Willow Glen Neighborhood Association Board says it now supports homeless relocations with conditions SEE PAGE 7



San Jose first city in CA to implement new ordinance that allows sale of ADUs separate from main home SEE PAGE 4



AUGUST 2024 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 8

# Willow Glen. SAN JOSE WWW.WILLOWGLENTIMES.COM



# Residents say 7-story apartments too big for Willow Glen

San Jose residents are raising concerns about a seven-story housing project being proposed on Willow Street in the Willow Glen neighborhood. If approved, the development would replace the liquor store pictured here. *Photo by Vicente Vera.* **See story, page 3** 

### **'Creating Leaders From Learners'**

Sacred Heart Community Service needs high-quality backpacks for their annual Pack-A-Back program

n Tuesday, August 1st, SHCS will begin its annual Pack-A-Back school supply and backpack distribution with the goal of providing 4,000 students with the school supplies they need for the 2024-2025 academic year.

Thanks to generous support from corporate and community sponsors (listed below), SHCS has collected hundreds of backpacks. However, there is still a need for donations to ensure every child receives a high-quality backpack and school supplies. SHCS is inviting members of the community to help students in the area by donating high quality backpacks, supplies, or dollars. For information on how to donate or volunteer, please visit: https://www.sacredheartcs.org/pab2024

Backpacks were distributed to parents and guardians who pre-registered online at Sacred Heart's 1381 S. First Street location on Tuesday, July 30th (8a-5p) and Thursday, August 1st (8a-3p). Please note that Sacred Heart will not be able to provide backpacks to members who have not pre-registered.

Sacred Heart Community Service has been working with the San Jose Unified School District to assess the necessary school supply lists for each grade level, ensuring students



have the right materials for their first day of school. In addition to helping local students get the supplies they need, the Pack-A-Back program can save families an average of \$400 which they can use on other recurring expenses like rent or groceries. Families will not only take home a backpack (and school supplies) for the new school year, but Sacred Heart Community Service also invites the community to learn about other health/wellness resources. During Pack-A-Back, SHCS will host a resource fair where local service providers will share information about various programs and services available to the community.

Sacred Heart is relying on donations and volunteer efforts to meet its goal of distributing backpacks to 4,000 children.

To donate or volunteer, visit: https://www.sacredheartcs.org/pab2024 ;Sacred Heart Community Service; 1381 S First St, San Iose, CA 95110.







## **42nd FESTA 2024 showcases Italian American contributions at History Park August 3-4**

he planning committee is working on finalizing the 42nd annual Italian Family Festa at History Park San Jose, slated for August 3-4.

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 free event takes place, 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 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 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
- $\bullet$  \$100 gift certificate to Greens Restaurant at Fort Mason
- $\bullet$  \$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.



### ATTENTION COLFERS

Thinking about downsizing to a gated community?



Play golf on a Spectacular Championship 18 hole golf course for ONLY. . . . \$34.00

### The Villages Golf & Country Club

Homes ranging from \$500,000 to \$1.7 million

Enjoy Country Club Living in this 55+ Gated Community

### Other Amenities:

Tennis - Pickle Ball - Bocce - Pools - Hiking - Billiards
Fine & Casual Dining in our Clubhouse & Bistro

Come for a Tour ~ Stay for a Lifetime







### Dee Ramirez

The Villages Realty Team

Lic# 00683945 REALTOR

408.440.7617

Dee@RamirezRealtyTeam.com www.DeeRamirez.com

2925 The Villages Parkway \* San Jose \* CA \* 95135

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

### **Times Local News**

# Residents say 7-story apartments too big for Willow Glen

By Vicente Vera

San José Spotlight

proposed seven-story apartment and townhome project could bring 126 homes and a new retail space to Willow Glen, but many residents in the neighborhood are not happy about the plan.

Almost 200 people called in to a June 3 community meeting hosted by San Jose Planning Department officials. Callers raised concerns about the imposing presence of such a large apartment complex on Willow Street near residential neighborhoods. Willow Glen residents said they're worried about congestion, strain on the electrical grid and sewage system, the loss of privacy and blocking the skyline.

But Alex Shoor, executive director of housing advocacy organization Catalyze SV, said higher income communities like Willow Glen need to play their part in helping alleviate the housing crunch.

"This is how you solve the housing crisis," he told San José Spotlight. "You increase the number of homes in a project, you move up the heights along main streets like Willow and you build community benefits like ground floor retail that the neighborhood can benefit from and enjoy."

If approved by city officials, the project developers would demolish a 5,500 square-foot building that houses a liquor store at 940 Willow St. to make room for the less than an acre housing complex.

"Every neighborhood in San Jose has got to build a lot of housing. That's the only way we reach our goals and prevent displacement and inequality in the community," Shoor said.

He also said he would like to see the developers, REDCO Development, engage more with Catalyze SV and the community.

Housing would range from studio apartments to three-bedroom townhomes, and 26 of the homes will be listed as affordable. John Tu, city planning division manager, said the project is still at the development review and environmental review stages before heading to the San Jose Planning Commission and City Council for approval.

"Planning staff have been listening to and noting public comments and concerns," Tu told San José Spotlight. "Ultimately, the city's review and decisions must be consistent with city and state law provisions regarding size, density, design, land use and other considerations."

Willow Glen resident John Pisacane told San José Spotlight he's been in San Jose for 35 years and originally lived in New York City, where skyscrapers abound.

He lived away from the hustle and bustle of the Big Apple, but immediately recognized the congestion caused by large, tightly packed buildings and the traffic that came with them whenever he went out.

"The problem is here in Willow Glen we have small streets and limited services, it's not like we have a big Target, Walmart or grocery store down the street," Pisacane told San José Spotlight. "So a new place with nice townhomes or small condos, something like that might make for a nice neighbor, but having a seven-story building might warp your view of the world."

REDCO Development co-founder Chris Freise said at the meeting this project is not the only seven-story housing complex planned in Willow Glen. San Jose's planning director greenlit a plan last year for more than 200 apartments in the neighborhood on a 2.2-acre lot at 1050 St. Elizabeth Drive.

"This push and pull of housing versus historic character (of the neighborhood), as it was called out, and the infrastructure comments — it's happening all over the Bay Area," Freise said at the community meeting. "Our team has done a very nice job, in my opinion, of trying to articulate the architecture, particularly the height and the design."

Just a few blocks from the proposed development is downtown Willow Glen, where several businesses and eateries line the street.

Nancy Mass said at the meeting she lives across the street from the proposed project and is concerned because of how tall the building will be compared to all the other structures



in the area

"The scale is completely out of proportion with the surrounding area," she said. "How are you going to mitigate the impact of our privacy by ensuring that windows and balconies do not provide direct view into our homes, windows

or backyards?'

Pictured above: San Jose residents are raising concerns about a seven-story housing project being proposed on Willow Street in the Willow Glen neighborhood. If approved, the development would replace the liquor store pictured here. *Photo by Vicente Vera* 





### **Times Community Notebook**

# 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* 

ayor 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 California 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 ADU's in the past five years with thousands more in the pipeline. This number represents about 23% of San José'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, 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-family 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

# California Attorney General warns police about license plate data law

Recent investigation by The News Observer, found more than 20 agencies let non-California departments access license plate reader collected data in apparent violation of state law.

Despite guidance from Attorney General Rob Bonta declaring the practice illegal, he and his office have not taken action against any of the agencies for sharing the information.

Some California law enforcement shared their data with dozens of outside departments, the newspaper found.

The Police Department for El Cajon, a city near San Diego, topped the list, making the information available to more than 130 non-California agencies.

Last month, Bonta's office took its most targeted action to date, sending letters to 14 police agencies in the state. Nearly all of the letters asked the departments to confirm if they were sharing data out of state. Two letters said the attorney general's office was ready to take legal action if the departments refused to cooperate.

At least one department identified in the newspaper's review reported not knowing their data was accessible outside California. The newspaper reported that the Police Department for Seaside granted access to 19 non-California agencies as of late May, including ones in Georgia and New York.



### Willow Glen

**Times** 

Times Media, Inc. (408) 494-7000

PUBLISHER / CEO
WILLIAM BELLOU
williamb@timesmediainc.com

STAFF WRITERS
LORRAINE GABBERT,
SHUBHI ASTHANA, ANGELA
COPELAND, SNIKITHA BANDA,
CLAIRE CHEN, KEN DEHART,
SEAN EASTWOOD, DENELLE
FEDOR, MATTHEW FRAZIER,
JANE JOHNSON, KEVIN LARSEN,
FRANK SHORTT

### ART DIRECTOR JEFF BAHAM

graphics@timesmediainc.com

CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER
SANDY BELLOU

Copyright © 2024 Times Media, Inc.

All rights reserved. The Evergreen

Times prefers letters to the editor and submissions of guest articles and columns for possible publication to be sent by email to editorial@timesmediainc.com. All submitted materials become the property of Times Media, Inc., and receipt of unsolicited materials cannot be acknowledged.

### **Times Local News**

### California families spend just 5 hours and 51 mins of quality time together each week, according to survey

pending time with family is universally cherished as one of life's profound yet fundamental joys. Indeed, a Pew Research Center survey found that for many Americans, family time is a paramount priority. Backyard Oasis, a company that offers premium backyard furniture & gear, recently conducted a survey of 3,000 families to determine how much quality time they spend together each week.

The survey revealed that the average California family spends just 5 hours and 51 minutes of quality time together each week (compared to a national average of 6 hours and 17 minutes). While that might sound like just enough time to binge-watch a couple of episodes of your favorite show, the good news is that, compared to a similar study in 2018, families are spending over one and a half more hours per week together. This is a 37% increase compared to six years

There were notable geographical variations. North Dakota families, for example, spend 8 hours and 30 minutes together each week, an increase of almost 100%. On the other hand, families in West Virginia spend the least amount of time together, averaging just 4 hours and 30 minutes of quality time each week.

Backyard Oasis delved further into the topic of quality family time. They asked California respondents how many times they sit together for meals each week, with the average being four times.

When it comes to activities, families have varied preferences. The survey found that the most



games: 17%

• Traveling or taking day trips:

• Engaging in outdoor activities

(e.g., hiking, biking): 13%

favored activity for families to do together is watching TV or movies, with 41% of respondents choosing this option.

Other popular activities include:

• Cooking or baking together:

And then there's the question of technology. When asked about the use of electronic devices during family time, 12% of families admitted that phones are always welcome at the dinner table. A more laid-back 67% said devices are sometimes allowed, while a strict 5% said they're banned altogether.

"Family time is a cornerstone of happiness and well-being," says Andy Wu of Backyard Oasis. "Despite modern day challenges, the good news is that families are spending nearly two hours more together each week compared to a few years ago, which is a positive trend. We hope these insights encourage more families to prioritize and cherish their time together, creating lasting memories and stronger bonds."

### **Silicon Valley water** agency delays decision to fine homeless people

**By William Bellou** 

Publisher

he Valley Water board of directors last week agreed to postpone voting on a policy that poses \$500 fines or up to 30 days in jail for unhoused people residing on agency-owned land.

The directors voiced their desire to hear from other government agencies, nonprofits and unhoused advocates at an Oct. 11 housing summit before making a decision regarding imposing a new

"The status quo is not working. Maybe this ordinance isn't perfect," Director Barbara Keegan said. "But we're spending a lot of money to deal with unhoused issues and it's not benefiting the unhoused or the society at large."

Over the last three years, Valley Water has spent \$8 million cleaning encampments and \$4.8 million relocating encampments along Coyote Creek. In that period, workers also removed nearly 6 million pounds of trash and debris.

There are currently more than 700 people camping along Valley Water property, a number seems to be rising each year. Valley Water owns the land rights to 295 miles of the 800 miles of waterways in Santa Clara County.

Homeless advocates urged the board not to go through with the policy until safe places for people are implemented.

By the end of fiscal year 2025, the city believes it can offer 1,200 new shelter options for the unhoused.





1078 SPYGLASS WOODS DR. | PEBBLE BEACH 3 bedroom | 3 bath | \$2,395,000

This stunning property, located in the prestigious Pebble Beach area, offers an unparalleled living experience with its luxurious amenities and prime location. The residence boasts three exquisite on-site suites, each designed with comfort and elegance in mind. The home features high ceilings throughout, creating an airy and spacious ambiance. This architectural choice of large windows enhances the natural light that floods the interior, adding to the overall sense of openness and tranquility. For car enthusiasts or those in need of ample parking, the property includes a two-car garage w/ electric car charger, complemented by a large driveway. It even has a special place to park your golf cart. With its combination of luxury, space, and convenience, this Pebble Beach listing is a true gem. Don't miss the opportunity to own a piece of paradise in one of California's most coveted locations.



**Annette Boggs REALTOR®/ FOUNDER** 831-601-5800 Pacific Grove, CA 93950 DRE # 01317801



www.aboveandbeyondca.com



The Almaden Senior Association Members are a diverse group of enthusiastic active adults 50+ who enjoy new learning opportunities, new experiences, and new adventures. Join us today. Meet new people and get involved with classes and programs that will enhance your life and open new doors.

#### Membership offers opportunities to enjoy...

- Exercise Classes for all levels & abilities
- Lunch events with entertainment run by members of the association.
- Trips to local and not so local places of interest.

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 Tring

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.

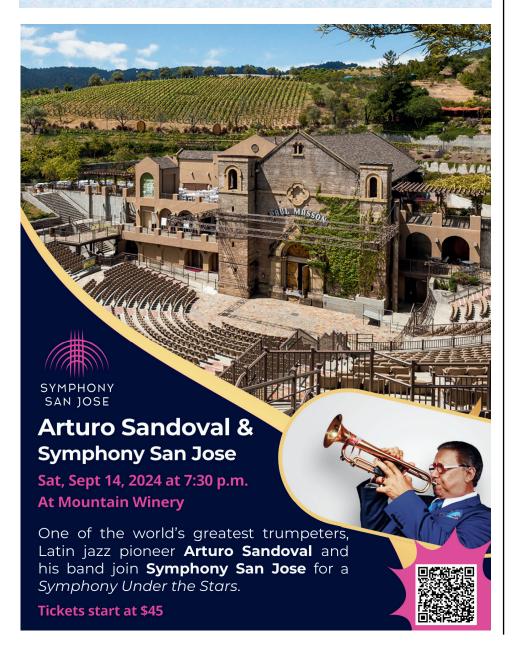
A September to Remember: Saturday Sept 21<sup>st</sup>, 12 to 3pm. We will entertain you at the Almaden Community Center with music of the 50's, 60's, and 70's. Wear clothes from those eras if you wish. Join us for a lunch of traditional Italian food, drink and dessert. Bring a photo of yourself from 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
You've played the board game and seen the movie... Now see the play!
A mansion. A murder. A mystery: Clue is the ultimate whodunit that will leave you dying of laughter and keep you guessing until the final twist. For Tickets, contact Donna Smith at <a href="mailto:dsmith95118@sbcglobal.net">dsmith95118@sbcglobal.net</a> or 408-266-4938

#### Almaden Senior Association

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

https://almadenseniors.org https://www.facebook.com/almadenseniors



### **Times Community Notebook**



Image: hotpot.a

## **Weeping Wednesdays: The Way of the Willow**

By Matthew Frasier

day off I get, the only one I have had off from work, for 24 years in Retail. Those are the days I drive to Willow Glen at the neighborhood park at Willow Street Frank Bramhall Park: 1320 Willow Street, San Jose CA. There I wander and reminisce about my years as a student at Willow Glen High School (September

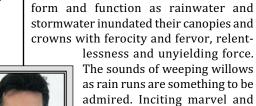
Glen High School (September 1993 to June 1997).

The rains would come in waves in those days of autumn and winter. Rains that ebbed and flowed as did the droughts: San Jose CA is wrought with droughts. Sometimes consecutive events in consecutive years.

Those years were the ones in which I believed I would become an engineer or a physicist. Years spent from 9 pm to 3 am working out complex equations and memorizing postulates. Pre-Calculus by rainfall from October to April each year was a routine, back in the years when rains came in droves and waves.

Years before becoming a landscape water management practitioner, I spent many evenings and nights thinking about the future of academic and intellectual endeavors and pursuits; anticipating legacies and methodologies of Mathematics and Physics.

Those who came before me were and still are great inspirations of timelessness and ubiquity. The anatomy and physiology of water and the art, craft, and science of hydrology were not yet known to me and would come much later in my life-



Weeping Wednesdays were those days

when the willows of Willow Glen wept in

Water Wise
Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water

metrics of imaginations gone awry.
Falling asleep to the sounds of rainfall and storms falling at 3 a.m. on Wednesdays was a whimsical experience and a precipice of slumber.

mystique by all measures and

My goals are now to finish my AA degrees in Liberal Arts and Theatre Arts (Film emphasis). Obtain a BS degree in Advertising; soon an MS in Mass Communications. And finally, a PhD in Media Studies.

Water is still my element of nature and nurture, given the plethora of hours of innumerable days spent in awe of such a prospect of perennial allusion and illusion. With 45 years of listening to rains and storms have calibrated my mind and my mind's eye to the sublime beauty and intricacies of such splendor. Water Conservation and Xeriscape is my trade.

Writing is my craft. Water is my art. Bringing the immediacies of eccentricities to life is that which brings me solace and solidarity at once.

Columnist-Essayist-Memoirist-Poet is my goal as I transition from Horror Cinema and Terror Theatre to the silver age of my journey in artistry.

This has been a most awarding and rewarding experience every step of the way, with Water as the horizon towards which I venture and that which I celebrate eternally and unequivocally. Thank you, each and all. May you enjoy your summer as we move towards fall.

Times Feature

### **Willow Glen Neighborhood Association Board says it now** supports homeless relocations

Board says conditions must be met before backing site for encampment residents

By William Bellou

Publisher

illow Glen Neighborhood Association Board says it's supporting homeless relocations as the City of San Jose gets ready to move hundreds of homeless residents from the city's waterways and into sanctioned encampment sites.

The relocation comes after the city got pressure from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board which has forced San Jose to relocate about 500 homeless residents from its waterways to expedite the clean-up of trash and pollution and comply with the Clean Water Act. If San Jose fails to meet its mandates by next year it could result in tens of thousands of dollars in daily fines.

### **Board votes for relocation**

Despite a number of local protests and petitions circulating, two-thirds of the

neighborhood association's board has voted to support a managed site on the Valley Transportation Authority's Lelong Street property — one of the three proposed locations in Willow Glen. But there is a catch — the board sites 11 conditions to gain its support.

A majority of Willow Glen Neighborhood Association Board members are expressing their frustration with the continued increase of homelessness over the years.

The board said it is willing to accept one specific site so long as 11 conditions are met. Those conditions include providing service for only homeless residents in the immediate vicinity; 24-hour security; prohibiting drugs, alcohol and violent behavior; and the availability of wrap-around services such as mental health, addiction and case management, limiting the site's operations to three years, and a provision that the site must be dismantled in six months if not properly managed.

The city has not directly responded to the board about its position letter.



### AN AWARD-WINNING LEARNING CENTER IN SAN JOSE



- Reading Comprehension
- Mathematics
- Writing & Grammar
- · Logic & Critical Thinking
- Competitive Debate
- · Study Skills for Academic Success
- Test-Taking Strategies

### Visit: SCAASanJose.com

for the complete schedule of camps & classes!



Silver Creek Academy 5619 Silver Creek Valley Road San Jose, CA 95138









# Drive home the savings.

### Al Olseen State Farm Agent

3267 S White Road, San Jose, CA 95148 Phone:(408) 274-4900 Hours: 9 am – 6 pm (Lunch 1-2 pm) Call for competitive Auto Insurance rates.

Like a good neighbor, State Farm is there.\* CALL ME TODAY.



State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Company
State Farm Indemnity Company, State Farm Fire and Casualty Company
State Farm General Insurance Company
Bloomington, IL

### Times Local News

# Assessing driving fitness: Strategies for determining elderly driver competency

By Michael James

s we age, our abilities and capacities evolve, affecting various aspects of our lives, including our ability to drive safely.

Driving is often associated with independence and mobility, but it also carries significant responsibilities, particularly as our cognitive and physical faculties change with time. Assessing the fitness of elderly drivers is a complex issue that requires careful consideration of multiple factors.

### **Understanding the Challenges**

Before delving into assessment strategies, it's crucial to understand the challenges associated with elderly driving. Aging can bring about a range of physical and cognitive changes that may impact driving ability. These changes can include diminished vision and hearing, decreased reaction times, impaired mobility, and cognitive decline, such as memory lapses and reduced attention span. Additionally, medical conditions like arthritis, Parkinson's disease, and dementia can further complicate the driving experience.

### The Importance of Assessment

Given these challenges, assessing elderly driver competency becomes imperative for ensuring road safety. However, it's essential to approach this task with sensitivity and empathy, recognizing that driving cessation can significantly impact

an individual's independence and quality of life

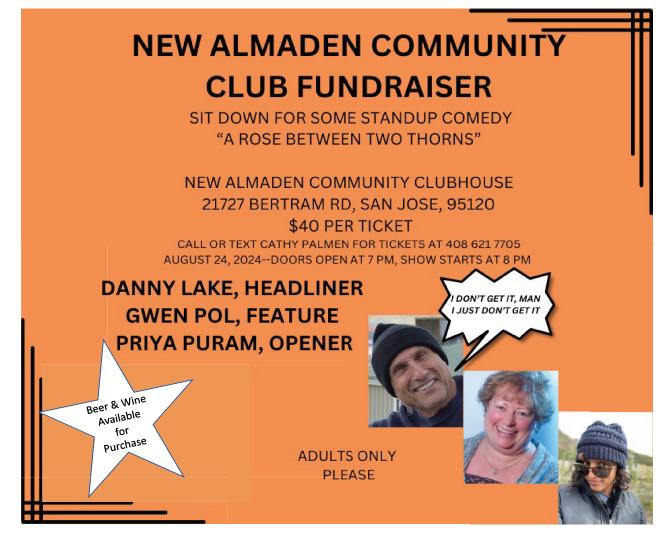
The goal of assessment should not be to arbitrarily restrict driving privileges but to identify potential issues and provide appropriate support and resources. It's still important to make sure your older family members as well as strangers on the road stay safe and away from getting into car accidents. If they have not been assessed for driving competency yet and have been in an accident, contact a local car accident attorney.

### **Comprehensive Evaluation Strategies**

- Medical Screening: Regular medical check-ups are essential for elderly drivers to assess overall health and identify any conditions that may affect driving ability. Healthcare professionals should inquire about vision, hearing, mobility, and cognitive function during these appointments. Conditions like cataracts, glaucoma, and hearing loss can often be managed with proper treatment, allowing individuals to continue driving safely.
- Cognitive Assessments: Assessing cognitive function is crucial for determining driving competency. Screening tools such as the Mini-Mental State Examination (MMSE) or the Montreal Cognitive Assessment (MoCA) can help detect cognitive impairment. Additionally, specialized driving evaluations conducted by occupational therapists or neuropsychologists can assess specific skills related to driving, such as attention, memory, and executive function.

### **Vision and Hearing Tests**

• Good vision and hearing are essential for safe driving. Regular eye exams See SENIOR DRIVERS, page 10





## **Three Sisters boutique closing after 16 years**

16 years ago, Carole Demkowski opened the doors to her Three Sisters boutique in Willow Glen on Lincoln Ave., but now due to doubling of her rent, she has decided to close her cherished store on July 31st. "We're demoralized, Demkowski said of her regular customers' reaction to the news of the shop's closing. It seems like all the little mom-and-pop shops are closing one by one." But the good news for customers is Demkowski's plan B. She'll have a space to sell her items at Montebello Road, in Campbell, the antiques emporium on Bascom Avenue in September.

Times Feature

### **TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK**

## **Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)**

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:

#### **Retrieval Augmented Generation (RAG)**

Retrieval Augmented Generation, or RAG, is popular these days because it introduces some serious capabilities to LLMs like OpenAI's GPT-4 - and that's the ability to use and leverage their own data.

Why do we need RAG? There's so much noise in the AI space and about RAG. Vendors are trying to overcomplicate it. They're trying to inject their tools, their ecosystems, their vision. the essence of RAG involves adding your own data (via a retrieval tool) to the prompt that you pass into a large language model. As a result, you get an output. That gives you several benefits:

- You can include facts in the prompt to help the LLM avoid hallucinations
- You can (manually) refer to sources of truth when responding to a user query, helping to double check any potential issues.
- You can leverage data that the LLM might not have been trained on.

With Retrieval Augmented Generation, the sys-



tem allows the LLM to function in the context of data external to its original dataset used for pretraining. The system works as follows:

- **Ingest flow**: Data is split into sentences or other chunks of data. Each chunk or sentence is then encoded into a vector embedding and stored in a vector store.
- Query flow: When a query is issued, the query is first encoded into its own vector embedding, and those are compared to the data in the vector store. The most relevant sentences or facts from the vector store are retrieved. Those facts (or sentences) are then provided to a summarizer LLM so that it can respond to the query with this context (set of facts) in mind and provide an accurate response to the query, based on the data.

#### About the Author

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

### **REAL ESTATE GUIDE**



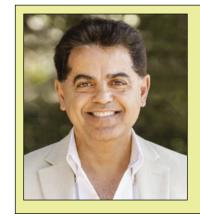
### **DEE RAMIREZ**

Realtor Lic. #00683945



(408) 440-7617

Dee@DeeRamirez.com www.DeeRamirez.com



### SHAWN ANSARI

**COMPASS** 

shawn.ansari@compass.com www.ShawnAnsari.com DRE #01088988

(408) 529-4574

REALTORS: YOUR AD COULD BE HERE! STARTING AT \$89 PER ISSUE! Call now to place your ad by phone: (408) 494-7000



### New California laws now in effect

By Sean Eastwood

Times staff writer
alifornians may not be aware of new laws ranging from housing to hidden fees.
Here are some of the laws more likely to have a direct impact on Californians.

### Housing

Senate Bill 684 aims to get more housing built by speeding up the approval process for subdivision maps. The law requires local agencies to approve those maps for projects in urban areas so long as they meet certain requirements including that the project not include more than 10 housing units.

An analysis by the legislature notes that small lot divisions allow for more medium-density housing such as "duplexes, fourplexes, garden apartments, townhomes."

### **Hidden Fees**

Senate Bill 478 and Assembly Bill 537 require the advertised or displayed price for most goods or services to include all fees and other charges required to make a purchase other than government taxes and fees.

SB 478 covers most types of businesses with a few exceptions for businesses that have different regulations around advertising.

AB 537 is specifically targeted at transparency of rates for short-term lodging such as hotels or peer-to-peer platforms like AirBnB.

### **Drug Testing Kits**

Businesses with "on-sale general public premises" alcohol licenses such as bars and restaurants are now required to sell drugtesting kits at a price not much higher than what it costs to purchase wholesale.

Bars and restaurants must also post a notice that reads, "Don't get roofied! Drink spiking drug test kits available here. Ask a staff member for details."

### Right to Repair

Senate Bill 244 requires manufacturers of electronics priced at \$50 or higher for wholesale to make documentation and spare parts or tools available to repair or maintain a product.

Manufacturers of products priced \$100 or more for wholesale must make parts and documentation available for at least seven years after the product was last manufactured.

#### **Menstrual Products for Students**

Assembly Bill 230, signed into law last October, takes an existing law that requires public schools that instruct any grade from 6-12 to provide free menstrual products in bathrooms and expands it to now include grades 3-5.



## It's easy & FREE to get rid of your junk





### SJenvironment.org/junkpickup

Help keep our neighborhood clean! Report illegal dumping: 408-535-3500



### Mr. Peabody's

The Most Powerful Green Cleaning On the Planet



Complete Carpet Cleaning, Stone Polishing and Repair

(408) 254-1949

**Serving Willow Glen since 1995** 

#### **Times Local News**

### **Senior drivers**

Continued from page 8 can detect conditions like agerelated macular degeneration, cataracts, and diabetic retinopathy. Hearing tests can identify hearing loss, which may affect a driver's ability to hear sirens, horns, or other important auditory cues on the road.

- On-Road Assessments: On-road evaluations involve observing an individual's driving skills in real-world conditions. Trained professionals, often occupational therapists or driving rehabilitation specialists, accompany the driver during a simulated driving experience or on actual roads. They assess factors such as lane positioning, speed control, signaling, and response to traffic signals and hazards.
- Driving Simulator Tests: Driving simulators offer a safe and controlled environment for evaluating driving performance. These simulations can replicate various driving scenarios, allowing assessors to observe how individuals respond to different situations without the risks

associated with on-road evaluations. Simulators can also assess reaction times and decisionmaking skills.

#### **Assessment**

Assessment outcomes may vary, with some individuals demonstrating continued competency while others may require additional support or modifications to their driving habits. Here are some supportive measures that can help elderly drivers maintain their independence while ensuring road safety:

- Driver Training Programs: Refresher courses tailored to elderly drivers can help update knowledge of traffic laws, refresh driving skills, and introduce strategies for coping with age-related changes. These programs can instill confidence and provide valuable tips for adapting to changing driving conditions.
- Vehicle Modifications: Certain modifications to vehicles can enhance safety and comfort for elderly drivers. These may include installing adaptive devices such as hand controls, pedal extensions, or steering

wheel grips to accommodate physical limitations.

- **Driving Restrictions:** In cases where individuals demonstrate limitations in certain driving skills, implementing restrictions such as avoiding night driving, limiting travel to familiar routes, or avoiding high-traffic areas can help mitigate risks while allowing continued mobility.
- Alternative Transportation Options: Encouraging the use of alternative transportation options such as public transit, ridesharing services, or community transportation programs can provide viable alternatives for individuals who may no longer be able to drive safely.
- Family Involvement: Open communication and involvement of family members in the assessment process can help facilitate difficult conversations about driving cessation. Family members can provide valuable insights into changes they may have observed in their loved one's driving behavior and offer support during the transition.

### WHEN JOURNALISM IS NOT PRESENT TO SERVE COMMUNITIES, BAD THINGS HAPPEN.

Trained journalists report authentic, credible information. And we fight for those who produce genuine news!

### Willow Glen Times

Your Community Resource.

Times Media, Inc.

- **■** Almaden Times
- **■** Evergreen Times
- **■** Willow Glen Times

Source: University of North Carolina School of Media & Journalism



### **TimesClassifieds**

Call to place your ad today! 408-494-7000

### **Buy/Sell**

I Buy Comic Books. Cash Paid. Alex (408) 393-1385

### **Employment**

#### LOGISTICS SPECIALIST

Analyze logistics operations. Bachelor's in International Trade related. \$62421/yr, Pumyang Shipping America Inc., 3494 Depot Rd, Hayward, CA 94545

### Jewelry

### M & L Jewelers

Jewelers & Watch Repair Ring sizing - Watch bands Watch batteries - Engraving Stabut our exclusion watch batter warrante

### (408) 270-6080

3218 S. White Rd. San Jose, CA Mon.-Fri. 10am-7pm, Sat. 10am-5pm

### **Painting**

# SPRING SPECIALS! Call us for details LOOK!!

Free Window Cleaning w/ Ext. Paint Job!
Free Pressure Wash w/Ext. Paint Job!
Free Estimate & Color Consultation w/Job!

- Residential & Commercial
  - Interior & Exterior
  - Drywall Repairs
  - Handyman Services

We'll Beat Any Reasonable Price! 30+ Years Experience CA. ST. LIC #651686 Insured & Bonded

TEL: (408) 281-7500 www.faithpainting.com



### **Shoe Repair**



No Shoe is Ever Too Old!

**Hours:** 

Mon-Fri 9:00 am - 5:00 pm Saturday

2850 Quimby Rd. Suite 100 • 270-0850

9:30 am - 4:00 pm

### **Electrical Contractor**

**Electrical Contractor** 

### **Commercial - Residential**

- \* Custom homes \* Remodels \* Lighting \* Main Panel upgrades \* Car chargers
- \* Main Panel upgrades \* Car charger Over 25 years in business

offering quality family

oriented service in the

Chapel, Gathering Hall,

Parish Office, Mission

Shop, Memorial Garden

Evergreen and Silver

Creek areas. Our

Center, Parish Gift



Mark Herriman Lic. #C10738461

### **ELECTRIC**

Lighting and Power Specialists

COMMERCIAL • RESIDENTIAL

1090 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 10 San Jose, CA 95125 Telephone: 408.591.3991 email: markhde@yahoo.com

# Places of Worship



### 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: Trans-

### EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

forming lives within our

community with God's

6581 Camden Ave. San Jose, CA 95120. The Rev. Shelley Booth Denney, Rector Phone:408-268-0243 Web: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.eicsanjose.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 Mus-

lims 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



Grace Church of Evergreen

### **EVERGREEN**

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. Christian worship every Sunday at 11am. Together we build better lives and a better community. Music Institute (408)791 7772. After School Piano, Violin, Other classical Instruments.

PreSchool, Ages 2-6 Caring for your child with God's love and affection. Check our website for current activities.

#### HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH

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



God is One ਰੱਬ ਇਕ ਹੈ Rab Ik Hai

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 beau-

tiful grounds. Learn

more about us and community events we sponsor by visiting our website; http://www.SanJoseGurdwara.org

#### ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH

Young Adult Ministries,

along with small faith

opportunities to help

the poor and marginal-

ized of San Jose. Our

Preschool is the only

Catholic Preschool

communities and

and Preschool are all 5111 San Felipe Rd., located at 5111 San San Jose, CA 95135 Felipe Rd. Please come 408-223-1562 join us to worship at www.stfrancisofasone of the following sisi.com times and locations: or www.stfrancis St. Francis of Assisi ofassisipreschool.org Chapel: Saturday 5:00PM, Sunday 8:30 We invite you to join our community of faith AM, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM (Mass in located in the Evergreen area of San Jose. Vietnamese), 6:00 PM Youth Mass We are an inclusive diverse community St. Francis of Assisi striving to serve as Dis-Gathering Hall Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunciples of Jesus Christ day11:00AM, Igbo in the footsteps of St. Mass - Second Sunday Francis, offering prayerful and joyful liturgies; of the month 12:30 PM Mt. Hamilton Grange evangelization, fellow-2840 Aborn Road ship, and service opportunities to the Sunday 9:30 AM community. We offer The Villages Gated spiritual opportunities Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday for all ages, including children's liturgy, 8:15 AM dynamic E.C.H.O - Jr. For more information. High, IGNITE - High please call or visit us at School and North Star

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

3695 Rose Terrasse Cir San Jose, CA 95148

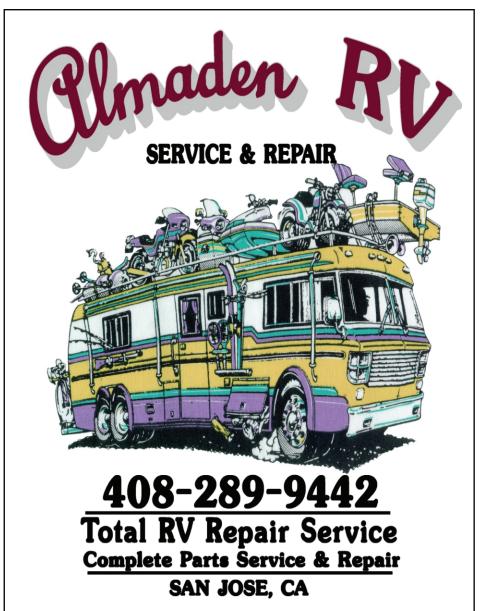


### thepoint.church

(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







One Step Closer Therapeutic Riding presents

G.R.I.T.

An Equine-Assisted-Learning Program for Women

**SELF-CONFIDENCE** 

RESILIENCE

LIFE SKILLS

SAFE BOUNDARIES

"It is deeply healing to tap into the power of the centuries old bond between horse and human. It's truly profound that our two species, with such diametrically different views of predator vs prey, can come together in partnership and trust. I feel privileged to have the opportunity to learn what these incredible teachers have to offer us." - GRIT Participant

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

G.R.I.T. is for adult women led by OSC founder Landa Keirstead. The small group meets in 2 hour sessions, once per week for six-weeks

Contact One Step Closer for more information and to enroll one.step.closer@sbcqlobal.net 408-778-3567