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City, Senate reports
Looking forward to 2025 and fighting the fires in Los Angeles
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Valley Water working to protect homes and business from flooding
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JAN. 24 - FEB. 6, 2025 ■ VOL. 42, NO. 3

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Silver Creek Academy 2025 Speech Contest winners announced

By William Bellou
Publisher

Silver Creek Academy hosted its 2025 Speech Contest, sponsored by Evergreen School District, on January 11th at James Franklin Smith Elementary School.

More than 150 participants from the Evergreen School District Public Speaking and Debate Program competed in the speech contest.

Students from first through sixth grade presented speeches regarding someone they admire while highlighting specific characteristics and qualities of those individuals. Seventh and eighth grade participants presented speeches about how individual

See **WINNERS**, page 10

Santa Clara County aims to restore East San Jose hospital services

By Brandon Pho
San José Spotlight

Santa Clara County officials have finalized their \$150 million purchase of Regional Medical Center from private corporation HCA Healthcare, which depleted the hospital's services over the years. But the hard work to make it whole again is just beginning.

County officials are racing against the clock to restore the gutted trauma care services by April 1, the day the sale closes, followed by heart attack and stroke care at yet to be determined dates. They'll also have to hold ample town hall meetings for community input on what services to restore before others, hire back enough staff while in a budget deficit, and do it all without opening new rifts with their hospital workers.

County Executive James Williams said there's much work to be done between now and April.

"We've also publicly committed to restoring labor and delivery services that were cut in 2020," Williams told San José Spotlight. "We will need some time to be in there, operating Regional, to develop an appropriate timeline to bring back those practices since they were shuttered so many years ago. But right now,



Santa Clara County will close its \$150 million purchase of Regional Medical Center from HCA Healthcare on April 1. File photo.

there's a lot of work to do between now and April to take over the operations."

Restoring Regional's downgraded level 3 trauma center to a level 2 will require new licensure approvals from the state — and that can take time. The county needs to get an electronic medical record system up and running and onboard the hospital's 1,000 workers into the county employee system. The county will also have to hire additional staff to revamp the care HCA reduced over the years.

Williams said it's still unclear how many new hires the county will need. He added the county expects to fill some staffing gaps with existing employees at the county's other hospitals, as well as contract workers.

The idea worries Allan Kamara, an emergency department nurse at Valley Medical Center. He said he's heard concerns from members of his union, the Registered Nurses Professional Association, that nurses will be asked to float up to Regional to help out. The issue fueled nurse strikes last April.

"VMC is already so short staffed due to the service cuts at Regional that have already occurred. Our ER is inundated with patients," Kamara told San José Spotlight.

Rachel Ruiz, a pediatric gastroenterologist at VMC and president of the county physicians' union, said physicians have signaled their readiness to travel to Regional and help keep

See **HOSPITAL SERVICES**, page 5

San Jose has a new vice mayor

By Brandon Pho
San José Spotlight

Two-term San Jose Councilmember Pam Foley is getting a new title: vice mayor.

Foley, who represents District 9, will take over the ceremonial role from District 1 Councilmember Rosemary Kamei, who Mayor Matt Mahan in 2023 appointed in an attempt to bridge political divides between labor and busi-



District 9 San Jose Councilmember Pam Foley has been appointed vice mayor by Mayor Matt Mahan. File photo.

ness interests.

Foley's new role will start Jan. 28 pending approval by the full San Jose City Council.

Foley, who like Mahan is more fiscally conservative and business friendly, will take over the responsibility of filling Mahan's role of chairing meetings — and appearing at public events — on occasions where Mahan can't show up. She said her fiscally conservative approach to governance makes her a sound pick ahead of looming budget woes.

"The concerns he wants to focus on in the city are pretty much those which residents of District 9 want to focus on," Foley told San Jose Spotlight. "In many ways I am

See **VICE MAYOR**, page 8

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Reflecting on the year

By Domingo Candelas

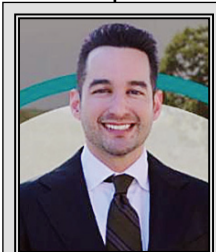
As we welcome 2025, I want to take a moment to reflect on some of the achievements we had this past year.

In 2024, my office partnered with many neighborhood associations and organizations to host numerous events throughout our district. Hundreds of neighbors attended our Music in the Square series, Fall Family Festival, and Santa at the Square event. An astounding crowd of 30,000 people gathered at Lake Cunningham for the first-ever city-sponsored fireworks show in East San Jose!

We kept our neighborhoods clean with community cleanups and dumpster days, collecting more than 300 tons of trash from residents. Additionally, we worked towards safer streets with 53 school crosswalks upgraded to high visibility for pedestrian safety and 9 traffic-calming projects and sideshow mitigation meas-

ures. While there is still much work to do, it's important to note our successes along the way.

Most importantly, I want to thank you all for your support in the recent election. Your trust and belief in a shared vision for the community have allowed me the opportunity to continue to serve for four more years. I am committed to continue working on making our neighborhoods and the City of San Jose an even better place for everyone to live and work.



Council Report
Domingo Candelas,
District 8 Councilmember

Fire relief work continues

By Dave Cortese

The year 2025 is off and running and unfortunately so are the horrendous fires fanned by the Santa Ana winds in the Los Angeles area.

This has culminated in the largest disaster in the history of the state of California - lives have been lost and thousands of homes and businesses burned to the ground.

In Sacramento we are laser focused, in real-time, on providing fire relief to the Los Angeles area.

I'd like to extend my heartfelt condolences and steadfast focus on bringing relief to our friends in Southern California.

As wildfires continue to impact our State, the Governor's Office of Service and Community Engagement (GO-Serve) and California Volunteers would like to share essential resources and information to help you all stay informed, prepared, and supported during this challenging time.

Please find graphics and additional information at the California Volunteers website. The toolkit provides social media posts and helpful links to public information in English and Spanish.

We are not strangers to fires in Northern California in areas like the foothills of San José and in the hills surrounding Morgan Hill and Gilroy. I now represent all of those cities - including 80 percent of San José - in District 15 since the boundaries were changed. My office will soon be holding town halls and community meetings in all those areas on preparations for wildland fires. We want to hear from you all about your concerns.

Why the new boundaries into

Morgan Hill and Gilroy in addition to San José? It's the result of the population changes highlighted by the 2020 Census. The boundaries for the Congressional, State Senate, State



Senate Report
By Dave Cortese
State Senator

Assembly, and Board of Equalization districts among others were all modified. In our case, the California Citizens Redistricting Commission was responsible for getting your input and determining the new boundaries.

The cities of Morgan Hill and Gilroy add so much to Santa Clara County and the district

I represent - housing, food, agriculture, parks, wineries and natural beauty. These cities also face a number of challenges like many California cities: climate change, wildland fires, flooding, inequities in housing, food insecurities and affordable living. Examples of the many issues I look forward to tackling at the state level with input from you and local community leaders.

As always, please feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or concerns. I can be reached at senator.cortese@sen.ca.gov or by calling (408) 723-4157.

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Times **Community**

Hospital services

Continued from page 1
service lines open.

“We know we’re up against higher stakes — we have a national physician shortage and our group wants to make sure the culture of Regional Medical Center is part of the county’s,” Ruiz told San José Spotlight.

Kamara and Ruiz agreed the county’s purchase of Regional is the right move.

They see it as an exciting moment for East San Jose. They just hope the county has learned its lessons from six years ago.

When county officials bought three near-bankrupt hospitals in 2019, they promised thousands of workers at O’Connor Hospital in San Jose, Saint Louise Regional Hospital in Gilroy and DePaul Medical Center in Morgan Hill they could keep their jobs. But workers said the county reneged on that pledge once it took over — fueling early months of “chaos.”

Williams said the county is more prepared this time around.

“We do have experience to draw on in terms of the steps that are needed. We’re of course taking lessons learned from that prior transition,” he told San José

Spotlight.

In the span of a year, East San Jose went from possibly losing most of its care to seeing more health care options than it’s ever known, according to Dr. Raj Gupta, a neurologist and medical director of Regional’s stroke center, who risked his job speaking out against the company’s cuts.

While he agrees trauma care is the first step, he said the stroke center is still in need of neurosurgeons. He said at some point the county needs to restore gastrointestinal care and care for kidney failure and disease, as well.

“I think these two services will be very vital besides your usual emergency services, critical care doctors, surgeons. We’re looking forward to working with the county,” Gupta told San José Spotlight.

Darcie Green, executive director of East Side patient advocacy group Latinas Contra Cancer, said she looks forward to the community laying out its vision at future town halls.

“Patients can come up with beautiful, innovative and reasonable ideas to deliver health care — we just need to listen,” said Green, who helped lead protests against HCA last year.

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Humane Society of Silicon Valley resumes services

By William Bellou
Publisher

Adoption services at the Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) are back to normal, except for operating rooms after a fire that broke out on December 16 destroyed half the building and temporarily closed the space.

The crucial operating rooms are so badly damaged, the organization is searching for a surgical unit near the shelter. It's estimated that the damaged parts of the building could take at least a year to complete the repairs.

The shelter's laundry operations were damaged, along with its medical areas, shelter operation offices and all the animal-holding areas.



The Humane Society of Silicon Valley in Milpitas is recovering from a fire that broke out Dec. 16 and destroyed half of the building.

The adoption area also sustained damages leaving only two-thirds of the floor operational. No one was injured in the fire.

To keep pet adoptions and housing going during that time, the shelter's staff has been relocating animals to foster homes. More than 100 animals found their new homes.

The shelter has reached storage capacity for donations, so the staff

is now encouraging monetary donations from the community as the staff figures out the costs associated with demolition, construction and other services including renting storage spaces.

The HSSV consists of more than 150 employees and more than 3,000 volunteers. Last year, the shelter found homes for more than 6,000 animals.



Valley Water working to maintain streams to protect homes and businesses from flooding

Valley Water crews worked throughout Santa Clara County this past summer and fall, maintaining local creeks as part of our Stream Maintenance Program.

Valley Water is focusing on work

in the creeks to enhance the health of our local ecosystems while reducing flood risks that threaten homes and businesses.

Valley Water currently oversees more than 300 miles of our county's 800 miles of streams. Maintaining streams ensures that our 185 miles of flood protection projects remain effective.

Valley Water crews utilize heavy equipment to remove vegetation and accumulated sediment in our creeks, ensuring water can flow downstream effectively. This proactive maintenance reduces the risk of flooding for local properties.

Bank Protection

High and sustained water flows can cause extensive damage to creek banks, eroding existing flood protection improvements and natural elements. Repairing creek banks also helps protect neighboring homes and property from damage.

Sediment Removal

Sediment and debris washed downstream can restrict water flow in some areas. During a heavy storm, these restricted-flow areas could cause water to back up, increasing the risk of flooding. Crews remove sediment to allow stormwater to flow through the creeks as designed.

Vegetation Management

Valley Water crews manage over 3,000 acres of instream and upland vegetation annually. Selective removal of instream vegetation maintains flow conveyance in streams and riparian corridors.

Mitigation

Valley Water implements mitigation projects to offset impacts associated with some of the bank protection, sediment removal, and vegetation management work.

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Times Local News

Vice Mayor

Continued from page 1
aligned with the mayor.”

But she said that doesn’t mean she’ll go along with every position Mahan takes.

“I am thoughtful in my decision-making process,” she said. “We have this relationship where initially we didn’t really know

each other, but developed a trust and respect. I am honored to be selected for this.”

Kamei, who won her first election in the West San Jose district outright in 2022, held the title for two years. Mahan’s selection of her was notable for political reasons.

San Jose politics are often split between a labor-leaning, progressive faction and one that’s more business focused, which leans toward loosening rules on development and business taxes. Mahan, who typically aligns with business interests, started his two-year term in 2022 with a labor majority on the city council that at times hindered his ability to pass policies. With Mahan starting his first full four-year term, councilmembers have been more inclined to agree with his business-focused decisions.

Kamei has previously said she considers herself more moderate, not leaning too heavily on one side versus the other. She said Foley is “an excellent choice.”

“She brings a lot of experience and is our most veteran councilmember,” she told San José Spotlight. “This is going to be a tough year and we’re going to have to make tough decisions. We have economically challenging times ahead — weighing different trade-offs and budget priorities.”

She said it’s been a privilege to hold the title for the last two years.

“I think I have brought a lot of my own experience and sense of bridge building to the council and I look forward to working with Pam and the mayor and my fellow councilmembers,” Kamei said.

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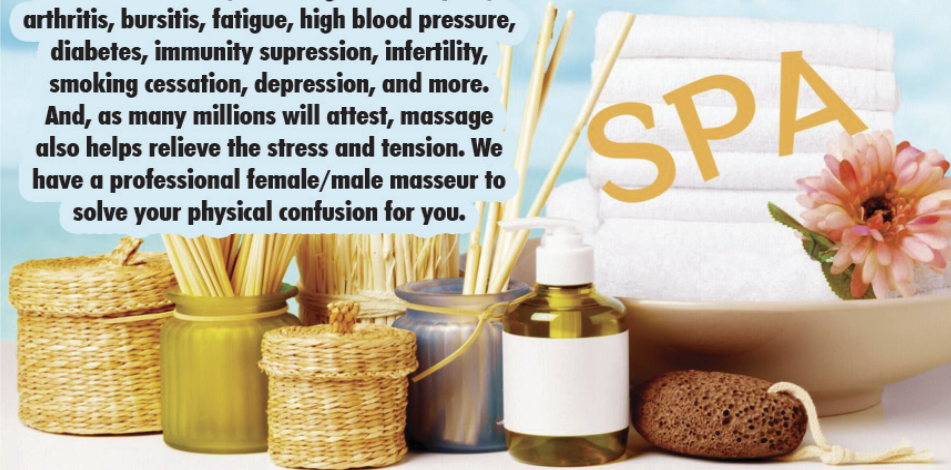
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Winners

Continued from page 1

actions can inspire change.

Families and friends of the participants, ESD staff and teachers, Board Members, and special guests attended this fun-filled event. Attendees included Board Member Patti Andrade, Millbrook principal Steve Sweeney, Evergreen Elementary principal Diana Nakano, and Honored Guests Bernadette Marcias and Linda Mora.

First, second, and third place winners were declared across each grade level division. Silver Creek Academy provided awards, free books, commemorative T-shirts, and goodie bags to all who participated. Students also enjoyed an arts and crafts table, game station, and photo op table.

"We loved hearing all the amazing speeches the students presented during the event! It was impressive to see how the students' skills and overall confidence developed. We look forward to continuing our public speaking and debate program in collaboration with the Evergreen School District," said Reem Coniglio, general manager of Silver Creek Academy, after the event.

For more information about Silver Creek Academy, call (408) 839-5905 or visit SCAA SanJose.com.

- Contest Winners**
- Grade 1 Division**
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 2. Swara Chiney



- Grade 2 Division**
1. Innila Anan
 2. Michaela Sanchez
 3. Keval Gandhi
- Grade 3 Division**
1. Shiven Desai
 2. Arjun Sharma
 3. Nivaan Kishore
- Grade 4 Division**
1. Nandika Goyal
 2. Andrew Nguyen
 3. Avani Emmadi
- Grade 5 Division**
1. Sahasra Maheshwar
 2. Amaani Sharma
 3. William Vo
- Grade 6 Division**
1. Ahaan Chakraborty
 2. Arianna Chakraborty
 3. Venba Kathiravan



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At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellow-

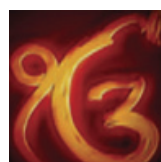
ship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed, loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family.


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. 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.



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

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

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


the**point**.church

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

To place a worship listing, email times@timesmediainc.com

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SCHEDULE TODAY: 408 - 477 - 2242
3519 SAN FELIPE ROAD
SAN JOSE, CA. 95135