

Public Library transitions leadership of Innovative College Scholarship Program SJ Aspires **SEE PAGE 9**



San José announces area for first safe sleeping site in city history along the Coyote Creek **SEE PAGE 8**



OCTOBER 2024 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 10

# Willow Glen **Times**

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## Teen mob creates chaos at Safeway parking lot

By Sean Eastwood  
Times staff reporter

Police are on the lookout for a large group of teens that mobbed the entrance of a parking lot in a Willow Glen neighborhood over the weekend.

Witnesses reported that a group of unruly teens allegedly ran through Safeway grabbing items off shelves and also set off firecrackers and smoke bombs in the parking lot near Bird and Minnesota Avenues on Saturday afternoon, September 28.

Police said that a few individuals were hit with rocks, including a pregnant woman who was hit in the face. A car was also damaged from someone throwing a rock.

Police eventually dispersed the crowd and are actively looking for those responsible.



## Goombahs' Annual Car Show benefits Second Harvest of Silicon Valley

Goombahs' Annual Car Show held in Willow Glen Sept. 8, benefitted Second Harvest of Silicon Valley. The event, featuring cars, food and friends is

free to drivers and viewers which brings needed cash and canned food donations.

With the help of the community for more than 12 years, the car club has collected more than 12,000 pounds of food and has raised \$85K for Second Harvest Food Bank. The Goombah's lifetime giving (in combined food and fund donations) to Second Harvest equates to 180,171 meals. *Photo by Lou Alexander*



The invasive shothole borer beetle that has destroyed thousands of trees in Southern California and along the Central Coast has been found in San Jose. *Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County.*

## San Jose could lose thousands of trees to invasive beetle

*'The pest could spell trouble for the region's urban canopy which cools surrounding neighborhoods'*

By Brandon Pho  
San José Spotlight

An invasive beetle killing a dramatic number of Southern California trees has found its way to San Jose — and it could threaten the urban forest that shades and cools Silicon Valley, including Willow Glen.

Santa Clara County officials aren't sure when or how the species, known as the shothole borer beetle, arrived in San Jose. The non-native species was first detected in Southern California in the early 2000s. The beetle was identified locally in November last year, but may have been in San Jose undetected for several years. Now San Jose officials are trapping the bugs while county officials survey the city to determine the extent of the

infestation.

Officials have tracked the bug around riparian areas like Coyote Creek and the Guadalupe River. But the beetle — which has already killed tens of thousands of box elders, California sycamores, valley oaks and more across seven counties in Southern California — is also infesting older and stately landscape trees in San Jose.

"These are large sycamores that have been here for years and years — and now they're dying from this beetle," Drew Raymond, acting agricultural commissioner for Santa Clara County, told San José Spotlight.

The pest could spell trouble for the region's urban canopy, which cools surrounding neighborhoods. That's a crucial resource for underserved areas across the county, such as East San Jose, where urban heat islands and a lack of shade make hot and sunny days more

*See BEETLE, page 5*

## San Jose planning commission gives green light to new Kaiser hospital

By William Bellou  
Publisher

San Jose's planning commission has approved Kaiser Permanente to redevelop its medical campus and build a state-of-the-art hospital which will begin construction in 2025.

Kaiser's plans include a 110-foot-tall, 685,000-square-foot hospital, energy center, and five-story parking lot at 250 Hospital Parkway. The new facility, which would be one of the first all-electric hospitals in the state, is 435,000 square feet larger than the current building and increases bed capacity from 247 to 303.

Kaiser is making the decision to rede-



velop the campus rather than spend money on the existing hospital to meet 2030 seismic standards.

"I think it's an exciting project," said District 8 Commissioner Dilpreet Bhandal. "Kaiser is reinvesting dollars into the current facility and there's a net increase in beds and everybody gets their own room in the new structure."

Senior land use manager Tina Wehrmeister said that Kaiser will keep the current hospital up and running until construction is completed and will eventually demolish the building.

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Times **Local News**

# Steinway Society - The Bay Area presents: Vyacheslav Gryaznov, Concert Pianist, Arranger and Composer returns to the Bay Area

*Gryaznov to perform an all Rachmaninoff program with orchestral accompaniment by G-Phil technology developed by the artist*

By **William Bellou**  
Publisher

Vyacheslav Gryaznov, Russian concert pianist, arranger and composer, will perform live in concert for Steinway Society - The Bay Area on Saturday, November 16, 2024, 7:30 p.m. at the Visual and Performing Arts Center (at De Anza College) in Cupertino, CA.

All works in this concert are performed with orchestral accompaniment by G-Phil, technology

developed by the artist. Interviews with Mr. Gryaznov regarding this proprietary technology are available upon request.

To meet the needs of a diverse community of patrons, Steinway Society also offers a recorded option to enjoy the concert on-demand for 48 hours.

To purchase tickets visit: <https://steinwaysociety.com/tickets>; or visit the Steinway Bay Area Box Office: 408.300.5635; or Email: [office@steinwaysociety.com](mailto:office@steinwaysociety.com).

Note: Livestream online: \$26.75 per household. / All concerts are recorded live and made available for unlimited listens for 48 hours. Student Rush and Group Discounts available.



Pianist **Vyacheslav Gryaznov** to perform live with his new technology, G-Phil Nov. 16 at the Visual and Performing Arts Center at De Anza College in Cupertino, CA.

**THE PROGRAM**

Rachmaninoff, Piano Concerto No. 1 in F-sharp Minor, Op. 1  
I. Vivace  
II. Andante cantabile  
III. Allegro scherzando  
Rachmaninoff, Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini, Op. 43

**INTERMISSION**

Rachmaninoff, Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor, Op. 18

- I. Moderato
- II. Adagio sostenuto
- III. Allegro scherzando

Vyacheslav Gryaznov made his 2016 West Coast debut with Steinway Society, and this is his third return to our stage. Since then, he has gathered acclaim at Berlin Philharmonie and Carnegie Hall, among others, and authored more than 40 concert arrangements. He has gained a reputation as one of the most remarkable young arrangers working today. In 2014, Gryaznov signed a publishing contract with Schott Music, the youngest Russian in their history to do so.

Gryaznov studied at the Moscow State Conservatory for his undergraduate and postgraduate degrees and earned the Yale School of Music's Artist Diploma in 2018.

"Mr. Gryaznov demonstrated a wonderful fleetness of fingers and

a hugely impressive command of... monstrous difficulties that need to be conquered."

-Concertonet

Steinway Society - The Bay Area is a nonprofit organization based in Silicon Valley. Now in its historic 30th season, this dedicated group of musicians, pianists, teachers, and arts lovers promotes excellence in piano performance and music education. Each season, Steinway Society presents a series of classical piano concerts featuring international award-winning pianists, as well as an active school music program. For more information on season subscriptions, individual tickets, the artists, and Steinway Society, go to [www.SteinwaySociety.com](http://www.SteinwaySociety.com) or contact (408) 300-5635.



**Tam Truong**, a candidate for the District 8 San Jose City Council seat, speaks during the January 2023 appointment hearings. File photo.

## San Jose cop running for office to stay in race despite administrative leave

By **Brandon Pho**  
*San José Spotlight*

**A** San Jose police sergeant and City Council candidate, Tam Truong, has been placed on administrative leave amid allegations of mortgage fraud. He said he plans to continue his campaign for elected office.

Truong, who's worked in law enforcement for two decades and is running against incumbent Domingo Candelas for the District 8 San Jose City Council seat in November, was sued last year for allegedly defrauding an escrow officer with the Orange Coast Title Company, which allowed him to ditch his mortgage and collect nearly \$540,000 from the sale of a home.

"The employee has been placed on administrative leave for a personnel matter," a spokesperson for the department told San José Spotlight.

Truong said the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office  
*See COP, next page*



★ **December 14, 2024** ★

National Wreaths Across America Day



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AMERICAN GOLD STAR MOTHERS

Times Local News

**Cop**

From previous page

filed a complaint against him.

"This single-count complaint filed by the district attorney's office represents nothing more than an allegation. It is based on a misunderstanding of all the facts in this case," Truong told San José Spotlight. "This matter has been settled through a civil proceeding, which is the appropriate venue. There is no evidence that I intended to mislead anyone. What we have here is a rush to judgment and an effort to criminalize innocent conduct without a full understanding of the facts.

The district attorney's office filed this charge against me on the eve of the election, depriving me of sufficient time to clear my name through the judicial process before voting begins."

Truong said he has an "impeccable record of public service."

"As someone who immigrated to this country from Vietnam at a young age, I believe in the rule of law and in our justice system. I am grateful for the overwhelming support from colleagues and members of the community who know me for my integrity and the strength of my character," he said.

He said he trusts the justice system to clear his name.

"I have not committed a crime, and I plan to continue with my campaign," he told San José Spotlight.

Sean Webby, spokesperson for the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, declined to comment on a potential criminal complaint. Officials with the Santa Clara County Superior Court didn't respond to requests for comment.

The insurance company's lawsuit claimed Truong "used his position of trust and authority as a SJPD Police Officer to fraudulently convince" an escrow officer that a lien on his property could be removed from a preliminary title document, according to court documents from last year.

The complaint filed against Truong in Santa Clara County Superior Court in September 2022 said he showed the escrow officer documents from his 2015 Chapter 7 bankruptcy to help convince her the lien was eliminated from his home on Plumstead Way in San Jose. After

defrauding the escrow officer in January 2021, the complaint alleges Truong conspired with two others to sell the Plumstead home in July 2021.

Truong's actions resulted in the sale going through as if he owned the title of the home outright, without any liens, the complaint said. Rather than pay back his mortgage with the money from the sale, he is alleged to have pocketed the cash and later reinvested it in another home.

San José Spotlight last year also reported that Truong at one point owed more than \$30,000 to a former employee of his private security company, Training and Protective Services, which he started in 2012 to offer private patrols for neighborhoods just as the city's police force was hemorrhaging officers due to Measure B, a 2012 ballot measure that slashed retirement benefits for police officers. Truong supported the controversial measure in his 2012 council run.

In a wage theft case filed with the state labor commissioner in 2014, one of Truong's employees, Kevin Halverson, claimed he worked nearly 1,700 hours in the first half of 2013, but was paid for only a little more than 500 hours.

Following a hearing and testimony from Halverson and some of his coworkers in early 2015, the labor commissioner ordered Truong to pay Halverson \$34,071 in wages, damages, interest and penalties. Truong's company dissolved a short time later.

In early 2015, the San Jose Police Department suspended Truong's department-issued outside work permit, which the department uses to monitor officers' business interests separate from police work, while police leaders considered whether it was a conflict for him to profit from the department's short staffing problems.

Truong is once again running for the same seat he sought through an appointment process in 2023.

Candelas, who was ahead of Truong in the March primaries, said he's reserving judgement on his November challenger.

"I'm going to let the process run its course. My focus as councilmember for District 8 remains the same: keeping our community safe, cleaning our streets and parks and creating stronger neighborhoods," he told San

José Spotlight.

Mahan said that while he awaits the outcome of Truong's case, he's withdrawing his support for him in the District 8 race.

"This is a serious charge that requires a fair, thorough and timely investigation,"

Mahan told San José Spotlight. "While I understand Tam Truong has stated he is innocent of this single charge, that must now be determined through our judicial system. Given these facts I am withdrawing my endorsement until such time as this case is resolved."

**Beetle**

Continued from page 1

unbearable. San Jose's tree coverage has dropped dramatically over the years. From 2012 to 2018, the city lost nearly three square miles of trees — a 1.5% overall drop in tree canopy.

After an internal audit found the city woefully mismanaged tree loss, the San Jose City Council in January 2023 voted to change the rules around tree removal permits. County Supervisor Sylvia Arenas said the beetle presents a danger to the region's tree shade.

"At a time when tree canopies can make such a difference in our neighborhoods, this invasive pest becomes a real pest for our community," she told San José Spotlight. The local shothole borer beetle discovery comes after urban foresters have already been monitoring another tree-killing beetle species, the gold spotted oak borer, for a couple of years since it was first found in San Jose. But so far they've stayed there, according to Jean-Paul Renaud, executive director of Canopy, a Palo Alto-based group dedicated to planting trees in the mid-peninsula.

"I know that there are traps laid out throughout Palo Alto and they're regularly checked for it but nothing so far. We're all holding our breaths," Renaud told San José Spotlight. "This speaks to the importance of diversity in our tree species when planting in an urban setting so that one pest or disease doesn't affect an entire tree inventory."

Raymond said infested tree removal is already underway in San Jose to prevent the safety risk of a falling tree. But that will come with a heavy price tag. "Because the shothole borer threatens larger trees, they would cost thousands of dollars to replace. It poses a threat to trees that have pretty substantial value. To replace a tree is not cheap," Raymond said.

One can spot the early symptoms of a beetle attack through wet staining and discol-

oration on the bark of a tree's main stem and branches. An infested tree will also show an entry or exit hole that is perfectly round and the size of a ballpoint pen tip. Other signs include gumming, insect waste, boring dust and sugary buildup around entry holes.

Researchers have confirmed the pest can kill 17 species of tree. But the beetle can live in dozens of other tree and shrub species, such as the California buckeye, coast live oak, avocado and acacia.



The beetle is tiny, with females comparable in size to a sesame seed and males being even smaller. Yet the insects have exacted enormous damage by tunneling into host trees and introducing a fungus that serves as food for the beetles and their larvae. The fungus leads to disease which prevents trees from transporting water and nutrients, damaging and killing them.

The bug can also spread through residential green waste collection. And there are certain steps to take to remove the pest so that doesn't help it spread. Infested wood needs to be chipped down to one inch or less and further sanitized by composting or drying the wood out through a process known as solarization.

"Unfortunately, there is no regulation on moving wood," Raymond said. "Our biggest weapon honestly is education."

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Times **Community Notebook**

Roaring Camp Bus Trip  
Redwood Forest Steam Train  
Thursday, October 24, 2024



Arrive: 8:15am  
Depart: 8:30am  
Return to ACC approx. 4pm  
\$96.00 per person (Non-refundable cancellation after October 9, 2024).

Travel through trestles, through towering redwood groves and up winding narrow-gauge grade to the summit of Bear Mountain as conductors narrate the history of Roaring Camp, the railroad and the forest.

In the 1880s, narrow gauge steam locomotives were used to haul giant redwood logs out of the mountains. Roaring Camp's steam engines date from 1890 and are among the oldest and most authentically preserved narrow-gauge steam engines providing regularly scheduled passenger service in America.

Lunch will be provided: Chicken Platter includes side salad, western-style ranch beans, corn, roll and butter, unlimited soft drinks, coffee, hot tea, water and marshmallows to roast.

Sign up MWF from 8-10am in the lobby of the Almaden Community Center.  
For questions, contact Donna at [dsmith95118@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dsmith95118@sbcglobal.net) or 408 266-4938



IN MEMORY

**Shauna Prout Garzee**

March 29, 1951 - Sept. 13, 2024  
Resident of Willow Glen

Shauna Prout Garzee passed away, peacefully, surrounded by family on September 13th, 2024. She was married to Robert (Bob) Garzee for 47 years (1977). Together they helped to raise Bob's sons Sean and Gavin Garzee. Shauna graduated from Willow Glen High School (1969) She attended Santa Clara University. Shauna worked for Valley Radiology Inc., Hewlett Packard, Logistics and Accenture.

Shauna enjoyed many activities and hobbies notably knitting, reading, participating in marathon walking events, cooking and making her wonderful chocolate confections.

She enjoyed being with family celebrating holidays and birthdays; boating on the Delta; attending school functions for her sons, grandsons, nieces and nephews.

Shauna was a member of Junior League of San Jose, Valle Monte League, and ToKalon. Her dedication and years of service illustrated her commitment to those who needed help.

Shauna is survived by her husband Bob,



her sons Gavin (Jennifer) Garzee and Sean (Kazumi) Garzee. Her precious grandsons, John, Rowan, Desmond and Renner. Her sisters Cindy (Dave) Griswold, Leslie (Dan) Howley and Sally Prout along with her numerous nieces and nephews. Shauna also leaves behind her beloved cats, Noel and Pilgrim.

A Celebration of Life will be held on Saturday, November 9th at 2pm with a reception to follow in McNaught Hall, St Francis Episcopal Church, 1205 Pine Ave San Jose, CA. In lieu of flowers please consider donating to the Junior League in Shauna's name.

Donations can be sent to the following address: JLSJ/Endowment Fund 1615 Dry Creek Road San Jose, CA 95125.

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

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  
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Times **Local News**

**TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK:**

# Transfer Learning

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:

### Transfer learning

In traditional machine learning, the goal is to train a model to perform a certain task like classification or regression.

With transfer learning you take a pre-trained model and use it (adapt it) to a new task. Because pre-training the model is quite expensive, the idea of transfer learning is the following: can we re-use some of the knowledge learned during the pre-training process and apply it to a new task that benefits from that knowledge?

Transfer learning is not a new idea, it just became more common with modern neural networks that are large and costly to pre-train. Let us understand with an example:

Imagine you have a model (a smart system) that has already been trained to understand and process language by reading lots of text, such as books, articles, and

websites. This initial training is like teaching the model everything it can about language – grammar, vocabulary, and common ways words are used together. This process is called pre-training, and it takes a lot of time and resources, like how a person might study for years to become an expert in a subject.

Now, instead of starting from scratch every time you want the model to do something specific (like answering questions or summarizing documents), you can take this pre-trained model and adapt it for a new task. This approach is called transfer learning.

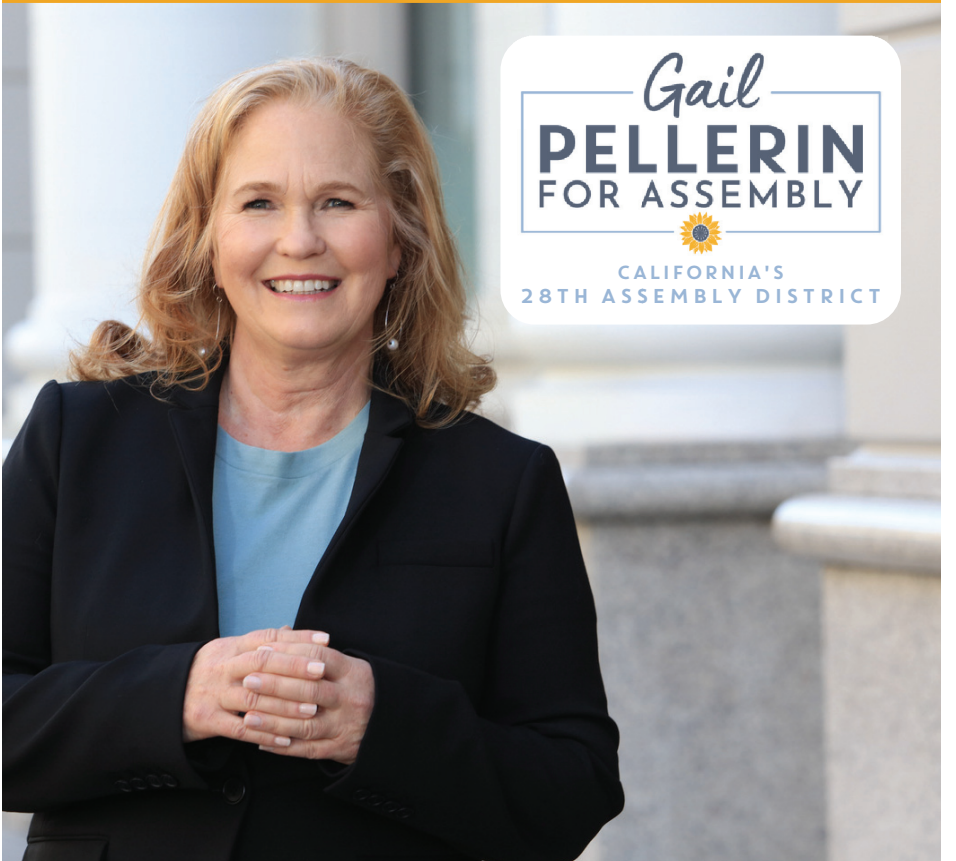
With transfer learning, we take the model that’s already learned general language skills and fine-tune or adjust it for a new task. Think of it like hiring an experienced writer to write for your blog. The writer already knows how to write well, so you only need to teach them the specific topic or style you want for your blog.

Transfer learning helps save time and resources because you’re building on top of existing knowledge. This concept isn’t new, but with today’s large and complex models (like LLMs [Large Language Models]), it has become more popular because these models take a lot of time and computing power to train from scratch.

### About the Author

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

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Times **Local News**

## New President named for Evergreen Valley College

Following a nationwide search, **Dr. Vinicio J. López** (inset) has been named the ninth president of Evergreen Valley College (EVC) upon a unanimous vote by the San José – Evergreen Community College District (SJECCD) board of trustees.



A first-generation college student who began his higher education journey as a community college student himself, López has almost 25 years of experience as a community college faculty member and administrator.

After serving as an English as a Second Language faculty member, López, a native Spanish speaker, transitioned into administration where he currently serves as vice president of instruction at Skyline College in San Bruno, California.

“Throughout the search process, Dr. López demonstrated a deep commitment to our District’s core values of opportunity, equity, and social justice,” said Dr. Beatriz Chaidez, SJECCD chancellor. “We are very fortunate to have someone with his breadth and depth of experience and skills to serve as the next president of Evergreen Valley College.”

In addition to his current role at Skyline College, López has experience overseeing student affairs, non-credit and workforce education, dual enrollment, and international education programs, among others. His prior administrative experience includes serving as senior interna-

tional education officer and dean of the Mission Campus for San Francisco City College. He has also served as dean of the Le-Jao Campus for Coastline College in Fountain Valley, California.

“I am humbled and excited to be joining Evergreen Valley College as the next president,” Dr. López said. “EVC is one of the premier community colleges in California and I look forward to working with my new colleagues among the faculty, classified staff, and administration to continue that commitment to excellence.”

At Skyline College, Dr. López is recognized for his collaboration with all stakeholders and constituency groups in order to create and implement initiatives that promote a student-first campus.

“Dr. López illustrated a deep commitment to serving and partnering with our most vulnerable students,” said Tony Alexander, SJECCD board of trustees president. “He understands how to foster an inclusive and welcoming learning environment that is informed by the lived experiences and voices of students and he is passionate about mentorship and the development of a future generation of leaders. The board of trustees is confident that Dr. López will be a great president for EVC.”

Among his other duties at Skyline, López is co-chair of the Enrollment Strategies Committee—a successful collegewide collaboration between students, classified professionals, faculty, and administrators—where he led development of a five-year enrollment management plan to increase student enrollment, retention, and completion.

“I would like to thank the board of trustees, Chancellor Chaidez, and the search committee for placing their confidence in me,” López said. “I look forward to working with all campus constituent groups to serve our students and help

them reach their academic and career goals and to create a culture where students feel their dreams are our dreams.”

López holds a Doctor of Education degree in educational leadership, administration and policy from Pepperdine University; a Master of Arts degree in Education from the University of Phoenix; a bachelor’s degree in history from University of California, San Diego; and an associate degree in social and behavioral sciences from Miramar College.

López is scheduled to begin in his new role as EVC president on September 16.

## San José announces area for first safe sleeping site in city history

*Located along the Coyote Creek, the site will help City meet environmental mandate*

By **William Bellou**  
Publisher

The City of San José just took a significant step toward establishing a safer, managed alternative to unsheltered homelessness at 1157 E Taylor St.

This location was selected from eight potential sites that the San José City Council unanimously approved for further analysis in June of this year. If the location continues to prove suitable, it will be the first safe sleeping site to open in San José, likely in early 2025.

“Last year, we did a clean-up at Watson Park, and the conditions were shocking — a green-space that should be open and available for all was covered in human excrement, filled with

debris and overrun by shopping carts. We can’t allow our public spaces to fall into squalor any more than we can allow our homeless neighbors to live in it,” said San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan. “This area will be the first to see the benefits of this new solution to homelessness — one that will preserve our park and protect it from re-encampment. We’ll be working with the neighborhood every step of the way to ensure this solution benefits everyone.”

In this year’s budget, the City Council voted unanimously to allocate dollars toward the creation of several Safe Sleeping Sites with the capacity to serve a total of 500 homeless people currently living on the streets of San Jose or along one of the City’s many waterways.

“I’ve lived in San Jose for several decades, witnessing the increasing plight of people living in the streets, the creeks, or anywhere they could find,” said Jeff Levine, a local resident and spokesperson for the Roosevelt Neighborhood Association. “I applaud and support 100% the City creating safe sleeping sites. Our neighborhood understands that solving homelessness requires all neighborhoods throughout the City to be supportive of plans to get people out of the creeks, highway overpasses, streets, parks and



into supervised housing.” The magnitude of the homelessness crisis has affected the health of City waterways, and this initiative is a part of broader budget investments designed to maintain the City’s stormwater permit and comply with the Clean Water Act by reducing pollution in the rivers and creeks that flow through San José — 88% of which is attributed to unmanaged, unsheltered living conditions along these waterways.

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Times Feature



The San José Public Library and San José Public Library Foundation Partners with The Boys & Girls Clubs (BGCSV) of Silicon Valley in transitioning BGCSV to assume management of SJ Aspires.

### Public Library transitions leadership of Innovative College Scholarship Program SJ Aspires

*Program transitions to Boys and Girls Clubs of Silicon Valley*

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Silicon Valley (BGCSV) has completed the transition process to assume management of SJ Aspires, an innovative program launched in 2018 by the San José Public Library and San José Public Library Foundation.

"We are extremely proud of the impact that SJ Aspires has had for underserved high school students in San Jose," said Jill Bourne, City Librarian. "This groundbreaking program demonstrates how a city can invest in the educational attainment of our youth and pave the path to a brighter future. Partnering with the Boys & Girls Clubs of Silicon Valley will continue to build upon the program's foundation to ensure that SJ Aspires thrives and expands under their leadership."

In January 2023, the BGCSV was selected to become a managing partner of SJ Aspires through an open process to identify a qualified agency to assume long-term oversight and operations, including

expansion and financial sustainability. The Library and Library Foundation reviewed the qualifications of potential partners and selected BGCSV to continue advancing the impact of SJ Aspires. Management and oversight of the program was officially transitioned on May 31, 2024.

"Many high school students in Silicon Valley face monumental barriers in the pursuit of post-secondary education," said Steve Wymer, BGCSV's President and CEO. "SJ Aspires is an innovative and powerful program that will change lives and communities, and we are grateful to partner with the San José Public Library and San José Public Library Foundation to serve even more students as we work to grow this important program over time."

Since becoming a managing partner, Boys & Girls Clubs has demonstrated its ability to expand the program and support for SJ Aspires students enrolled in William C. Overfelt High School and San Jose High School by providing full-time College and Career Advisors at each location to offer individualized assistance to students invited to enroll in the program during the 2023-24 academic school year.

"We are incredibly proud to have taken an innovative idea from inception through proof-of-concept that has set so many young adults on the path to further education," remarked Dr. Dawn Coppin, CEO, San José Public Library Foundation. "We have tremendous appreciation for all the donors who saw the potential of SJ Aspires and the students it serves. We are confi-

dent that BGCSV will add more wonderful chapters to this story."

The Library and Library Foundation worked closely with BGCSV through the transition during the 2023-2024 academic year to ensure that the work that was done to establish the program will continue to grow and maximize the potential of students. SJ Aspires is available to qualifying students at Overfelt and San Jose High School during the 2024-2025 academic school year.

For more information about SJ Aspires, visit: [www.bgclub.org/sjaspires](http://www.bgclub.org/sjaspires)



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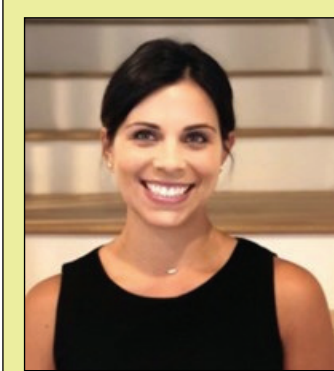
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The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors commended San José Spotlight for its dedication to empowering residents with accurate information vital to everyday lives on Sept. 9, 2024. *Photo by Jen Morrow.*

## San José Spotlight receives prestigious honor from Santa Clara County

By **Annalise Freimarck**  
*San José Spotlight*

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors has commended San José Spotlight for its commitment to providing accurate and critical information on issues affecting county residents.

The commendation, presented on Monday by Supervisor Otto Lee, recognizes this news organization's dedication to empowering residents, boosting transparency and igniting civic engagement. The honor covers San José

Spotlight's work over the past five years since its 2019 founding, including comprehensive homelessness coverage, in-depth reporting on the fight to keep Regional Medical Center open, coverage of a potential San Jose city worker strike over higher wages and its coverage of the 2021 VTA mass shooting.

Lee said San José Spotlight has strengthened democracy in the county since it began covering the community. Santa Clara County commends organizations and individuals who do something noteworthy that benefits residents.

"Through its vigilant and steadfast commitment to San Jose and the surrounding areas, San José Spotlight has uplifted marginalized voices, holds power to account and paves the way for change," he said at the Monday meeting.

The commendation adds to this news organization's other recognitions, including the prestigious James Madison Award for its successful lawsuit against San Jose and former Mayor Sam Liccardo, who is now running for Congress, for violating state transparency laws and improperly withholding public records. San José

Spotlight also won four first-place awards this year in the annual California Journalism Awards for covering stories such as a San Jose police union office manager hit with drug smuggling charges and the effects of the Silicon Valley Bank collapse on everyday business owners and nonprofits.

Moryt Milo, San José Spotlight editor, said the organization remains dedicated to its mission of providing fearless journalism that disrupts the status quo by sharing vital community stories.

"We will be out there every day covering the stories that matter, telling the stories that go untold and reinvigorating our community and their

engagement because we strongly believe that reporting the news, especially local news, is a fundamental cornerstone of democracy," she said at the meeting.

San José Spotlight is the region's first nonprofit newsroom covering San Jose, Sunnyvale, Santa Clara, the West Valley and the county.



## Symphony San Jose and Chorale San Jose: Get ready for some of classical music's scariest hits at California Theater October 26-27

Just in time for Halloween, Symphony San Jose and Symphony San Jose Chorale conjure up some of classical music's scariest hits in performances scheduled Saturday, October 26, 2024 (7:30 p.m.) and Sunday, October 27, 2024 (2:30 p.m.)

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- For tickets, visit [www.tickets.symphonysan-jose.org/Online](http://www.tickets.symphonysan-jose.org/Online)

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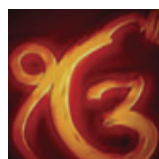


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