

Four very important ways you can prepare for earthquakes in 2024
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3 California walks voted among top 150 nature walks to start 2024 in survey of 3,000 families **SEE PAGE 9**



FEBRUARY 2024 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 2

Willow Glen Times

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San Jose resident **Katie Wyatt's** house was issued a \$250 blight citation for her exercise bike and dresser on her porch.
Photo courtesy of Leslie Griffy

San Jose makes a 'mistake' with overzealous citations, mayor says

By **Annalise Freimarck**
San José Spotlight

San Jose resident Katie Wyatt's house was full. With six people home for Christmas, including her mom and a cousin from Jamaica, she decided to store her exercise bike on her porch, with a dresser off to the side for shoes taken off before entering the house.

She never expected a \$250 fine from the city for leaving her belongings on her own porch — a fee she couldn't afford.

After paying for her father's end-of-life care and funeral, money was tight. Her mom was recently diagnosed with breast cancer, and Wyatt wanted to send money for warm meals while she was going through treatment.

"I was like, 'Oh my gosh, I have to tell my mom I can't buy her meals because of the exercise bike on my porch,'" Wyatt, who has lived in San Jose's Northside neighborhood since 2012, told *San José Spotlight*.

The citation is part of a six-month pilot program San Jose's code enforcement department implemented in November called the Focus Area Service Team program (FAST).

The program aims to address blight in six neighborhoods that have historically received the most complaints for exterior code violations, including the Northside and the East Santa Clara Street — Alum Rock Avenue corridor; the downtown area and Monterey Road corridor; and the Cassel, Mt. Pleasant, Pinehurst and La Colina areas.

See CITATIONS, page 3

San José Chamber Orchestra presents FANTASIA, February 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, Bar-



Conductor and violinist, **Alyssa Wang**. *Photo by Robert Torres*

bara 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 Tickets also available at the door Feb. 11, 2024.



Flautist, **James Blanchard**.
Photo by Curtis Brown

'One Love' & 'Madame Web' will bring moviegoers together over Valentine's-Presidents Day predicted

By **Sean Eastwood**
Times staff writer

Paramount's musical biopic **Bob Marley: One Love** and Sony/Marvel's **Madame Web** are expected to bring people together over the Valentine's – Presidents Day holiday frame.

Bob Marley: One Love is expected to lead over the six-day February 14-19 holiday frame - Wednesday, Valentine's Day thr-

ough Monday, President's Day - with \$27 million-\$33 million; the movie is expected to be strong among moviegoers, both young and older audiences.

Reinaldo Marcus Green directs Kingsley Ben-Adir as the legendary reggae songsmith, whose life was unfortunately cut short at 36 due to cancer.

Meanwhile the Dakota Johnson- and Sydney Sweeney-star-



ring Spider-Man spinoff **Madame Web** is eyeing \$25M over six days, with the movie tracking with those under 35. The movie is expected to be solid with diverse audiences.

The S.J. Clarkson-directed movie sees Johnson playing Cassandra Webb, a paramedic in Manhattan who develops the power to see the future.

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

Times **Local News**

Citations

Continued from page 1

Inspectors hit the Northside and East Santa Clara Street-Alum Rock Avenue neighborhoods in mid-December with more than 130 citations issued this month — with 47% for graffiti and 21% for furniture left outside.

Residents can receive fines ranging from \$250 to \$1,000 for common blight issues such as junk and furniture in front yards visible from the street, graffiti, inoperable vehicles and overgrown vegetation. Residents can be fined if furniture isn't removed after 72 hours. Money collected through the fines funnel into the city's general fund.

The Cassel and Mt. Pleasant areas will be inspected the week of Feb. 19. The Pinehurst and La Colina areas will be inspected the week of April 1.

Rachel Roberts, deputy director of code enforcement, said the program's goal isn't to cite residents needlessly. She said residents are notified before the inspection through the mail.

"We're leading with outreach and education with our residents," Roberts told *San José Spotlight*. "(We're) hoping that through outreach and education, we can empower them to address any blight on their property proactively."

Wyatt, who owns Spicy Roy's Caribbean Grill with her husband, said she never received a notification letter warning her of the upcoming inspection. After receiving the fine, she posted about it on Facebook and Nextdoor, a neighborhood online platform, and received support from her neighbors, with one leaving an envelope full of cash at her house.

San Jose officials, including Mayor Matt Mahan, have prioritized cleaning up blight in the city with programs such as FAST and BeautifySJ. Mahan visited Wyatt's home on Jan. 15 and paid her fee.

"The city made a mistake rolling out the FAST program," Mahan told *San José Spotlight*. "But I believe staff has realized the need to redirect the focus to San

Jose's most egregious instances of blight, starting with negligent landlords and commercial property owners who aren't doing right by the community."

Wyatt said while she is grateful the mayor paid her fee, she wants her neighbors' fees to be paid for or removed.

Cheryl Wessling, spokesperson for planning, building and code enforcement, said the department is considering feedback from residents as the program moves forward.

"We encourage residents to reach out so we can work with them on their concerns," she told *San José Spotlight*.

The city also issued a \$250 citation to Kimberly Rivera Hurtado for a couch and a high chair in her front yard. Rivera Hurtado has been renting an apartment with her mom for roughly 30 years.

She bought a new couch and moved the old one out to be picked up the next morning. Rivera Hurtado said she was notified before the inspection, but thought it was later in January.

She pulled from her savings to help her 82-year-old mom, who is on a fixed income, pay the fee.

"I think they're just trying to find reasons to get money," she told *San José Spotlight*.

Residents can appeal the fine but have to pay it first or apply for an advance deposit hardship waiver, if they can't afford the fee. Rivera Hurtado and Wyatt said they don't have time because they work full time.

While Roberts encourages residents to call code enforcement with their concerns, Rivera Hurtado said the office is closed by the time she gets home from work.

Wyatt said while blight is an issue in San Jose, she wants to see code enforcement dedicate its time to abandoned buildings and businesses rather than homes.

"Shift the focus to protect our historic homes, to protect the historic buildings and to try and recruit businesses to get into all these abandoned buildings after the pandemic downtown," she said. "A busy city is a safe city."

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Times In Memory

Anita Mae Goble

December 22, 2023
92 years old; Willow Glen
resident for 45 years

Anita Goble went home to be with her husband Ernest Goble, her son Stephen Bowen, her mother Effie Turpin, and her father Norman Turpin on December 22, 2023.

She is survived by her daughter, Cheryl Bowen, her sister, Loretta Sands, her grandchildren Brian Hansen, Lindsey Hansen, Kerstin Asquith, Robert Bowen and her great grandchildren, Kyle Hansen, Lance Hansen, Eva Asquith, and Zoey Asquith. She fought a long hard battle with a rare form of leukemia for one year and lived life with exuberance and a love for family to the very end of her earthly existence.

Anita was born in 1931 on her grandfather's farm in Pineridge, Arkansas. She was proud of her Cherokee roots and spoke Cherokee before she spoke English. She spent her young years living in Sasakwa, Arkansas with a Cherokee family during the Dust Bowl. The native children called her "Tuska" which means "little sis-



ter" because they loved her white hair and dark eyes. During the depression years, her family moved to an oil lease in Konawa, Oklahoma. At night for entertainment, she would listen to radio programs like "The Shadow" and "The Lone Ranger" and go to the movies for the nickel matinees. Her elementary years were spent in Holdenville, Oklahoma where her father worked for oil companies.

Anita was an avid reader as a child and won the "Good Reader" contest in 1937.

In 1945, her family moved to Salinas, California where her dad worked in the lettuce fields. She lived down the street from John Steinbeck. She graduated from Salinas High School and went on to complete her A.A. degree at Hartnell College in 1950. In 1951 she married Haskell "Hack" Bowen and had two children. Her love for children motivated her to go back to school to receive her

B.A. in Teaching and a California Teaching Credential in 1960 from San Jose State University. She taught for 16 years in the Cambrian, Union, and Oak Grove School Districts.

In the early 1970s, Anita traveled with the Venture for Victory Basketball Team around the world and served as the team mentor and counselor. In 1971, she and Hack created a university travel abroad course called the "Seekers" that took college students around the world to study global leadership.

In 1978, Anita married Ernest Goble and lived in Willow Glen for 45 years. She was an active member of the Valle Monte League, a non-profit women's organization dedicated to raising funds for improving mental health in the community. She also organized and led the Women's Ministries groups at Church on the Hill where she was an active member for 69 years. She spent her years in the church mentoring hundreds of high school and college youth. Anita loved teaching, learning, and giving back to her community. In 2014, she founded the Anita Goble Education Endowed Scholarship Fund at Santa Clara University.

Anita lived life to the fullest for 92 years. She will be missed by her family and many friends.

Anita and her family sincerely thank all the team members of the Multidisciplinary Cutaneous and T-Cell Lymphoma Clinic at Stanford Cancer Institute for their

dedication and care. We wish to thank in particular, Dr. Michael Khodadoust, and Samantha Kramer, PA-C who expressed great compassion and hopeful determination throughout her one-year struggle. In lieu of flowers or gifts, the family asks that you help fight this cancer by donating in her name to the Stanford University Cutaneous and T-Cell Lymphoma Clinic at: <https://med.stanford.edu/cutaneouslymphoma/community/make-a-gift>



Carole Virginia Reek
06/28/1942 - 10/30/2023
Hicklebee's Bookstore
staff member

San Jose Carole Virginia Reek, who valiantly fought cancer for two years, peacefully passed away on October 30, 2023, surrounded by her children and sister, Cheryl Wadley. She was born on June 28, 1942, in San Jose, to her parents, Barbara Stetson and Ralph Robideaux.

Following her graduation from San Jose High School, Carole embarked on a journey of love and commitment by marrying her beloved husband, Robert Reek. They were married until his death in 2014. She dedicated herself to raising her family and spent many years working at Hicklebee's Bookstore in Willow Glen.

Carole was known for her insatiable love of literature, her zest for travel, and her remarkable skills as a master gardener and mentor. Her family held a special place in her heart, and she took great pride in her children, Jill O'Connor (Jim), Adam Reek (Sandy), and Seth Reek (Veronica), as well as her cherished grandchildren, Olivia, Ethan, Sophia, Jillian, Ava, and Dario.

In addition to her family, Carole leaves behind her close friends from Mountain Meadow and her "Ladies Group," who provided invaluable support during her courageous battle.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to be made to UC Master Gardeners of Santa Clara County in Carole's memory.

Carole's legacy of love, resilience, and her green thumb will be remembered and cherished by all who had the privilege of knowing her.

Willow GlenTimes

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Times **Local News**

WATER-WISE®

Hues of Blue

By **Matthew Frazier**

Qualified Water Efficient Landscaper
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Hues of Blue; Willow Glen is alive with hues of blue! From the rains to the waterways to the creeks. Past column entries speak of The Wednesday Willow and The Willows of Willow Glen. This piece speaks to the hues of blue surrounding the atmosphere and the environment of Willow Glen.

From September 1993 to June 1997, I was a student at Willow Glen High School. Those heritage willows have been removed since. They stood strong for many years, offering shade and shelter on hot days, for those of us so inclined to sit beneath their canopies.

Pre-Calculus (September 1996 to June 1997) were days and nights of academic turbulence as I forged ahead with full fervor and vigor, to learn the material and excel in this curriculum. Sunlight became moonlight as it filtered through the canopy of those trees. Spilling onto the pages of my notebook as it forged through.

Hues of Blue found their way through the canopies of these heritage willows and onto the pages of my Math notebooks during those winter evenings of 1993-1997. With ambitions of becoming an Algebraist, the atmosphere was most conducive to such. Those were days and evenings forged in Time.

August to December 2023 at San Jose City College. Pre-Calculus with Algebra. Not the same as those evenings beneath The Willows of The Glen. Those



Water Wise
Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water
Manager

were monuments to Knowledge and Wisdom, for all Time.

The Feral Cats of Evergreen Valley are essentially non-existent here in Willow Glen. The Gulls of The Glen beckon as The Moon wanes. Their anguished cries are melodic and melancholy at once.

Thursday, January 18, 2024. Much time has passed since those evenings. Math is still a passion and a vision. Now begins the next chapter in the pursuit of Higher Education in the subject, with an AS degree in Math from San Jose City College. Images of those willows are forever etched in the annals of my memory as I put pen to paper and take

notes.

On May 31st, 2025, I will have my AS in Math and host evening Calculus discussions at Hogue Park in West San Jose CA. We can discuss that which lies beyond our immediate skies. Telescopes sometimes appear here. Willows reside throughout city parks in San Jose. They are beautiful and yet they are very different to those in Willow Glen and at the school.

What lies in the wake for us now, as STEM professionals and students? Conversations about Quantum Teleportation as we peer through powerful telescopes in The Night Sky and dream of possibilities beyond our imaginations? Calculus leads the way.

Post-Calculus courses beckon. But not like the ebbing and waning canopies of those willows. Those are images and memories forged in Time. The removal of those heritage willows was saddening. Yet new willows will eventually emerge.

Come now, each and all, to Willow Glen. Come to see the heritage willows that remain. The city parks of San Jose will give you scenery.

The willows of The Glen will give you shelter and solace.

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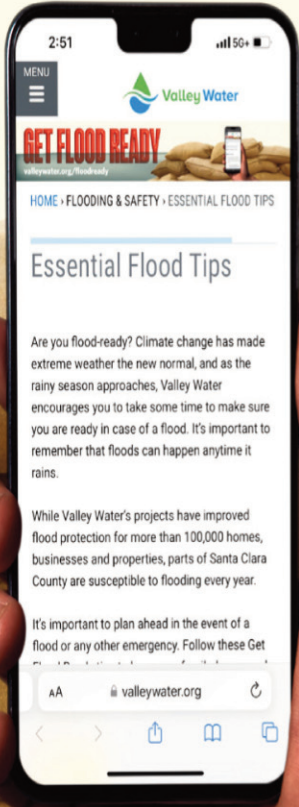
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Times **Local News**



The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors provided a one-time matching grant to Camp Via West to fund camp facility renovations, including critical accessibility modifications for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

County helps make camp more inclusive

By Sean Eastwood
Times Staff writer

Youth and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities across Santa Clara County are enjoying a more inclusive camp experience due to support from Santa Clara County.

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors provided a one-time matching grant to Camp Via West to fund camp facility renovations, including critical accessibility modifications for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. County Supervisor Joe Simitian proposed the grant.

The County's support enabled Camp Via West to address necessary infrastructure needs. The camp used County funding for the development of a newly renovated sports field, which also includes ADA-compliant bathrooms, storage for sports equipment, and a concession stand to provide food and water for campers and spectators at the sports field.

"This should help alleviate some longstanding accessibility and mobility challenges for youth and adults who want to engage in camp activities," said Simitian. "I'm delighted we're making the Camp, and our community, more accessible for all."

One of the few remaining camps serving individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities in the region, Camp Via West provides programming and a wide variety of respite and inclusion camps for children and adults in Santa Clara County on a 13.5-acre campus located on County-

owned land in the Cupertino foothills. The Camp's innovative programs are supervised by trained staff who help campers learn new skills, develop meaningful relationships, and build confidence, all while enjoying the outdoors.

"This is an extraordinary opportunity for the County to support an inclusive social and recreational space that addresses the immediate needs of the community," said Bryan Neider, Chief Executive Officer of Via Services Inc. "The support from the County helped us address the accessibility issues and enhance the sports field to allow for more campers to enjoy athletic and outdoor activities."

Operated by Via Services Inc., an independent nonprofit that has been serving the disability community in the Bay Area since 1945, Camp Via West operates youth, teen, and adult outdoor day and overnight summer camp programs. The camps typically offer program sessions from June to August, specifically designed for young people ages 5 to 17 and specific sessions geared to young adults and adults, including seniors, with a wide array of activities including swimming, arts and crafts, sports and games, and gardening.

Sessions are usually one week long and the camp typically serves approximately 80 campers per session, totaling nearly 800 campers each summer. The camp alternates weeks for children with developmental disabilities and adults with developmental disabilities.

Four very important ways you can prepare for earthquakes in 2024

By Glenn Pomeroy
Special to the Times

No one knows exactly what 2024 will bring, but we all know that the Bay Area is earthquake country and that the next quake could strike at any time.

Did you know that California has more than 500 active faults and that most Californians live within 30 miles of an active fault?

The greater San Francisco Bay Area is sitting on top of three major faults and scientists say there is a 98% chance of a magnitude 6.0 or greater quake hitting the Bay Area in the future. Many of us remember the magnitude 6.9 Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 that killed 63 people, injured thousands, and caused about \$6 billion in damage, including destroying parts of I-880 in Oakland and rendering the Bay Bridge unusable for about a month.

So, as we step into the New Year, one of the most important resolutions you can make is to help protect your family, your loved ones, and yourself from preventable earthquake damage.

Here are four things you can do to prepare this year.

Get Organized with an Emergency Safety Kit:

Create an easy-to-reach emergency kit with essentials for each family member – and your pets! The American Red Cross recommends a three-day supply of food and water, along with items such as medications, a cell phone charger, flashlights, a first aid kit, and a whistle for signaling help. These emergency supplies can make a big difference after an earthquake or other emergency.

Strengthen Your House:

Take some time to learn about your home and understand its unique structural risks. Many older homes in the Bay Area – especially those built before 1980 – are at risk of earthquake damage because of outdated building



codes.

And did you know that many homeowners in the Bay Area may be eligible for the Earthquake Brace + Bolt (EBB) grant program? EBB offers up to \$3,000 to qualifying homeowners to help them strengthen their homes with a seismic retrofit. The program has helped more than 23,000 California homeowners strengthen their homes and help protect their families from earthquake damage. Registration for EBB opens January 10th – visit EarthquakeBraceAndBolt.com to learn more.

Different house styles may need different safety measures. Raised foundation homes, living space over garage homes, post and pier homes, hillside homes, and mo-bile/manufactured homes are all common types of houses throughout the Bay Area, and each has unique vulnerabilities. Visit StrengthenYourHouse.com to learn more about your home type and the specific retrofit you might need.

Create an Emergency Plan:

Communication is key during emergencies, especially because some family members may not be at home during an earthquake. Text messages may work better than phone calls during and after seismic events, so make sure everyone has emergency contact information saved on their phone, memorized, or written down. Practice your preparedness plan and keep copies in easy-to-reach locations. And make sure all family members know where the emergency supplies are kept.

Secure Your Home:

Look around your home and identify anything that could be a risk if the ground starts to shake. During an earthquake, heavy furniture can topple over if it's not anchored and secured to studs. Move large, heavy items away from doors. Install flexible connections for gas lines and appliances to reduce fire risk. Brace overhead fixtures that could come crashing down and move beds away from windows. A lot of earthquake injuries are caused by household items and furniture falling and hitting people – taking simple precautions can reduce the risk of injury and help protect your family.

It is not a matter of if, but when the next big quake will strike the Bay Area. Make earthquake preparedness a priority this New Year. Organize supplies, create an emergency plan, secure your living space, and understand your home's structural risks. Prepare for the next earthquake now, and rest easier knowing you've taken concrete steps to protect your home and family for many New Years to come.

Editor's note: Glenn Pomeroy is CEO of California Earthquake Authority (CEA). Since 2008, Glenn Pomeroy has led the not-for-profit CEA — the largest earthquake insurance provider in the United States and one of the largest in the world.

"Our daughter, Zoe (age 19), has been going to Camp Via West and participating in their weekend recreation days since she was 10," said Los Altos resident Shannon Fallick. "This organization has benefitted Zoe and our family in a myriad of ways. Zoe has grown so much from her experience at Camp Via West, and we, as her family, have gotten some much-needed respite time. I can say with confidence that there is not another

recreational organization in our area that provides this level of service and care to the special needs community."

That sentiment was echoed by San Jose resident Cheryl Snyder. "My son, Adam, has attended Camp Via West for almost 30 years, starting at age 10," said Snyder. "The opportunity to be away from home in a safe and inclusive environment is one of the many gifts of being a camper.

Camp offers Adam and his peers an opportunity to have an away from home, typical camp experience. For Adam, these activities are an opportunity to be independent, to be 'one of the guys', and to be included. This feeling of belonging is really the greatest gift Camp Via West offers."

To learn more about Camp Via West and its events, visit: <https://viaservices.org>.

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San Martin Horsemen's Association has been here to enlighten its members and the community about horse and rider safety, environmental issues, veterinary tips. It has also been there to support County and State Park & Recreation trail maintenance and actively support the 4-H and most equine activities in the area.

On the third Wednesday of every month, the Association has its General Meeting at a local restaurant at 7:00 PM. There is always a program of interest to the horse minded. They also have monthly pleasure rides at different locations like Dinosaur Point, Mt. Madonna, Henry Coe State Park and Salinas River Beach. There are ice cream social pleasure rides, and the Halloween Poker ride where horse and rider can come in costume and win prizes for their imagination and ingenuity. There are camping trips at Point Reyes and Jack Brooks.

The Association has sponsored CSHA sanctioned horse shows, CSHA sanctioned Trail Trials, Gymkhanas, a parade unit, a quadrille unit as well as team penning, roping and cutting clinics. These are great schooling opportunities for kids and adults alike. There is really something for everyone and their horse.

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truth

3 California walks voted among top 150 nature walks to start 2024 in survey of 3,000 families

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

Nature walks stand out as a refreshing way to start the year with nature's tranquility and beauty.

People everywhere are coming together to enjoy the outdoors, creating memories that last a lifetime.

Among these cherished traditions, nature walks stand out as a refreshing way to start the year with nature's tranquility and beauty.

Sustainable Jungle recently commissioned a survey aimed at discovering the best nature walks. They surveyed 3,000 families asking them to rate which nature walks across the U.S. they would most like to experience at the start of 2024.

Here are the top 10 most popular nature walks:

#1 Lanikai Pillbox Hike in Oahu, Hawaii.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the islands' beauty, Lanikai Pillbox Hike on Oahu emerged as the most sought-after nature walk to experience the start of the new year. It is a 1.6-mile hike offering panoramic views of Lanikai and Kailua. It can be a challenging hike with some rocky parts, ideal for families who hike often.

Lanikai Pillbox Hike on Oahu emerged as the most sought-after nature walk to experience the start of the new year. It is a 1.6-mile hike offering panoramic views of Lanikai and Kailua.

#2 Lookout Mountain Trails in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

In second place came Lookout Mountain Trails in Chattanooga. Offering a range of trails with varying difficulty, the area around Lookout Mountain is perfect for families. The Guild-Hardy Trail is a popular option, providing a relatively easy and scenic walk through the forest with views of Chattanooga.

#3 Waimea Valley Botanical Gardens Trail in Oahu, Hawaii.

The third most popular walk in the country is also in Hawaii. This 1.9-mile trail is more of a walk than a hike, passing through beautiful botanical gardens and ending at Waimea Falls.

#4 Tomoka State Park, Florida.

In fourth position is Tomoka State Park. It offers scenic trails where families can enjoy a leisurely walk amidst natural beauty. The Tomoka Trail is a half-mile trail that takes you along the Tomoka Point peninsula, and it's known for its beautiful

shady maritime oak trees.

#5 Carlsbad Caverns National Park, New Mexico.

This walk offers a unique experience of exploring cool cave formations. The Big Room trail is around 1.25+ miles and has an option to take an elevator back up, which can be great for kids.

#6 Amicalola Falls State Park Trails, Georgia.

Located in the North Georgia mountains, this park is home to the tallest waterfall in Georgia, Amicalola Falls. The park offers various hiking trails, including the East Ridge Trail, which is a moderate 2.1-mile loop that provides stunning views of the waterfall and surrounding forests. There's also a short, paved path to an overlook for those looking for an easier option.

#7 Discovery Park Loop Trail in Seattle, Washington.

This 2.8-mile loop trail in Seattle's largest park offers a mix of forest and beach with views of Puget Sound and the Olympic Mountains. It's an easy, well-maintained trail that's perfect for families looking for a nature escape within the city.

#8 San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, Texas.

This park offers a unique blend of natural beauty and historical significance. The Mission Reach Trail connects several historic missions and provides an easy, flat path suitable for all ages. It's a great way to enjoy nature while also learning about Texas history.

#9 Great Falls Park Trails near McLean, Virginia.

Just outside of Washington, D.C., this park offers several easy trails that provide spectacular views of the falls where the Potomac River builds up speed and force as it falls over a series of steep, jagged rocks and flows through the narrow Mather Gorge. The River Trail, in particular, is a favorite for families.

#10 Radnor Lake State Park Trails in Nashville, Tennessee.

Rounding up the top 10 is Radnor Lake State Park. This state park features several easy trails that loop around Radnor Lake, providing a tranquil nature experience right in the city. The Lake Trail, in particular, is a flat, 1.3-mile path that's perfect for a leisurely family walk.

The state of California had 3 nature walks voted among the 150 most popular in the country. These are as follows:

#14 Los Angeles River Trail

This trail offers a range of distances from less than a mile to moderate lengths (4-8 miles). It follows the river's curves and flows, providing flat areas perfect for family hikes or bike rides. Starting from Griffith Park allows easy access to several trails.

#30 Ferndell Nature Trail and Griffith Observatory Walk

Griffith Park in Los Angeles is a fantastic place to start the year with a refreshing walk. It offers a variety of trails suitable for all fitness levels, from easy strolls to more challenging hikes.

#125 Wilder Ranch State Park

This park is ideal for family picnics and offers moderate-length hiking or mountain biking trails near Santa Cruz, CA. It has restrooms, drinking water, and stunning ocean views, although it can be windy.



"These top 150 nature walks provide a guide for anyone interested in enjoying the beauty of the outdoors while fostering a deeper appreciation for our natural world. By exploring these destinations, we hope to inspire a greater sense of

responsibility and stewardship for the environment as we embark on a new year of conservation, renewal and change," says Amber McDaniel from Sustainable Jungle website: www.sustainablejungle.com

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

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:

Personally Identifiable Information (PII)

Personally identifiable information (PII) is any data that could potentially identify a specific individual.

Any information that can be used to distinguish one person from another and can be used to deanonymize previously anonymous data is considered PII.

PII may be used alone or in tandem with other relevant data to identify an individual and may incorporate direct identifiers, such as passport information, that can identify a person uniquely or quasi-identifiers, such as race, that can be combined with other quasi-identifiers, like date of birth, to successfully recognize an individual.

Why does PII need to be



secured?

Protecting PII is essential for personal privacy, data privacy, data protection, information privacy and information security. With just a few bits of an individual's personal information, thieves can create false accounts in the person's name, incur debt, create a falsified passport, or sell a person's identity to a criminal.

As individuals' personal data is recorded, tracked, and used daily -- such as in biometric scans with fingerprints and facial recognition systems used to unlock devices -- it is increasingly essential to protect individuals' identity and any pieces of identifying information unique to them.

What is considered PII?

Any information that can uniquely identify people as individuals, separate from all others, is PII. It may include the following:

- name
- address
- email
- telephone number
- date of birth
- passport number
- fingerprint

- driver's license number
- credit or debit card number
- Social Security number

Sensitive vs. Non sensitive PII

PII can be labeled sensitive or non-sensitive. Non-sensitive PII is information that can be transmitted in an unencrypted form without resulting in harm to the individual. Non-sensitive PII can be easily gathered from public records, phone books, corporate directories, and websites. This might include information such as zip code, race, gender, date of birth and religion -- information that, by itself, could not be used to discern an individual's identity.

Sensitive PII is information that, when disclosed, could result in harm to the individual if a data breach occurs. This type of sensitive data often has legal, contractual, or ethical requirements for restricted disclosure.

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

Times **Local News**

Here's who's running for Santa Clara County supervisor

By **Jana Kadah**
San José Spotlight

In about two months, Santa Clara County residents will be asked to select a candidate in the primaries who can govern through a landmine of challenges over the next four years.

Three of five seats on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors are up for election this year. Districts 2 and 5 are open contests, with current officeholders terming out, while in Districts 3 the incumbent is running unopposed. The primary is set for March 5, 2024.

The top two vote-getters in each race will head to a runoff in November, unless one candidate wins by more than 50% in March.

Here's a roundup of Santa Clara County candidates running in the primary:

District 2

With Supervisor **Cindy Chavez** terming out, there are five candidates seeking to fill her seat and represent the district centered in San Jose, which includes swaths of downtown and East San Jose.

Alum Rock Union School District board member **Corina Herrera-Loera's** No. 1 priority is inequity—particularly in East San Jose. Through her roles as county deputy juvenile probation officer for 18 years and current Alum Rock trustee, she's been able to address ongoing inequality while also advocating for youth to be connected to their identities.

Jennifer Celaya, founder of nonprofit New Beginnings, is a fresh face in a race full of politicians and is running without the backing of special interests. She is a Native American woman with tattoos. Celaya is aware that's not what a typical elected official looks like, but is what people in her community look like, and she believes they deserve a voice. Her top priorities are expanding social services, mental health support and housing across the county.

Former San Jose Vice Mayor **Madison Nguyen** is a well-known politico looking to make a comeback. She began her career in public service as a Franklin-McKinley School District board member in 2002 and later became the first Vietnamese American San Jose councilmember in 2005 and vice mayor in 2011—serving on the council until 2014. Her goals are to increase affordable housing projects on county-owned land and tackle homelessness with more mental health, substance use and workforce development programs.

Betty Duong, Chavez's chief of staff, is also eyeing the seat after decades of work in the county. Duong worked in the county executive office for several years where she led the Vietnamese American Service Center project, the first of its kind in the nation. She was special counsel for the Vietnamese American Workers' Rights Project at Legal Aid at Work, and also the campaign manager for Measure A, an affordable housing bond measure that was approved by voters in 2016.

Nelson McElmurry is a practicing attorney and father of four who wants to advocate for county residents. The San Jose native's priorities include homelessness and affordable housing, mental health and crisis support, public safety and restorative justice, access to affordable child care and creating a business-



Numerous candidates are running for seats on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in 2024. File photo.

friendly environment.

District 3

Incumbent Supervisor **Otto Lee** is running unopposed. He won his District 3 seat in 2020 on a platform of environmental activism, addressing homelessness and improving mental health care.

Lee's political career began in 1996 when he began serving on the Sunnyvale Planning Commission before being elected to the City Council in 2003 and serving a term as mayor.

Lee worked as an intellectual property attorney and served in the U.S. Navy for 28 years. He earned a bronze star for helping to lead the drawdown of U.S. troops in Iraq.

District 5

Supervisor **Joe Simitian** is terming out of his north Santa Clara County seat—which represents Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Saratoga, Stanford and portions of Sunnyvale and San Jose. Five candidates are competing to replace him.

Mountain View Councilmember **Margaret Abe-Koga** is looking to continue her work at the regional level. Abe-Koga said she's most concerned with climate change and the needs for more mental health services. As supervisor, her priorities would be working with local cities to address those issues, as well as public safety and the housing and homelessness crisis.

Sally Lieber is a "corporate free candidate," according to her campaign site. Lieber was elected to the California State Board of Equalization in 2022 and currently serves as its chair. She also previously served on the Mountain View City Council and in the California Assembly. She said she has the experience and knowledge to focus on each of the county's policy areas: medical and mental health care, social services, environmental protection, homelessness and the criminal justice system—to name a few.

Barry Chang is a former Cupertino mayor and councilmember looking to serve at the county level. His priorities are traffic congestion, environmental protection, affordable child care, mental health services and senior services, according to his campaign site.

Peter C. Fung is a doctor and director of the El Camino Healthcare District. His priorities are mental health services, financial accountability and affordability for all. He said his work in the medical field equips him to solve some of the county's most pressing issues.

Sandy Sans is a business owner and father living in Los Altos. He is the founder of real estate business Los Altos Holdings Inc. Sans holds a master's degree in material science engineering from UCLA and an undergraduate degree from University of California, Davis.

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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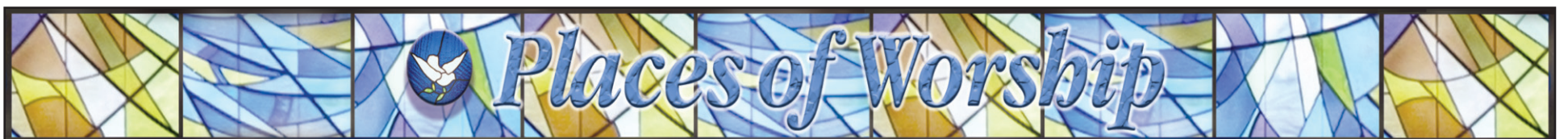
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The word Sikh (see-kh)

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 "enlighten-
er" completes the rela-
tionship of teaching
and learning. Sikhism
is monotheistic and
stresses the equality of
all men and women.
Sikhs believe in three
basic principles; medi-
tating on the name of
God (praying), earning
a living by honest
means and sharing the
fruits of one's labor
with others. Currently
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Residents cast ballots at the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters on Nov. 8, 2022. File photo.

Here's who's
running for San
Jose City Council
and mayor

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election season is
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