intelligent Applications**

Continuously adjusting to changing internal and external customer demands, the intelligent applications will be augmented with Artificial Intelligence and infused with data from transactions and external

sources. The applications will learn from their interactions, improving autonomous responses over time and potentially transforming the experience of customers, users, product owners, architects, and developers - and extend beyond Generative AI.

**3. Democratized Generative AI**

Talking about generative AI, it reinvented the work being done in improving existing processes in 2023. Opening access to information, skills across roles and business functions including non-technical ones, Generative AI has the potential to boost productivity, reduce costs and offer new growth opportunities. Because it doesn’t require hard technical skills of its users and is widely available, Generative AI will level the playing field in terms of access to information and skills across a broad set of roles and business functions, making it one of the most disruptive trends of this decade.

**4. Connected Workforce**

There is a need to scale talent driven by a work environment where employees are seamlessly connected through technology and supported by AI. The concept revolves around digital tools such as collaboration platforms, IoT, to enhance communication, collaboration, and productivity among employees.

**5. AI Trust**

The easy access to AI highlights the growing need for AI Trust, Risk and Security Management. Without proper controls, AI models can lead to negative outcomes that outweigh their benefits. AI Trust would encompass the tools for model management, data protection, AI security, monitoring model performance, and managing risks when using AI in various applications.

Let’s continue this list in the next issue....

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

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

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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

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

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.

## 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 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."

## 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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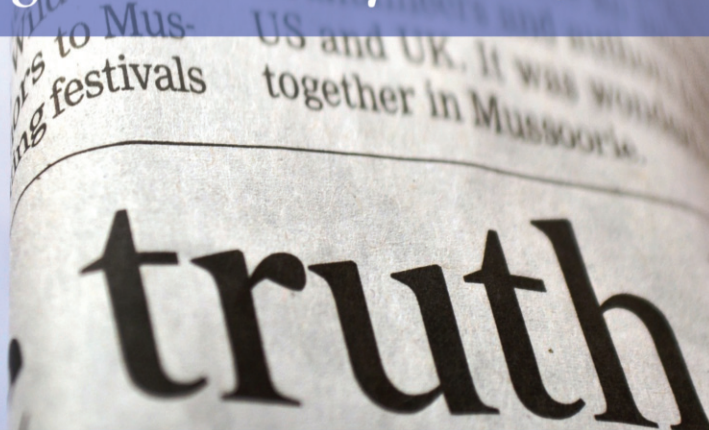
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