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# Willow Glen Times

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## Documentary: 'We Rise' is an inspiring story of strength, courage and the pursuit of justice

*Willow Glen High School students set out to claim the county championship that eluded them the previous year*

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Atta Squirrel Films, spearheaded by Bay Area filmmakers Michael Afendakis (resident of Willow Glen) and Jonathan Leveck, is set to present audiences with their latest documentary, "We Rise."

Situated in the frenetic heart of Silicon Valley, this touching film delves into the deceptively fascinating world of High School



Jessica prosecutes the case in "We Rise."

"Mock Trial" competition, whereby an unlikely group of Willow Glen High School students set out to claim the county championship that eluded them the previous year.

Bucking, with a kind of irreverence, the tropes one associates with films exploring high school competition, "We Rise" delves deep into the personal journeys of its main characters.

"I'll admit I was hesitant," says Director and Co-Producer Michael Afendakis, when asked whether the world needed another film about a high school competition.

"It's not an untapped subject, to be sure. But when I met these remarkable individuals: Sofia, Jessica, Sammi, Angela, Celia, and Lucas—I knew I had to make the film. These kids inspired me with their passion; moved me with their drive and deep empathy for the wellbeing of others—it was palpable," Afendakis said. "So, we decided we'd do the film, using one guiding principle: The competition could serve as a backdrop, but the film would be about the kids."

Co-producer, Jonathan Leveck adds, "It's their courage and resilience in the face of this alarmingly unstable world—what kids are dealing with these days. I think every generation is prone to discount the trials of the young. But I challenge anyone, of any age,



Angela and Celia after a win in scrimmage in "We Rise."

to hear these kids' stories and not be humbled by their strength, their positivity, and their grace."

Scheduled to hold its California premiere at the prestigious Poppy Jasper International Film Festival in Morgan Hill on April 11th at 4 p.m., "We Rise" has captured the heart of festival director Mattie Scariot, who hails the documentary as "...a poignant film that skillfully intertwines the student's legal endeavors with personal narratives, shedding light on the challenges, crises, and hard-fought victories that have shaped them into the remarkable and resilient young adults they are today." Scariot's praise underscores the film's potential to resonate deeply with its audience, leaving a lasting and inspiring impact.

The film's early recognition doesn't end

there. "We Rise" was recently awarded the Joe Cantwell Award for Documentary Excellence at the Alexandria Film Festival, and the esteemed Beverly Hills Film Festival, scheduled for the beginning of May, eagerly anticipates the screening of "We Rise." Festival Director Nino Simone's praise, "I just simply loved this film," is as telling as it is succinct.

"This film allowed me the opportunity to share my story and how that shaped my life," says Jessica Hellman, one of the notable stars of the film. "Michael and Jonathan took great care to ensure that what they portrayed was done truthfully and honestly—they were great to work with." Hellman's testimonial underscores the filmmakers' dedication to accurately portraying the experiences of the individuals featured in "We Rise." Afendakis

See WE RISE, page 9

## San Jose parents strengthen school safety

*Willow Glen High School's school site council updates safety plan after a series of incidents*

By Lorraine Gabbert  
San José Spotlight

One San Jose high school is stepping up its safety measures following threats to students last year. Parents, teachers and officials hope the improvements will be adopted by other schools in the district.

Willow Glen High School's school site council updated its



Maren Sederquist, school site council chair, said the updates have been effective, resulting in a 22.4% increase in attendance and 56% decrease in tardies since last year. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

safety plan after a series of incidents, including an arrest of a Willow Glen High School student who walked on campus armed with a loaded ghost gun and knife. Before that, a Hoover Middle School student was caught with a loaded firearm and an Abraham Lincoln High School student was arrested after threatening on social media to shoot classmates with an assault rifle.

The incidents rocked the San Jose Unified School District last spring and were the impetus for the safety plan, which the parents developed and launched.

The plan, now in place, is designed to address student accountability, attendance, review behavioral threat assessments and response protocols. School leaders say they're seeing results.

At a school community meeting last week, Maren Sederquist, school site council chair for Willow Glen High School, said the plan has resulted in a 22.4% increase in attendance and a 56% decrease in tardies since last year. In January last year, the high school had 44% of seniors on track to graduate, and it's already up to 77% as of January.

See SCHOOL SAFETY, page 3

SEE OUR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE - PAGE 11



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Times **Local News**



Willow Glen High School parents learned about changes to the school's safety plan at a community meeting on Feb. 12, 2024. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

## School Safety

Continued from page 1

"At Willow Glen High, our graduation rates for seniors are always between 92% and 97%," she said, "but getting them up to a higher percentage in January is gonna give more of them a better chance."

### How the plan works

Accountability and consistency are the foundations of the updated safety plan. All student searches and suspensions will be equitable. Students are supervised at all times, there are consequences for missed tutorials, gaps are removed from students' schedules, passes are required for leaving class and parents must be present to check their teens out.

"If we walk into a room and it smells like marijuana... every student is going to be searched," Sederquist said. "We're not trying to target certain students. People are being treated fairly."

For added security, all administrators roam the campus throughout the day and cameras are checked frequently. Speakers in classrooms are tested regularly.

Students are less fearful to use the restrooms, Sederquist said, now that they're supervised. Restrooms are cleaner and have less tagging and drug use, she added.

Sederquist said the Why Wait Project has been an invaluable resource in updating the school's safety plan. Last year, parent Trudi McCanna formed the Why Wait Project to provide school site councils — responsible for creating safety plans for individual campuses — with research-based, best-practice approaches to school safety.

Other school site council parents are following what the school's doing, but they need support from the district to ensure their plans can be implemented, McCanna told San José Spotlight.

At the Feb.12 meeting, she said the district puts overwhelming responsibility on schools dealing with safety issues and called for a safety program director at the district level.

San Jose Unified School District Board President Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo said she participated in Simonds Elementary School's site safety plan meeting. She said each school forwarded its safety plan and public comments to the district for evaluation and future planning.

"Although I cannot be at all the school site safety plan committee meetings, I trust that each school is also going through this process which takes into account each individual school's differences," she told San José Spotlight. "This also allows for flexibility of those schools who may want to be more engaged or have other challenging issues to address that are specific to their school site."

Sederquist said SJUSD updated its safety protocols and emergency response and created a seven-page summary for parents. She'd like the district to allow the school to pilot an anonymous reporting system created by the Sandy Hook Promise, where students can report a classmate at risk of harming themselves or others through an app, website or telephone hotline connected to a team of trained counselors.

She said an increase is needed in the availability of naloxone on campus to combat opioid overdoses, as well as trauma kits, battery-powered lights, classroom walkie-talkies and outside lighting.

Parent Holly Gallup said the meeting reassured her about safety on campus. McCanna was also impressed with how much the school site council has accomplished.

"I don't know of any other school in the district that... has looked at the safety plan with such thoroughness," McCanna said. "Willow Glen High School is absolutely leading the way in our district."

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## San Jose sets fines for catalytic converter thefts

By Jana Kadah

Reported thefts of catalytic converters are trending down in San Jose, and city officials are strengthening policies to ensure that thefts keep dropping.

The San Jose City Council unanimously approved a policy that makes it a misdemeanor to possess a catalytic converter that is not attached to a vehicle without proper documentation, punishable by up to six months in jail and \$1,000 per violation Feb. 6. Mayor Matt Mahan and Councilmember Arjun Batra were absent.

Proper documentation includes the bill of sale for the converter or photos of the car that housed the converter. Body shops must provide documentation that the owner of the converter relinquished it.

Catalytic converters control vehicle emissions of harmful gasses from going into the environment. Thefts of those converters have surged nationwide in recent years because the precious metals in the converters — including platinum, rhodium and palladium — make them lucrative to steal and sell, garnering between \$250 to \$800 apiece.

San Jose Police Department officials said in 2023 the number of stolen catalytic converters dropped to 836 compared to 1,843 the year before. But the financial burdens on victims remain significant. Depending on insurance coverage, replacing a catalytic converter can range from \$1,000 to \$3,000.

“The cost of replacing a catalytic converter is beyond reasonable for any working-class person,” Councilmember Peter Ortiz said. “To that end, the goal of our policy is to send a clear message to thieves: if you steal from the working class, we will come down on you with the full force of the law.”

Thieves stole more than 240,000 catalytic converters across the country in 2022 — a 288% increase from 2021, according to the latest data by the National Insurance Crime Bureau. California was overrepre-



The San Jose City Council approved a policy making it a misdemeanor to possess a catalytic converter that is not attached to a vehicle without proper documentation. Photo courtesy of San Jose Police Department.

sented, making up 37% of all catalytic converter thefts across the nation.

SJPD Lt. Brent McKim, who heads the financial crimes unit, said San Jose residents have spent approximately \$4 million to replace stolen catalytic converters over the past three years.

“That doesn’t even account for the lost wages, when a family is without their vehicle for days or weeks while their car is in the shop,” McKinnon said. “This indiscriminate crime extends across virtually every neighborhood, impacting residents’ livelihoods. In the worst cases, victims have been physically harmed or killed attempting to stop the crime.”

Prior to this policy, SJPD could only arrest or fine someone if they were caught in the act of stealing a catalytic converter.

SJPD also created a program that would etch an ID number on residents’ catalytic converters for free so if someone tried to sell it it could be identified if found. However, the program failed to take off — rendering it ineffective. In 2022 and 2023, only 435 residents used the etching services, according to police.

In November, officers stopped a stolen vehicle containing 14 stolen catalytic converters — none of which were etched with an ID number, McKim said.

The fine for each undocumented catalytic converter is \$1,000 for the first offense, \$2,000 for second offense and \$4,000 for third and subsequent offenses in a 12-month period.

“Though we hope by this point, the thief would’ve gotten the message,” McKim said.

## Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority embraces the future with a new fleet of hybrid buses

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (SCVTA) is excited to announce the arrival of the first two of 92 state-of-the-art hybrid buses equipped with the revolutionary Allison eGen Flex Hybrid System.

VTA anticipates a steady delivery rate of six buses per week starting this week. The complete fleet is expected to be operational in the coming month as VTA decommissions most of its remaining diesel buses. Each new Hybrid bus has a price tag of roughly \$822,800.

The Allison eGen Flex Hybrid System allows these buses to operate in an all-electric mode for up to 10 miles, significantly reducing emissions and noise in sensitive areas. This system not only enables the buses to operate accessories such as air conditioning and heating more efficiently but also improves fuel economy by up to 25% compared to conventional diesel buses.

**Key Features of the New Hybrid Buses:**

- Equipped with the Allison eGen Flex Hybrid System for low

emissions and fuel efficiency.

- Enhanced passenger experience with a 36-passenger seat layout, USB mobile charging ports, and innovative wireless Stop Request Buttons.
- Reduced maintenance costs and downtime through the elimination of inefficient belt-driven accessories and electric hybrid regenerative braking.

With these new hybrid buses, VTA is set to offer its passengers a quieter, cleaner, and more efficient public transportation option.

As VTA moves forward with this exciting transition, the authority invites the community to join in celebrating this milestone towards a cleaner, greener future. Stay tuned for updates on the rollout and the positive impacts these buses will have on public transportation in Santa Clara County.



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Times Local News

Mothers' Milk Bank announces critical need for donor milk

By Sean Eastwood  
Times staff writer

Nation's oldest milk bank, based here in San Jose, in inviting lactating mothers to join its network of milk donors to support premature and adopted infants.

The non-profit Mothers' Milk Bank (MMB) is aiming to expand its pool of contributors, following the heels of a new University of Iowa study on the health benefits of donated breast milk for extremely premature infants.

The importance of donated breast milk has garnered international media attention in recent months after tennis champion Serena

Williams shared her milk donation in a viral social media post.

In response to the significant demand for human donor milk and the urgent need to support our communities' most vulnerable members, Mothers' Milk Bank is leading a comprehensive initiative to recruit new milk donors. This initiative includes "Milk Meet-Ups," providing opportunities for individuals to begin the month-long process of qualifying as milk donors.

The Milk Donor Drive is aiming to enlist 5,000 new donors throughout 2024.

To learn about how to make a mother's milk donation, visit <https://mothersmilk.org>



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Times **Local News**

## Salary Sacrifice: Average Californian prepared to forgo \$13.7k of their salary not to have to commute in 2024

By Sean Eastwood  
*Times Media staff writer*

As the corporate world inches back to traditional workspaces, the welcome 3-year respite from daily commutes, courtesy of the pandemic, is under threat.

The once-undeniable perk of skipping the daily commute - a timesaver and stress reducer for many - is now at stake.

According to research, the average American devotes an astonishing 330 hours each year to commuting, time that could be spent on personal pursuits or with family. With this backdrop, Gunther Volvo Cars Coconut Creek launched a study to understand how much employees value their work-from-home (WFH) arrangement and their aversion to resuming the commute.

Surveying 3,000 employees currently working remotely but facing requests to return to the office, either full-time or in a hybrid model, the study posed a straightforward question:

'How much of your salary would you sacrifice to avoid commuting in 2024?'

Regional data paints an even more colorful picture of this trend. Californians, dealing with the double whammy of long commutes and enticing paychecks, are leading the charge. They're game to let go of a hearty \$13,759 per year to keep their home coffee brews and casual work attire. They are followed closely by residents of Washington and Utah, willing to let go of \$13,017 and \$12,843, respectively.

On the other end of the scale, Montanans appear quite happy to commute again - here they would be prepared to take a salary cut of just \$429 in order to continue working from home.

"The results of our survey highlight a shift in priorities. Employees have had a taste of what a commute-free life can be like, and they're placing a substantial value on that flexibility and time saved", says Joseph Gunther IV of Gunther Volvo Cars Coconut Creek. "As we navigate forward, it's important for companies to consider these preferences as part of their strategic planning."

Top 10 States Where Workers Would Sacrifice the Most Salary to Avoid the Commute:	
California:	\$13,759
Washington:	\$13,017
Utah:	\$12,843
New York:	\$12,693
Colorado:	\$12,631
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Rhode Island:	\$11,107

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Times **Local News**



**POPPY'S GALORE** - Máyyan 'Ooyákma - Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve must be docent-led and registration will be required beginning March 2, 2024 on weekends due to limited space.

## Máyyan 'Ooyákma - Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve to limit weekend visitor access

By Sean Eastwood  
Times staff writer

Beginning March 2, 2024, all Saturday and Sunday visits to the Máyyan 'Ooyákma - Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve (pronounced My-yahn Oiy-yahkmah) must be docent-led and registration will be required due to limited space. This change only applies to weekend visitors; all other access remains unchanged.

A Butterfly Pass is still required year-round to access the trails inside the Habitat Protection Area. Wednesday through Friday, visitors with a Butterfly Pass may access the Habitat Protection Zone without a docent. (The Preserve is closed Mondays and Tuesdays year-round for scientific research and management.)

Multiple docent-led hikes ranging in distance from a quarter mile to five miles will be offered throughout the day on Saturdays and Sundays. On these hikes, visitors will experience the unique habitat and learn about the rare and threatened species that thrive there, including the Bay checkerspot butterfly. Visitors will also learn how they can play a role in protecting the landscape and the wildlife that live at the Preserve.

Coyote Ridge Open Space Preserve connects over 1 million acres of important habitat in the Santa Cruz Mountains and the Diablo Range. The preserve is comprised of rare, sensitive serpentine grasslands, this unique landscape is a biodiversity hotspot for endangered plants and animals.



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## Times Community

# 10,000 DEGREES partners with the Shark's Foundation and Tech CU to support college success program

*\$25,000 grant to fund 'Money Matters: Budgeting for College' program designed for San Jose Students*

The Sharks Foundation and Tech CU award 10,000 Degrees with a \$25,000 education grant.

10,000 Degrees, an organization dedicated to empowering students to enter and graduate college in eight Bay Area counties and Utah, has received a \$25,000 grant from the Sharks Foundation and Tech CU to help support the organization's 'Money Matters: Budgeting For College' program for San Jose students.

'Money Matters' is an interactive financial aid literacy curriculum designed by 10,000 Degrees to help high school students from low-income backgrounds learn about college affordability to develop and achieve their postsecondary goals.

The Sharks Foundation and Tech CU \$25,000 Community Assist Grant will help fund the 10,000 Degrees 'Money Matters' program for the 2023 - 2024 academic year. Additional-



ly, the Sharks Foundation and Tech CU will engage 10,000 Degrees students by volunteering in upcoming 'Money Matters' workshops at 10,000 Degrees partner high schools in San Jose's East Side Union High School District (ESUHS).

"10,000 Degrees is incredibly grateful for the support we have received from the Sharks Foundation and Tech CU, and for their commitment to our students and programming," said Kim Mazzuca, 10,000 Degrees president and CEO. "At 10,000 Degrees, our goal is to help students enter and graduate college. However, transitioning from high school to college is not easy for many students, particularly for first-generation college students or students who have been historically underserved."

"The Sharks Foundation is committed to closing the educational equity gap for low-income students in the Bay Area, particularly in East San Jose, through our organizational objective to put Diversity, Inclusion and Belonging at the forefront of all we do," said Jenné Johnson, Sharks Foundation senior manager. "The 'Money Matters' program is an essential tool for high school students to adequately prepare for managing their money through and after college and set them up for success for a lifetime of responsible spending."

## Mayor says San Jose is safest Bay Area city — not everyone agrees

By Brandon Pho  
San José Spotlight

The mayor of San Jose recently made a sweeping declaration online about his city's safety record.

Mayor Matt Mahan's office calculated that San Jose boasted the lowest homicides per capita compared to Oakland and San Francisco in 2023. His office used state population data and reporting by NBC Bay Area, which attributed its crime statistics to the San

Jose Police Department. The mayor hailed San Jose police for solving 100% of homicide cases between 2021 and 2022.

But not everyone feels this makes San Jose the safest, nor is it a proper barometer for community safety. Community leaders say there are other areas affecting safety where San Jose falls behind, such as traffic fatalities and economic hardship.

Margaret Petros, executive director of the Silicon Valley nonprofit Mothers Against Murder, advocates for families of homicide victims — but said public safety is more complex than that.

"Every other day I read a press release from the San Jose Police Department about traffic fatalities," Petros told San José Spotlight.

"Hit and runs, DUIs — how many of these auto fatalities are victims of crimes?" Petros told San José Spotlight. "What types of services have been provided to their families? I bang my head on brick walls about this."

Jose Valle, who was formerly incarcerated and works with

community organizing group Silicon Valley De-Bug, said criminal activity often arises from economic hardship and questions how Mahan's safest city declaration reconciles with his push to expand the city's police force.

"Looks like we're doing good. So should we spend more on the police or should we invest more on trying to solve some of the social ills in our city?" Valle told San José Spotlight.

Despite the City's recent efforts, San Jose, a city with roughly 1 million residents, still has one of the smallest police departments of any major U.S. city. The short-staffed police department had 1,063 sworn officers as of August last year, according to the department, including 24 recruits in field training and 41 recruits in academy training.

Tom Saggau, a spokesperson for the San Jose Police Officers' Association, said low homicide rates don't eliminate the need for more officers. See *SAFEST CITY*, page 10

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truth



## IN MEMORY

# John Anthony LoFranco

**December 25, 1945 - February 11, 2024**

Resident of Willow Glen

John is survived by Jeannie, his loving wife of 53 years, his adored children Delanie LoFranco, Jae Marcus, husband Matt, John LoFranco, and wife Kristiana. He leaves behind four grandchildren who dearly loved their Pa; Nicholas, Samuel, Harrison, and Zoë.

He will forever be missed by lifelong friends, David and Joyce Busse, Ted and Cathy Klakoff, the late Richard Busse and his wife LuAnn Busse.

John was born at San Jose Hospital and was a proud native son. He was part of a huge extended Italian family and embraced his heritage.

He attended Willow Glen Elementary, Markham Middle School, Willow Glen High School and graduated from Buscher High School. John was a graduate of San Jose State University. He began his public service career in 1970 with the San Jose Public Library where he met Jeannie.



Then he went on to be a long-time member of the City of San Jose and City of Santa Clara Planning Departments and retired in 2004.

John began his next career as a Northern California Golf Association Tournament Official. He loved his time spent on golf courses all over the state of California as well as Mexico. He officiated USGA, PGA, and collegiate tournaments. His favorites were collegiate tournaments where he met many young players who are now on the professional tour. His commitment to the golf community garnered him the Tournament Official of the Year for 2007. John

had to give up this work he loved when his balance and sight began to fail.

John was a true bay area sports fan; he followed his favorite teams and players with intensity. He could quote stats on all players. A 49er season ticket holder since 1970, he never missed a Niner game either in person or on television. He was a self-proclaimed Niner Nut and wore their colors proudly.

In retirement John and Jeannie loved to travel and took a lifelong desired trip to Italy and Sicily. Their favorite travels were to Maui which brought them much joy and contentment in retirement.

There will be a celebration of life event at a later date.

The family asks that donations in John's name be made to the Maui Strong - Hawaii Community Foundation. [www.hawaiicomunityfoundation.org/maui-strong](http://www.hawaiicomunityfoundation.org/maui-strong)



Sofia and Sammi on defense in "We Rise."

## We Rise

*Continued from page 1*

added, "I wanted to make sure I did all that I could to earn the students' trust. I felt this immense responsibility to play it straight with what they shared with us. I wanted them to be proud of what we made together. I wanted them to walk away from the film saying—that was us, that was honest, that was true."

As "We Rise" continues to screen at festi-

vals across the country, audiences can anticipate a thought provoking and engaging experience—one that celebrates the indomitable spirit of youth and the unwavering pursuit of a more just world.

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Times **Local News**

## WATER-WISE COLUMN

# 'Fort Foxworthy'

**By Matthew Frazier**

Qualified Water Efficient  
Landscaper (QWEL), CalWEP

**M**y first shift was at Walgreens, store-12548, at the corner of Almaden Expressway and Foxworthy Avenue – in South San Jose CA in late January this year.

Foxworthy Walgreens is a very small store, in a very small shopping center with a high-volume sales site for Walgreens. We are a small crew, front store team, and pharmacy team. Besides being a neighborhood store, we are a campus and gallery for xerophytes.

### Native and non-native grasses

Upon arrival, one will find both native and non-native ornamental grasses and shrubs, including desert phormiums. Native rainfall and native storms irrigate these botanicals with fervor and fortitude. Being a former nursery consultant and nursery specialist, I

was drawn to this store essentially to the exclusion of others.

I call it "Fort Foxworthy." With the presence and stature of a small outpost set amidst the margins of San Jose and Willow Glen, it's a gallery and showpiece for drought-tolerant and low-water-use plants. Having worked in garden centers and nurseries for 15 years, there is much to be appreciated and celebrated at this locale.

The first 90-day term with Walgreens will be at this small store. With the possibility of relocating to Deerfield, Illinois upon graduation with my MS in Mass Communications and my EdD in Transformative Education Leadership, there is a pending possibility of working towards becoming a trainer-of-record for Walgreens while working closely with store leadership, district leadership, and beyond – culminating with corporate leadership.

Consultative Sales, Customer Service, Inventory Management, and Training are some of the features, advantages, and benefits of the company. With ambitions of Education Leadership within Walgreens, this is a 10-year plan. Back to the xerophytes.

The rains and the storms of Santa Clara County and its valleys are plentiful enough, though erratic and non-consecutive enough,



## Water Wise

**Matthew Frazier,  
Certified Water  
Manager**

to prompt the citizenry to embrace native plants and native trees. Preferably valley-natives, throughout this county and beyond. "Fort Dare" is essentially a mini campus and showroom for xerophytes. Though I sleep in my vehicle on my meal breaks, I find myself strolling the campus on my rest breaks, when time permits.

Those who work in irrigation are prone to visit now and then, buying items and medicine and then stopping to admire the plants and shrubs that adorn this property. The building is reminiscent of an outpost along the expressway, where passers-by and travelers can load and reload their baskets,

packs, and travel attire.

San Jose, with a population of roughly 950,000, is home to enthusiasts and professionals in Arboriculture, Botany, Horticulture, Irrigation, Viticulture, and Xerigation/Xeriscape. We welcome you, one and all, to visit our store and find that which you seek – with the aid of our friendly and helpful team, front store, and pharmacy.

You will find not only the items and the medicine you have come for; you will see xerophytes at their very finest.

*Foxworthy Walgreens, Store 12548; 1130  
Foxworthy Avenue, San Jose CA 95118; (408)  
723-9905.*

## Safest city

Continued from page 8

"Homicides ticking down has absolutely zero to do with whether or not there are enough officers to respond to calls appropriately. That's not a fair assessment on staffing," Saggau told San José Spotlight.

He said a better indication of safety in San Jose — and police department hiring needs — is 911 response time.

Saggau pointed to the department's current performance in responding to priority 2 calls, which deal with injury or property damage, as well as all missing children under the age of 12 and disabled people. The goal for priority 2 calls is to achieve a response time of 11 minutes or under. The department has averaged

more than 20 minutes on those calls, according to San Jose's annual report on city services.

He also said some homicides that happen within a home setting, such as a domestic disturbance, can't be prevented by an increased police force.

"You could have a cop on every street corner — that's not going to prevent that crime," Saggau told San José Spotlight.

"Our officers work day and night to protect our neighbors from all threats — whether it be theft, assault, domestic violence, drug possession or child abuse, and we can always do better," Mahan told San José Spotlight. "Hiring more police officers will give our department more bandwidth to solve crime, keep our residents safe and reduce response times when every second counts."



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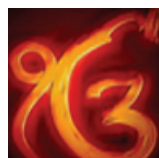
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