

SEASON'S GREETINGS!

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Evergreen Times

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Noon Year's Eve Celebration at Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose

Celebrate the arrival of 2025 at the Purple Museum by participating in the "count-down to noon across time zones" with family hugs, performances from special guest Choo Choo Soul, and the Museum's version of the famous Ball Drop in Times Square with tons of confetti.

Museum Ball drops are at 12 p.m., 1 p.m., and 2 p.m. At the different drops, "shoutouts" are given to different countries and what people in those countries might be doing at that time.

When: Tuesday, December 31, See NOON YEAR EVE, page 9

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San Jose holiday tradition needs the spirit of giving to stay afloat

By Annalise Freimarck
San José Spotlight

Dozens of people crowd around hundreds of trees wearing Santa hats and reindeer antlers, hanging ornaments and laughing. San Jose's beloved Christmas in the Park is about to enchant Plaza de Cesar Chavez.

This year, the nonprofit that brings the holiday joy is asking people to pull out their wallets to fill a six-figure gap and keep the tradition alive. Christmas in the Park needs about \$100,000 going forward after three key sponsors pulled out because of the poor economy. The funding gap won't affect the more than 44-year-old tradition this year but could affect next year's festivities. The fun begins with the Nov. 29 tree lighting ceremony in downtown San Jose.

Debbie Degutis, Christmas in the Park managing director, said without the money, staff won't be able to invest in new interactive activities and upgrades to the older displays to keep



Christmas in the Park needs to fill a \$100,000 gap to avoid pinching pennies for next year's festivities. Photo by Annalise Freimarck.



Debbie Degutis, Christmas in the Park managing director, said the nonprofit is relying on some of the 700,000 visitors to consider donating to keep the tradition alive. Photo by Annalise Freimarck.

things fresh. Degutis said the event will be back next year and isn't going away, but she's relying on the expected 700,000 visitors to come up with the \$100,000 to avoid pinching pennies.

She added the best way the community can show support is by buying a ticket to the nonprofit's other event: History Park's drive-thru light show. The light show is open through Jan. 1 and offers more than a mile of twinkling lights. Tickets range from \$25 to \$30 per car, depending on the day.

"More than ever, we really need the community to step up and support the largest community event in the city," Degutis told San José Spotlight.

See CHRISTMAS IN THE PARK, page 4



Athenna Crosby of San Jose will represent the United States at the 72nd Miss World 2025 which will be held next February at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai, India.

Athenna Crosby crowned Miss World America

Crosby's "Miss World Beauty With A Purpose" project was "Equality for Individuals with Disabilities"

In a dazzling finale, Miss World America California, Athenna Crosby of San Jose, CA, emerged as the new Miss World America.

Selected by an esteemed panel of judges, Athenna will represent the United States at the 72nd Miss World Festival in 2025. Athenna is a San Jose, CA native.

Seattle Washington played host to the highly anticipated Miss World America 2024 compe-

tition, bringing together 60 remarkable women from across the nation.

Each contestant graced the stage with beauty, intelligence, and a commitment to community service, vying for the honor of being named Miss World America.

The results were announced by Ekta Saini, National Director of Miss World America and the first Indian American woman to be the national director of Miss World America.

Meet the New Miss World America 2024: Athenna Crosby

Athenna Crosby is a Los Angeles-based actress, model, and television presenter who proudly embraces her Latin American heritage as a dual citizen of the United States and Venezuela. A graduate of Utah Valley University with a Bachelor of Science in Communications, Athenna's platform combines her skills in media and advocacy.

See CROSBY, page 9

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Christmas in the Park

Continued from page 1

Christmas in the Park is free and relies largely on donations, sponsorships and fundraising to recreate the holiday magic year after year.

Real estate developer Chuck Toeniskoetter is one of those donors. His companies, including real estate and development businesses and Silver Creek Self Storage, donated \$25,000 this year. He said as someone who took his four kids when they were little, he donated because it's a gem for families.

"They've got Santa, they've got the Christmas tree, music — it's just a happy place to be able to take your kids," he told San José Spotlight.

The festivities expand past the holiday cheer in the heart of downtown, uplifting the area's small businesses as hundreds of thousands of people walk through the bustling streets.

Alex Stettinski, CEO of the San Jose Downtown Business Association, said the economic boost during the holiday season is critical to downtown's vitality. The area has struggled to recover from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic which left it saddled with high commercial and office vacancy rates.

Stettinski said the ice skating rink — provided by the downtown association next to the Signia Hotel — along with Christmas in the Park transform the city's core.

"All these (events) that we have throughout the year are absolutely crucial to keep driving people and visitors into downtown to frequent our businesses," he told San José Spotlight. "It absolutely has an immediate impact



on the vitality of our business economy."

The heart of the tradition, however, is the joy it brings to people every year, from the sugary hot chocolate topped with copious amounts of whipped cream to the 600 trees organizations and families who decorate between hol-



San Jose resident and teacher **Erin McCarthy** decorates the Orchard Middle School tree at Christmas in the Park on Nov. 26, 2024. Photo by Annalise Freimarck.

iday displays.

San Jose resident Erin McCarthy has been coming to the event since she was a child. She takes her nieces and nephews each year and participated in decorating a tree this year for Orchard Middle School, where she teaches. She wants to continue doing it for years to come.

"Some traditions are just the bedrock of society," she told San José Spotlight. "They give people a sense of belonging, being part of something that's bigger than themselves."

Degutis has also been coming since she was a child, when she and her parents made it a tradition to volunteer at the information booth on Christmas Eve. She has about 20 years of photos with Santa as an adult and wants that magic to stick around.

"Things in life really aren't free, and if we treasure something, we need to take care of it," she said. "So I'm hoping people will help take care of Christmas in the Park."

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Times **Community News**

The San Jose Nutcracker

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Reid-Hillview Airport first airport in the US to offer unleaded fuel for all general aviation aircraft

Reid-Hillview Airport becomes first in country to sell 100-octane unleaded fuel

By William Bellou
Publisher

Reid-Hillview Airport has become the first airport in the US to offer unleaded fuel that can be used in all general aviation aircraft.

After a controversial report in 2021 arose about high blood lead levels in children living near Reid-Hillview, officials began phasing out leaded fuel at the airport. The study analyzed 17,000 blood samples taken from children living around the airport from 2011 to 2020.

Director of County Airports Eric Peterson said nearly 35 percent of general aviation aircraft in the country cannot use the lower-octane unleaded fuel. Lead concerns also have been a hot-button issue contributing to whether or not the county might close the airport in future years.

"Offering G100UL to our airport users has been years in the making," Peterson said. "This fueling alternative positions RHV as the first airport in the nation to offer unleaded aviation fuel for the entire general aviation community and we are pretty excited



The offer ensures that every piston-powered plane can refuel with unleaded aviation gas. *Photo courtesy of Reid-Hillview*

about that."

The new fuel averages \$7 per gallon for full-service fuel delivery. Fueling hours at Reid-Hillview Airport are from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. every day of the week. The unleaded fuel is slightly less expensive than 94-octane leaded fuel.

Peterson said around 125 certificates were issued last Saturday. Bay Area pilots who don't keep their aircraft at either Santa Clara County airport were also able to get 25 gallons of the G100UL fuel.

Stephen McHenry, a pilot based at the San Martin Airport in the southern part of the county, said the pilots he has heard from are embracing the additional offer for unleaded fuel.

A fueling operator at San Martin Airport is expected to distribute the 100-octane fuel there as well.

Non-profit Boulevard Bombs helps the community year round and one can donate if they wish

By Kevin Larsen
Times Media writer

Boulevard Bombs is one of the most caring non-profits in the Bay Area. The organization, celebrating its 16th year, works hard to give to others who are less fortunate. Here is a list of various Boulevard Bombs activities:

- Blvd Bombs - 03.16.2024 Easter for homeless kids.
- Blvd Bombs - 03.23.2024 Escort Eastridge Little League Parade
- Blvd Bombs - 03.30.2024 Bay FC Inaugural Game
- Blvd Bombs - 06.02.2024 Escort 408K Race to the Row
- Blvd Bombs - 07.21.2024 Shiny Side Up
- Blvd Bombs - 08.03.2024 Back To School Drive - Homeless - Backpacks
- Blvd Bombs - 08.17.2024 LifeMoves Shelter, deliver the backpacks, school supplies, and tennis shoes
- Blvd Bombs - 08.24.2024 Music Under The Sun - History Park
- Blvd Bombs - 09.07.2024 Chicano Soul Fest
- Blvd Bombs - 09.14.2024 Mexican Independence-Celebration Children's Discovery Museum Kickoff
- Blvd Bombs - 09.15.2024 Sabrina
- Blvd Bombs - 09.21.2024 Blvd Bombs Foundation - Bark In The Park
- Blvd Bombs - 10.01.2024 thru 10.27.2023 Coat Drive
- Blvd Bombs - 10.18.2024 Music In The Park - Dia De Los Muertos Preparty
- Blvd Bombs - 10.19.2024 Dia De Los Muertos - Blvd Bombs Altars since 2012
- Blvd Bombs - 10.26.2024 Trunk & Treats
- Blvd Bombs - 10.27.2024 20th Annual Micailhuitl Ceremony, Dia De Los Muertos - Blvd Bombs Altars
- Blvd Bombs - 10.28.2024 Selma Olinder Elementary School
- Blvd Bombs - 11.02.2024 HomeFirst -Homeless - Food, Coats, Care Packages, for Dogs Treats
- Blvd Bombs - 11.11.2024 Veterans Parade
- Blvd Bombs - 12.14.2024 Christmas for homeless kids, Gifts, Stockings, Santa, The Grinch, Cindy Lou, and more...

If you wish to donate to such causes here is their website and a list of things they are involved in visiting: blvdbombs.com (Venmo or Zelle available) Venmo @blvdbombs; Zelle 4082189729; or mail your donation to: Boulevard Bombs Foundation; P.O. Box 731634, San Jose, CA 95173-1634; 408.218.9729; Make checks payable to: Boulevard Bombs Foundation - Tax-Deductible 501(c)(3)

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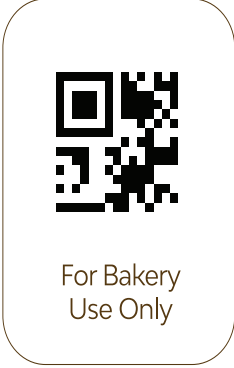
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Times **Community News**



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Senator Cortese wants California to stop selling polluting diesel trains to other countries

By William Bellou
Publisher

State Senator Dave Cortese (D-Silicon Valley) introduced a bill that restricts the resale of California decommissioned diesel trains for continued use on Dec. 2.

Cortese, who is the chair of the Senate Transportation Committee, is authoring the bill because Caltrain recently finalized an agreement to transfer its retired diesel fleet to the municipality of Lima, Peru, following the electrification of its network. The fleet includes 90 gallery cars and 19 diesel locomotives, originally built between

1985 and 1987.

“This is no way to run a railroad by taking the diesel off California’s carbon footprint then putting it right back on in Peru. Are we not all fighting to decarbonize the same air?” asked California State Senator Dave Cortese, Senate Transportation chair. “As a world leader in decarbonization in our transportation sector, we need to lead on this. We need to be serious about decarbonization worldwide.”

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Times **Local News**

Crosby

Continued from page 1

Her Beauty With A Purpose (BWAP) project, titled "Inclusion for All: Fighting for Those With Disabilities," reflects her decade-long commitment to creating a more inclusive world. Inspired by her brother Adrian, who has Autism, Athena has worked with non-profits like Best Buddies and successfully lobbied for her hometown of San Jose, CA, to recognize April as Autism Awareness Month.

"This is a dream come true." Athena said during her acceptance speech. "As the first Venezuelan American Miss World America, I am proud to represent the incredible diversity of this nation, and I am committed to using this platform to champion inclusivity and equality for all."

As Athena Crosby prepares to represent the United States at the 72nd Miss World Festival, she joins a global network of women united by the Beauty With A Purpose mission.

Guided by the visionary leadership of Julia Morley, the Miss World Organization is the oldest international pageant that has raised

over \$1.3 billion for charitable causes.

About The Event

The event was hosted by Shree Saini, Miss World America 2022, who became the first Indian American and Asian American woman to be Miss World America, who shared, "As a burns survivor and pacemaker patient, I have changed my pain into purpose. I've poured every ounce of my being into serving others. I've humbly volunteered in 34 states and 14 countries, spreading the message of resilience and kindness. In a world that often seems to care less, be someone who couldn't care more."

The Miss World America 2024 contest is the second consecutive year under the leadership of Ekta Saini and her husband, Sanjay Saini.

The Punjab-origin couple gave the highest prize package in pageant history - \$250,000 in kind and cash sponsorship. Ekta Saini also hosted more than 80 free mentorship zoom calls to mentor the contestants prior to their arrival to nationals.

Ekta Saini brought fresh energy to the national competition which shared her deep commitment to service: "My request to all



Athena Crosby is crowned Miss World America; 1st Runner-Up is **Kimberly Chinomso** (Miss World America Oregon) and 2nd Runner-Up is **Anne Li** (Miss World America Washington District of Columbia). Miss World America Beauty With A Purpose Ambassador is **Devon Viola** (Miss World America Massachusetts).

the parents and friends here today is to help your daughters feel empowered, help them recognize all that they have achieved and all that they are capable of achieving. Even though there is one winner tonight; We are forever a Miss World America family."

About Athena Crosby

Athena Crosby is a TV host, entertain-

ment correspondent, actress, and model born and raised in San Jose and now based in Los Angeles, California. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Communications from Utah Valley University. As a vocalist, she's performed at the Giants vs. Padres MLB game and the Dalai Lama's 80th birthday celebration. She also plays the Alto Saxophone and the Cuatro.

Athena is best known as the spokeswoman for the Oscar-qualifying Cinequest Film Festival, she has interviewed stars like James Franco and Imagine Dragons.

As a long-standing advocate for disability rights, Athena is committed to creating a positive impact that extends beyond the realms of the entertainment industry. Her Miss World Beauty With A Purpose project was Equality for Individuals with Disabilities, inspired by her brother Adrian who has Autism. She has been a volunteer with the charity Best Buddies for over 10 years, which provides jobs and friendships to people with disabilities, and helped lobby the city of San Jose, CA to decree April as Autism Awareness Month.



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Noon Year Eve

Continued from page 1
2024, 9:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. (Ball drops at 12, 1, and 2 p.m.)

Admission: \$18 for children and adults; \$16 for seniors; infants under one & members are free Tickets: <https://www.cdm.org/event/noon-years-eve/>

The Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose is located at 180 Woz Way in Downtown San Jose.

About Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose

Kids lead the way at Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose, exploring and discovering through open-ended, play-based learning. More than 150 hands-on exhibits and programs in sciences, humanities, arts, nature, and health spark curiosity and ignite family fun where children build life skills in creative and critical thinking, problem solving, and confidence. The non-profit celebrates people and diverse cultures, creates authentic connections, and builds global understanding. Welcoming more than 10 million visitors since 1990, the award-winning museum inspires creativity, curiosity, and lifelong learning inside the stunning 50,000 square foot purple building designed by the late world-renowned Mexico City architect Ricardo Legoretta, and outside in the half-acre nature space.

For more information about the museum, visit www.cdm.org.

Times **Local News**

Second Story Duo's collaboration and artistic growth shapes band's 2nd album 'Reflections'

By William Bellou
Publisher

For Second Story Duo, the creation of "Reflections," released in late October, was a labor of love two years in the making, born out of the commitment to collaboration and artistic growth.

For San Jose residents Lynn Case, one half of the duo alongside her partner Doug Bloomquist, the journey began with a simple New Year's goal:

to step outside her comfort zone and explore the possibilities of working with other musicians.

'Life, love and memory'

Lynn and Doug have created a rich tapestry of creative partnerships, culminating in an album that captures not only their growth as a band but also their personal reflections on life, love, and memory.

"This album started with the idea of collaboration," Lynn said. "Doug and I joined a Tuesday night class where we share our new songs and get feedback from the instructor; a number one song hit songwriter, Steve Seskin, and fellow songwriters and musicians. It really pushed us to elevate our work."



Second Story Duo's new album, "Reflections," is stated to be a labor of love for south San Jose residents **Lynn Case** and her partner **Doug Bloomquist**.

lunge to live up to his playing, but it pushed us in the best way."

Finding the right path

Throughout Reflections, collaborations drive the music forward, shaping both the sound and the emotional depth of the project. Pianist Greg Sankovich was another key influence. "Greg's a genius on the piano," Lynn explains. "He's got this way of making me feel free enough to mess up on the way to finding the right path." Their work with Greg on the title track, "Reflections," set the tone for the album's exploratory spirit. "He patiently led us through the process, and by the end, I fell in love with the song all over again."

'We let each track evolve in its own way'

The album stands apart from their previous work, particularly their debut album, "What I Wish For Us." "With 'Reflections,' we let the lyrics dictate the direction of each song," Doug said. "We weren't bound by

One of the first collaborations was with their friend, Multi-instrumentalist and guitarist Robert Witmeyer, who brought a Heart-inspired flair to "New York/California Girl." Lynn explained that she had this vision of a lead guitar part in that style, and "Robert just rocked it...it was a chal-

genre or style—we let each track evolve in its own way." The result is an eclectic collection of songs, from the country-tinged "Whiskey" to the French-inspired "The Lake Song," a love letter to Lynn's sister-in-law, complete with a lilting accordion performance by Doug himself, honoring his father's musical legacy.

While the duo has always drawn from personal experiences in their songwriting, "Reflections" is perhaps their most intimate and varied project yet. "Every song touches a part of my life or someone I care about," Lynn reflects. "Whether it's the story of a friend's journey with Alzheimer's in "The Long Goodbye" or the carefree summers that inspired "The Lake Song," each track is a love letter to a moment or a person who means something to me."

Solid backing vocals

The collaborative spirit of Reflections extends to the backing vocals, with Rocio Guitard, Mary Zarucchi, Sharon Perl, and Maggie Wing—known as the "Shady Ladies"—lending their voices to create a fun, empowering anthem with "Out With My Girls." Rocio co-wrote the song with Lynn and Doug, did the harmonies, and helped with the vocal recording. "He made the entire experience a blast. It was a whole new world of music," Doug said.

"Shady Ladies"—lend their voices to create a fun, empowering anthem with "Out With My Girls." Rocio Guitard co-wrote the song with Lynn and Doug, created the harmonies, and helped with the vocal recording.

As Lynn and Doug look back on the two-year journey of Reflections, they recognize not only the challenges they faced but also the immense growth that came with it. "Every song on this album taught me something new," Lynn says. "Whether it was learning to trust myself more or figuring out how to sing in a way I never had before, each track required its own lessons."

At its heart, Reflections is a celebration of the moments that shape our lives—both the small, everyday ones and the profound ones we carry with us forever. "I hope listeners can find their own journeys in these songs," Lynn shares.

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Anna Fedorova
10/5/24



Vyacheslav Gryaznov
11/16/24



Alexander Malofeev
1/26/25



Zlata Chochieva
3/29/25



Florian Noack
4/26/25



Alexander Kobrin
5/31/25



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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
"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.

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

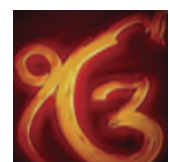
practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak" the English meaning is " May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.



GRACE CHURCH OF EVERGREEN
www.GraceChurchEvergreen.Com
408-274-1200
See you on Facebook.
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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.



God is One
ਰੱਬ ਇਕ ਹੈ
Rab Ik Hai
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.SanJose-Gurdwara.org>

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH
5111 San Felipe Rd., San Jose, CA 95135
408-223-1562.
www.stfrancisofassisi.com
or 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!



thepoint.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

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