

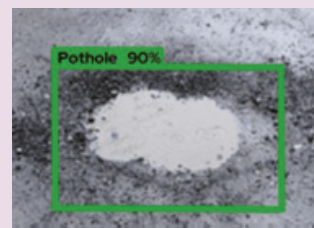
42nd FESTA 2024 showcases Italian American contributions at History Park Aug. 2-3 **SEE PAGE 4**



## San Francisco's low inflation

Report: Changes in inflation by cities across America ranked; highs and lows listed **See page 6**

San Jose uses Artificial Intelligence to streamline government **SEE PAGE 9**



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AUGUST 2 - AUGUST 15, 2024 ■ VOL. 37, NO. 16

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## San Jose first city in CA to implement new ordinance that allows sale of ADUs separate from main home

San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan, State Assemblymember Phil Ting and housing leaders celebrate AB 1033, urge other cities to follow San Jose's lead

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Mayor Matt Mahan and housing advocates highlighted a new path to affordable home ownership today as a local ordinance took effect this week.

San Jose became the first city in California to opt into AB 1033, which allows property owners to sell their accessory dwelling units (ADUs) separately from their main home.

"We all know that homeownership has become unattainable for far too many residents in San Jose and across our state," said San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan. "We need to keep the American Dream alive by bringing the innovation inherent to our region into our housing policy, and this new ordinance does just that. San Jose will continue to lead the way, but we can't solve this crisis alone - I am looking forward to seeing other Cali-



fornia cities follow suit."

"I thank the City of San Jose for seeing the impact that my legislation could have across their neighborhoods. ADU ownership could provide a path to buying their first home, or even allow our seniors to downsize their homes," said Assemblymember Phil Ting. "With this less expensive housing option available, increased home ownership can help build stronger communities."

San Jose has completed nearly 1,400 new ADUs in the past five years with thousands more in the pipeline. This number represents about 23% of San Jose's new housing stock over that time frame.

Now, homeowners in San Jose can sell their ADU, similar to how a condominium is sold. AB 1033 took effect this year, but cities have to take the extra step and opt into the state law.

"The ability to sell my ADU is yet another reason this addition to my backyard was one of the smartest things I've done. Not only has it increased the value of my property, it also generates more rental income than I expected," said Joyce Higashi, San Jose ADU owner.

The Casita Coalition, a statewide organization that works to remove barriers to more affordable, *See ADUs, page 5*



Parents and community leaders called for San Jose Unified School District trustees to replace Superintendent Nancy Albarrán at a recent board meeting. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

## San Jose parents want new leadership in largest school district

By Lorraine Gabbert  
San José Spotlight

Parents and community advocates are calling for new leadership in San Jose's largest public school district following a county report that highlights numerous issues — which the district disputes.

Community members spoke Thursday at a San Jose Unified School District (SJUSD) board of trustees meeting, citing a Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury report that said the district is adrift and plagued with leadership and safety issues. The June 10 report echoes a district survey done last year, and notes high turnover of administra-

tors, lack of mental health services and gaps in campus safety plans. Jurors also said they heard numerous examples of district leaders lacking sensitivity for the concerns of parents, teachers and other employees.

Crystal Calhoun, a member of the San Jose Unified Equity Coalition, said SJUSD creates a hostile environment for its employees.

"There's a lot of distrust," she told San José Spotlight. "That's why we have a high turnover rate of teachers and principals. With so many people asking... (Superintendent Nancy Albarrán) should step down."

Calhoun echoes the report's *See DISTRICT, page 7*



## Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority has openings for two volunteer committees

By William D. Bellou  
Publisher

The Santa Clara Valley Open Space Authority has openings for new members of the Authority's Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) and Expenditure Plan Oversight Committee (EPOC).

The open call for applicants follows the rat-

ification on June 13 by the Authority's elected Board of the agency's 2024-25 fiscal year work plan and annual budget.

Members of the CAC are volunteers who reside within the Authority's working area and are interested in nature, ensuring public access opportunities and environmental conservation. Interested candidates are invited to apply by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/3f6p6p87>

"Transparency and accountability are two core values of the Authority, and these two community volunteer committees advance both of those commitments," said Andrea Mackenzie, general manager of the Authority.

*See COMMITTEES, page 5*

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## 42nd FESTA 2024 showcases Italian American contributions at History Park Aug. 2-3

The planning committee is working on finalizing the 42nd annual Italian Family Festa at History Park San Jose, slated for August 2-3.

This is the annual Italian American Heritage Foundation (IAHF) signature event, showcasing the contributions of Italian American heritage and culture within the rich diversity of Santa Clara Valley.

What signals the uniqueness of this event is celebrating the Italian American roots in Santa Clara County, with guests attending from throughout the region.

### 2024 highlights

Some of the 2024 highlights on the Roma Stage: the traditional Saturday Night Street Dance with The Houserockers, a special performance by Opera San Jose, closing with Italica on Sunday night.

New this year will be the award winning 20 plus member, San Francisco Brass Band. Returning Festa favorites include: "Ragazzi" Childrens' zone, Wine Tasting Garden with the sounds of the Gold Money Band, Roman Encampment for a march back into time, and the mayoral competitive grape stomp where Mayor Matt Mahan will defend his title!

The Culinary and Cultural Stage will feature the legendary John D'Ambrosio's pizza toss, an Italian Costume Fashion Show, and other fascinating presentations. Special heritage displays will



be featured at the Villiaggio Culturale. Of course there will be culinary treats presented by the Tricarico Club, Sons of Sicily, and the IAHF. Arts & Crafts and specialty food vendors will also be there with Italian flair items, and a display of Italian Vespas.

The event is free, thanks to sponsors, grants and the generosity of the members of the IAHF.

If you would like to help with a special donation, any amount is welcomed, simply go to: <https://www.iahfsj.org/2024-festa> to donate.

Visit [www.italianfamilyfestasj.org](http://www.italianfamilyfestasj.org) for a more detailed list of the sights and sounds of the 42nd Italian Family Festa! In addition to donating, please consider being a part of this enriching experience by volunteering. If you would like volunteer email: [volunteers@italianfamilyfestasj.org](mailto:volunteers@italianfamilyfestasj.org) with any questions.

As the IAHF's Italian Family Festa approaches, we are excited to build upon the theme of "Ferragosto" for the annual Festa Raffle. The proceeds benefit the 42nd Italian Family Festa.

Ferragosto is probably the oldest festival in Italy, going back to Roman times and the Emperor Augustus. The month of August is the traditional month of vacations, get aways and outings

in Italy. So, the Festa Raffle Committee has assembled well over 12 amazing GET AWAY PRIZES, valued from \$200 to \$2000.

Here's a sample of the prizes:

- Three-day stay at a Penthouse Condo in Pacific Grove.
- One night at the Roman Spa in Calistoga.
- Family membership to Il Museo Italo Americano
- \$100 gift certificate to Greens Restaurant at Fort Mason
- \$100 + 4 passes to the Legion of Honor and de Young Museum
- \$200 Dinner Certificate at Cafe' Vitale in Los Altos
- \$200 Dinner Certificate at the Basque Cultural Center, South SF
- \$200 Dinner Certificate at A16 SF
- Italian Wines by Restaurateur Shelley Lindgren
- 2-night stay and breakfast at Sheraton-Anaheim
- 1-night stay at a Bay Area suite, including continental breakfast for 2 (two prizes).
- Time share points in a multitude of locations, including hotel packages for outings.



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Stop by the front desk at the Almaden Community Center and ask for an application. Currently Membership is free. Membership includes a copy of our newsletter and offers you discounts on classes through San Jose PRNS.

### Events and Trips:

**Cache Creek Casino: Tuesday Sept 17, 8am to 6:30pm.** Come on the bus with us to Cache Creek Casino for a day of gaming and food. Leave the community center at 8am and arrive back around 6:30pm. Cost: \$50 cash or check. You get \$20 in free play. Tickets on sale MWF 8am to 10am. Contact Rich, 408-219-8641 for more information.

**A September to Remember: Saturday Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, 12 to 3pm.** We will entertain you at the Almaden Community Center with music of the 50's, 60's, and 70's. Wear clothes from those eras if you wish. Join us for a lunch of traditional Italian food, drink and dessert. Bring a photo of yourself from back then that we can display. Ticket sales start Monday Aug 26, then MWF 8am to 10am. Members: \$22, Non-Members \$25 cash or check. Call Jeanne 408-425-5723 for more information.

**Clue (the play):** SJCPA, November 2, 2024, 2pm. \$90

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Times **Community**

**ADUs**

*Continued from page 1*

sustainable homes, was a huge advocate for this legislation. They created a model ordinance that San Jose utilized to draft the local legislation required to take advantage of this new law.

"As homebuyers across the state face an extreme shortage of starter home inventory, we applaud Mayor Mahan and the City of San Jose for creating new possibilities for homeownership," said Rafael Perez, Board President of the Casita Coalition. "ADU condos have proven successful elsewhere, providing much-needed inventory that is more affordable than traditional single-fam-

ily homes. Families in San Jose will now have more options for housing themselves and other generations on properties with an ADU. We hope other cities and counties will follow San Jose's lead!"

Assemblymember Ting has authored previous ADU legislation to make the local approval process faster and remove the parking requirements. As Assembly Budget Chair, he also championed funding for a grant program that helps homeowners pay for pre-development costs, such as design and site prep.

The City of San Jose will be hosting a workshop in the coming weeks to help homeowners understand how to use this new ordinance.

**Committees**

*Continued from page 1*

"The seven-member EPOC provides direct public oversight of the Authority's use of Measure Q and T funds. The 15-member CAC ensures that the many voices and perspectives of the diverse communities the Authority serves are heard by our elected Board members and staff leadership on a regular basis. Service on either committee is a special opportunity to have real, direct impact on your community. We encourage anyone who lives in our jurisdiction in Santa Clara County to consider donating their time in this rewarding capacity."

Both committees contribute in very tangible ways to equitable and accountable operations of the Santa

Clara Valley Open Space Authority.

The CAC participates in reviewing and recommending applications of the Authority's annual Urban Grant program that has distributed nearly \$15 million in grants and funded 950 community programs to support nature and connections to nature in urban areas over the agency's 30 years. In 2023 alone, the Authority awarded nearly \$2 million to 19 local organizations.

"The EPOC provides a vital benefit directly to our taxpayers, who overwhelmingly voted in 2020 to continue funding the Authority via Measure T, based on the promise that there would be citizen oversight of expenditures. This committee's oversight represents our promise to the voters," added Mackenzie.

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Times **Local News**



**Sydney Scott of Almaden Valley earns Tampa University Dean's List Honors**

Sydney Scott, of Almaden Valley, earned Dean's List honors at The University of Tampa

for the Spring 2024 semester. Scott, a senior, majored in Environmental Science BS, and studied B.S. Environmental Science; B.S. Marine Science - Biology.

Students must maintain a GPA of 3.75 or higher to be eligible for the Dean's List.

The University of Tampa is a private, comprehensive university located on 110 acres on the riverfront in downtown Tampa. Known for academic excellence, personal attention and real-world experience in its undergraduate and graduate programs, the University has about 200 programs of study and serves more than 11,000 students from 50 states and most of the world's countries.

**Changes in Inflation by City**

With the year-over-year inflation rate at 3% in June, the personal-finance



San Francisco (pictured) has a low inflation problem in 2024. Photo by Josh Hild via Unsplash

website WalletHub today released its updated report on the Changes in Inflation by City, as well as expert commentary.

To determine how inflation is impacting people in different cities, WalletHub compared 23 major MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) across two key metrics

involving the Consumer Price Index, which measures inflation.

WalletHub compared the Consumer Price Index for the latest month for which BLS data is available to two months prior and one year prior to get a snapshot of how inflation has changed in the short and long term.

| Biggest Inflation Problem | Smallest Inflation Problem |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Dallas, TX             | T-19. Los Angeles, CA      |
| 2. Honolulu, HI           | T-19. San Francisco, CA    |
| 3. New York, NY           | 21. Miami, FL              |
| 4. Detroit, MI            | 22. Tampa, FL              |
| T-5. Riverside, CA        | 23. Houston, TX            |
| T-5. Boston, MA           |                            |

To view the full report and your city's rank, visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/cities-inflation/107537>

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**District 10 councilmember still working for you**

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**District 10 Report**  
Arjun Batra  
Councilmember,  
District 10

You can reach us by emailing [district10@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district10@sanjoseca.gov), filling out the form through our website at <https://sjd10.com/contact-us>, or calling (408) 535-4910.

In addition, I am available monthly on Zoom and in person at my Talk With Batra events. This is an opportunity for you to speak with me 1-on-1 to ask your questions or share your concerns.

Our next meeting will be on Zoom on Thursday, August 8 at 6:00 PM. Register at <https://bit.ly/TWB080824>.

— Arjun Batra  
Councilmember, District 10



Times **Local News**

**Leadership**

*Continued from page 1*

demand for SJUSD to open fully staffed, full-time wellness centers at all its high schools.

“When you have one wellness center for 25,000 kids, you don’t care about their mental health,” she said.

Superintendent Albarrán said SJUSD welcomes fact-based, constructive feedback, but sees the grand jury report as a missed opportunity.

“Reliance on 80 interviews and 500 documents instead produced unrepresentative, misleading and inaccurate information about SJUSD operations and practices,” she told San José Spotlight. “SJUSD will use our required response as an opportunity to reflect on areas of potential growth.”

Parent Chris Webb said SJUSD not video streaming board meetings reflects its lack of transparency and accountability. The report said all of the larger school districts in Santa Clara County, except for Fremont Union High School District, offer livestreaming and video recordings of board meetings with remote public participation. But SJUSD only offers audio recordings of board meetings on its website.

“My faith in the superintendent is totally shattered. We are overdue for new leadership,” Webb told San José Spotlight.

But Jennifer Ponzio, principal at Reed Elementary School, said she feels supported by district leadership.

“Anytime anything happened at the school site, or I needed support, communication was readily available,” she said at the meeting. “What I read in the grand jury report does not align with what I’ve experienced as an administrator my first year in this district.”

The findings from the grand jury report echo a 2023 school climate survey of parents, students and district employees conducted by SJUSD. The survey revealed 41% of employ-

ees, 55% of all teachers and 68% of high school teachers don’t have a high degree of trust in the district. About 33% of high school administrators don’t feel they can share ideas and concerns with leadership without fear of retribution.

Parent Jeffie Khalsa said teachers aren’t respected or prioritized, especially with the district going back on its promise to give the most experienced educators a raise. She said the trustees should be replaced if they don’t take action and hopes more parents and teachers voice their complaints.

“I think being organized will let people see that their experiences aren’t individual or an anomaly at their site,” she told San José Spotlight. “It’s a systemic problem.”

The report highlights school safety issues and points to the district’s own survey, which found 47% of all teachers and 57% of high school teachers said they’ve been concerned about their physical safety at school. Parent Trudi McCanna wants the district to provide clear, standardized emergency response protocols, especially due to confusion around emergency response and barricades. She said parents and principals at some schools have created safety plans, but this requires an enormous investment of time.

Citing the report, Tomara Hall, a member of the San Jose Unified Equity Coalition, said SJUSD has lost 54% of its principals during the past two years, compared with 22% at other districts.

“We need a superintendent who’s willing to admit there are several problems that need to be addressed and changed,” she told San José Spotlight. “They have money and they’re not putting it toward programs and they’re not paying teachers enough. If the superintendent doesn’t step up, I don’t see her staying. Anything that was in the civil grand jury report that they don’t do... we should get rid of some of these school board members.”



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# San Jose uses AI to streamline government

By Vicente Vera  
San José Spotlight

San Jose is a beehive of artificial intelligence innovation, with the city continuing its integration of the technology into every day services to improve the lives of residents.

Now that AI is more accessible than ever, Mayor Matt Mahan along with other city officials are using it to identify problems and strategize solutions. San Jose is already using AI to optimize public transit, translate languages, review documents and find street issues like potholes, graffiti, broken street lights, illegal dumping and more — all before they're noticed by residents. And the city is just getting started.

"We can detect and predict when things need to be happening, and when things need to be resolved before they become a challenge or issue for the public," San Jose Chief Information Officer Khaled Tawfik told San José Spotlight. "This is really important to us since we are in the capital of Silicon Valley."

The city ramped up its AI integration campaign last November when it launched the GovAI Coalition to set standards for responsible use of AI in government. They have since recruited more than 300 cities and 700 government employees focused on the coalition.

"The goal is, instead of us walking alone and reinventing the wheel in every city, we believe we can come together, divide the work and tackle this challenge collectively," Tawfik said. "What we have proven in the last six months is when government works together, we can achieve a higher quality of

work."

While road safety is one of the main areas to see AI integration, San Jose backed away from data collection related to homeless people sleeping in their vehicles after advocates raised privacy concerns.

AI expert and San Jose State University Professor Ahmed Banafa said integrating AI will further San Jose's image as a "smart city."

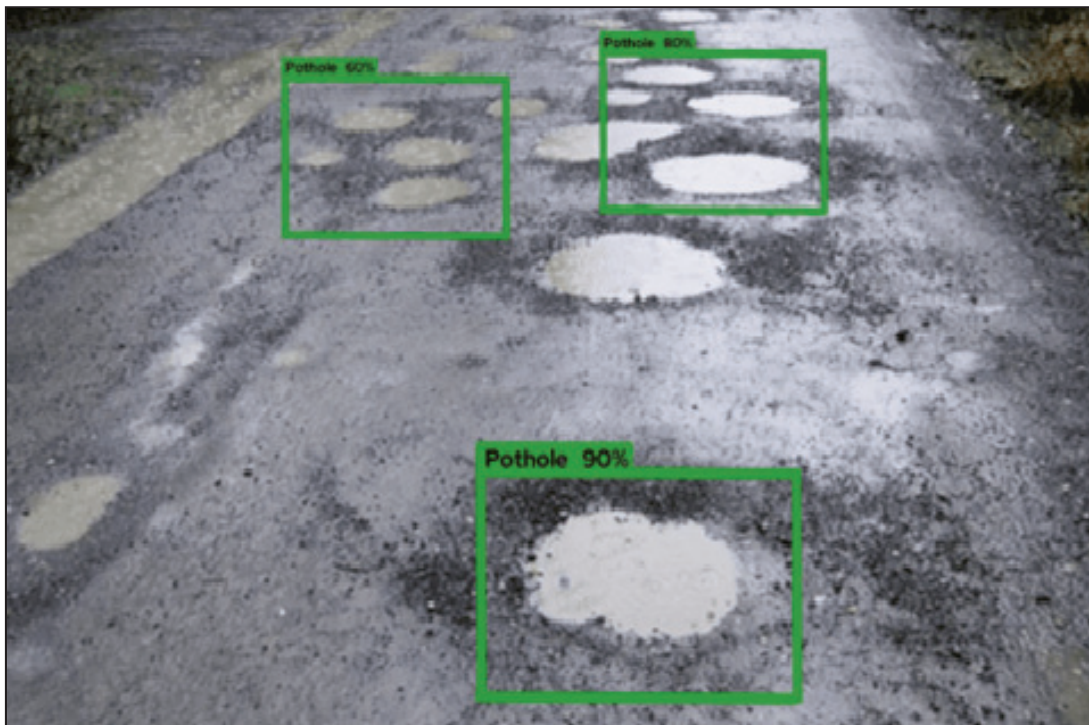
Examples of using AI to make the city more efficient include traffic management, emergency responses, routine city business reviews and more.

"There can be a chatbot or a ChatGPT device that will answer my questions in a very intelligent way — then take that information and report it," Banafa told San José Spotlight.

"They can report if there's a lot of people asking about a topic on the city council agenda, why aren't people asking about a topic, what's the issue and examples like that."

He also said AI can be used to monitor the city's air quality, energy use, waste management and other services.

Many of the artificial intelligence companies in San Jose's own backyard are doing much of the work in developing new AI technology, Silicon Valley Leadership Group Vice President of Technology & Innovation Peter Leroe-Muñoz said, but information sharing



San Jose is using artificial intelligence to detect potholes across the city. Photo courtesy of San Jose.

between businesses, universities and the city make things move faster.

"So the city is able to draw on all of those resources, all of those innovators and all of those students to better understand and think through how a city can use AI to serve its residents," Leroe-Muñoz told San José Spotlight. "That is a tremendous advantage that most other cities around the country don't have."

AI integration shouldn't concern city workers however, he said, as the technology will

be there to make employees more efficient and better at doing their jobs.

But to keep that advantage San Jose must also maintain good energy standings to support the needs of AI technology, he said.

Mayor Mahan said in a recent interview with Fox Business that the city has two large new transmission lines coming in and will keep investing in the grid and look into redirecting energy as the AI field expands.

"Energy is the language of tomorrow, it's the currency of tomorrow," Tawfik said.

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**LIVING HOPE APOSTOLIC MINISTRIES**  
<https://www.livinghopeam.org>  
Village Square Branch Library (4001 Evergreen Village Square San Jose, CA 95135). (408) 592-7562  
Pastor Shelia Sapp "Worship Service and Dinner" (Community Room) 10/29/23 at 3:00pm. "Bible Study" (Group Study Room) every Saturday at 12:00pm  
OUR MISSION: Evangelizing our community and the world with the gospel of Jesus Christ.  
OUR MINISTRY: Training ministers on how to use their love for God to reach those in need of His love.  
OUR PASSION: Transforming lives within our community with God's love.

**EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN**  
6581 Camden Ave. San Jose, CA 95120. The Rev. Shelley Booth Denney, Rector  
Phone: 408-268-0243  
Web: [www.eca-sj.org](http://www.eca-sj.org)  
At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful

followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed, loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family.

**EVERGREEN ISLAMIC CENTER (EIC)**  
<http://www.eicsan-jose.org>  
2486 Ruby Ave, San Jose CA 95148. (408) 239-6668  
"As-Salaamu-Alaikum" the English meaning is "Peace be upon you".  
Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?  
A) Islam is a faith and way of life. Islam began in the 7th century. People who follow Islam are known as Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides Muslims to

practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak" the English meaning is " May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.

**GRACE CHURCH OF EVERGREEN**  
[www.GraceChurchEvergreen.Com](http://www.GraceChurchEvergreen.Com)  
408-274-1200  
See you on Facebook. 2650 Aborn Rd at Kettmann, across from the Public Library. Serving Evergreen for over 55 years.  
John Goldstein Pastor. [john@GraceChurchEvergreen.com](mailto:john@GraceChurchEvergreen.com). Christian worship every Sunday at 11am. Together we build better lives and a better community.  
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Faith.Knowledge. Community - this is our

promise to our members. If you are looking for an active Christian faith community, we invite you to experience Holy Spirit Parish Community. All are welcome! We are located at 1200 Redmond Avenue, San Jose, CA 95120. Mass is celebrated at 8:30 a.m. Monday - Friday. Our weekend Mass schedule is Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation is every Saturday at 4 p.m. or by appointment. Our Parish Office is open Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Call 408-997-5100 for recorded information or 408-997-5101 to speak with someone in our parish office.

**SAN JOSE GURDWARA**  
3636 Gurdwara Ave. San Jose, CA 95148

The word Sikh (see-kh) means "disciple" or "student." A Sikh is a practitioner of the faith founded in the 15th century by Guru Nanak in Punjab of old British India. A Guru who is a "teacher" or "enlightener" completes the relationship of teaching and learning. Sikhism is monotheistic and stresses the equality of all men and women. Sikhs believe in three basic principles; meditating on the name of God (praying), earning a living by honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor with others. Currently there are close to one million Sikhs living in the USA and Canada and 25 million Sikhs living around the world. Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world. At the Gurdwara (House of God) in San Jose we welcome all. We pray daily for peace and prosperity for everybody in the world. Come to visit and enjoy Langer (food) in our kitchen which is open 365 days of the year and serves complementary vegetarian meals. We also encourage you to enter our history room

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

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
5111 San Felipe Rd., San Jose, CA 95135  
408-223-1562.  
[www.stfrancisofassisipreschool.org](http://www.stfrancisofassisipreschool.org)  
We invite you to join our community of faith located in the Evergreen area of San Jose. We are an inclusive diverse community striving to serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, offering prayerful and joyful liturgies; evangelization, fellowship, and service opportunities to the community. We offer spiritual opportunities for all ages, including children's liturgy, dynamic E.C.H.O - Jr. High, IGNITE - High School and North Star-Young Adult Ministries, along with small faith communities and opportunities to help the poor

and marginalized of San Jose. Our Pre-school is the only Catholic Preschool offering quality family oriented service in the Evergreen and Silver Creek areas. Our Chapel, Gathering Hall, Parish Office, Mission Center, Parish Gift Shop, Memorial Garden and Preschool are all located at 5111 San Felipe Rd. Please come join us to worship at one of the following times and locations:  
St. Francis of Assisi Chapel: Saturday 5:00PM, Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM (Mass in Vietnamese), 6:00 PM Youth Mass  
St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall  
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM  
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road  
Sunday 9:30 AM  
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday

8:15 AM  
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!

**the point.church**

**THE POINT CHURCH**  
3695 Rose Terrace Cir San Jose, CA 95148  
(408) 270-7646  
English Service: Sundays at 9:30 & 11:00 AM  
Spanish Service: 11:00 AM  
Cambodian Service: 11:00 AM  
Cantonese Service: 11:00 AM  
Mandarin Service: 11:00AM  
Youth Extreme Point (7th-12th grade): Every Saturday at 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

To place a worship listing, email [times@timesmediainc.com](mailto:times@timesmediainc.com)



# SOS

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