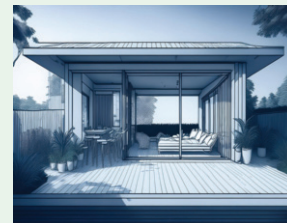


East San Jose mural honors Vietnamese community
SEE PAGE 3



Uncertain times
Santa Clara County defends ideals, takes care of the needy
See page 4

Mayor proposes statewide stockpile of ADUs in case of future fires
SEE PAGE 5



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Evergreen Times

FEB. 7 - FEB. 20, 2025 ■ VOL. 42, NO. 4

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Carl Eugene Salas in the San Jose City Council chambers on Jan. 28, 2025. Photo by Vicente Vera, San Jose Spotlight.

Carl Salas selected for District 3 to replace Omar Torres who resigned in disgrace from District 3 council seat

By William Bellou
Publisher

Engineer and businessman Carl Salas will temporarily represent San Jose's District 3, filling the months-long void since an alleged sexual molestation misconduct scandal prompted Councilmember Omar Torres to resign from the San Jose City Council.

Salas bested Jahmal Williams, See SALAS, page 4

Funny Farm restaurant in Evergreen closes due to multiple burglaries, rising costs

By William Bellou
Publisher

Evergreen Valley's popular Funny Farm restaurant, located on San Felipe Rd., has closed its doors permanently due to seven break-ins and the rising cost of operating a business. Funny Farm's last day of business was Sunday, Feb. 2.

The restaurant has not been able to recover from the thousands of dollars of damage from the break-ins and the rising costs of doing business in Silicon Valley, according to co-owner Monica Levi.

Since the break-ins at Funny Farm, local leaders have tried to protect the businesses in the area with increased police presence following several break-ins.

Last year in August, the restaurant suffered its seventh burglary, the third in less than a



NO LAUGHING MATTER – Evergreen Valley's popular Funny Farm restaurant closed on Feb. 2 which was no laughing matter for co-owner **Monica Levi** and chef **Ron Levi**. The restaurant stayed open longer on the last day so that patrons could order their favorites and say their goodbyes. Photo by Robert Eliason, San Jose Spotlight.

month, when its security system failed to sound an alarm. The damage to the restaurant was estimated to be in the several thousands of dollars.

"While I am sad to see the Funny Farm close, I remain committed to supporting local businesses in every way possible while they navigate these challenging times," said Domingo Candelas, District 8 San Jose City Councilmember. "It's unfortunate that the cost of doing business in this city is so high."

Co-owner Monica Levi told KRON-4 that the restaurant's PG&E bill increased from \$1,800 a month to more than \$6,000 over just three years. The restaurant has also been dealing with increasing costs of food, including eggs. Levi says deciding to close was not easy.

Funny Farm specialized in presenting classic comfort food favorites with a quirky twist with its specialty burgers, melts, and Reetos, served in an eclectic and fun environment.

A restaurant patron told the *Evergreen Times* that he would like to start a GoFundMe page, but that the idea may be too late to initiate.



Nine students graduate from Tesla START Program at Evergreen Valley College

Many placed nationwide after graduation

On Thursday, January 23, EVC's Auto Tech program saw nine more students graduate from its Tesla START Program.

The graduates have jobs at Tesla. Over its 11 cohorts, more than 100 students have been placed within Tesla.

The 16-week program combines lectures and hands-on experience at the service centers to teach students to become service technicians.

Sergio Valles, who leads the program for EVC, has relationships with 19 service centers. He has coordinated students working in centers located nationwide following their graduation.

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Tule, we meet again

TULE LOOKOUT - A close look at some of the tule elk gathered atop this ridge off Silver Creek Valley Road several afternoons lately. This photo was taken by Lou Alexander on Saturday, Feb. 1.

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Times **Community**



Painted by artists associated with 1Culture Gallery, the mural is located at 1737 Alum Rock Ave. on the side of Wash America. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

East San Jose mural honors Vietnamese community

By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

A new mural on Alum Rock Avenue in East San Jose pays tribute to the city's Vietnamese community.

The mural's three panels — which depict Vietnamese people fleeing their homeland, a woman in cultural dress and the beauty of Vietnam — is a first for the East San Jose Asian American community.

The artwork evokes the history of the Vietnamese American community in a city with the greatest number of Vietnamese residents outside of Vietnam. It also claims to be the largest Vietnamese mural in the San Francisco Bay Area, according to District 5 San Jose Councilmember Peter Ortiz.

The unveiling moved former members of the Vietnamese military to tears. Thuan Nguyen, president of the Vietnamese Business Association, said 2025 marks 50 years since the Vietnamese people fled their country due to the Vietnam War. Many resettled in San Jose, making the mural even more meaningful. It lets people know they're part of the city, he said.

"Every time I look at the mural and I see the list of people who made it happen," he said, "it shows the spirit of community as a whole, working together, making each other feel comfortable and understood and appreciated."

Nguyen said it's impressive to see funding for the mural come from outside the Vietnamese American community.

Painted by artists associated with 1Culture Gallery, the mural is located at 1737 Alum Rock Ave. on the side of laundromat Wash America. Ortiz's office and Alum Rock Santa Clara Street Business Association collaborated with 1Cul-

ture Gallery on its creation. The Sobrato Organization, Community Housing Developers and residents also provided funding, including Hai Huynh, Hoàng Mộng Thu, Hannah Nguyen, Thuan Nguyen and Ha Trieu.

Philip Nguyen, executive director of the Vietnamese American Roundtable, said the emotional response of older residents to the mural can facilitate conversations around healing. He said more public art is needed to celebrate the rich cultural history of San Jose.

"I feel a deep sense of pride and belonging when I see the mural," he said. "Art, like this mural, allows children of refugees and immigrants opportunities to engage with their own families about their migration and resettlement histories, as well as to the shared, yet diverse experiences of what it means to be from East San Jose."

Ortiz said although District 5 boasts the second highest Vietnamese American population in San Jose, the community historically hasn't had representation in his district.

"I wanted to make sure they were able to see themselves in the story and the social fabric of the East Side," he told San José Spotlight. "It makes people feel seen and heard. It shows them you are a member of this community. We welcome you and we're going to work together."

Ortiz described Alum Rock as a living, breathing reflection of the rich cultures, dreams and entrepreneurial spirit of its diverse residents. He said adding more murals will help establish a sense of identity and portray the rich history of its people, as well as promote cross-cultural harmony and the Alum Rock business district.

District 7 Councilmember Bien Doan sees the mural as a celebration of the Vietnamese American community's vibrant culture, which is deeply rooted in San Jose.

"It's a beautiful mural that tells a story through art of the Vietnamese immigrant community," he told San José Spotlight. "The journey we made from Vietnam, the struggle and the triumph and establishing a new home far away from our homeland."



A new mural on Alum Rock Avenue in East San Jose pays tribute to the city's Vietnamese community. Photo courtesy of Councilmember Peter Ortiz's office.

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BLOOD DRIVE

Dignity Bay Area Community Blood Drive

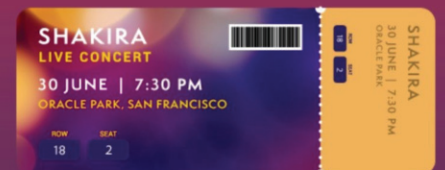
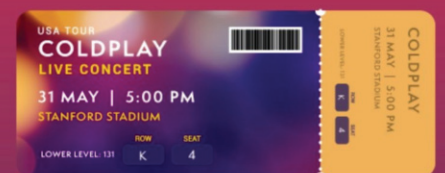
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Santa Clara County defends ideals, takes care of people in need

By Dave Cortese

We're starting off the month of February with many changes coming at us quickly because we're in a new political era. That's unsettling and disruptive for many of you living in my district. But in Santa Clara County we have always defended our ideals, celebrated and honored our many cultures, taken care of our people in need, and protected our environment.

Locally is where we have always done the best for our community! I encourage you to get involved and stay informed about the many events, activities and issues coming your way in February! I've highlighted many of them inside this newsletter.

Today's "Unhoused Health Fair" is a great example of how our community organizations lift each other up and help one another for the

greater good of the people who live here! I hosted my annual Unhoused Health Fair at San Jose City Hall with everything from health & dental screenings to bike repairs and information about housing, shelters and resources for older adults and children. So many of our community and non-profit organizations contributed their time, energy and resources to help people who often cannot help themselves. In my next newsletter in February, I'll highlight pictures of this great event.

February represents our colorful, diverse community with more Lunar New Year festivities including Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Taiwanese and more! It's also Black History Month with plenty of activities for everyone to



Senate Report
By Dave Cortese
State Senator

participate in at our public libraries, music venues and event centers.

American Heart Month is also in February – a time to take stock of your blood pressure, cholesterol, exercise and diet! There are many events you can attend to get all the information you need about maintaining a healthy heart. And of course, don't forget to keep your schedules and hearts open for Valentine's Day on February 14 - celebrate this day by sending messages of love and affection to partners, family and friends!

Please send me Dave.Cortese@sen.ca.gov any upcoming, free events in District 15 that you want highlighted in this newsletter that is published twice a month.

Salas

Continued from page 1

Director of DEI Partnerships at San Jose State in a final round of voting Tuesday, January 28. The pair advanced in earlier voting over land-use consultant Bob Staedler and Danielle Christian, a longtime Santa Clara County employee.

Salas said his priorities center around making the city "safe, clean

and efficient."

Despite the challenges ahead, Mahan touted Salas' experience and expressed confidence in his ability to serve District 3 residents ably, which encompasses the area around downtown San Jose.

"I'm so excited to have an opportunity at the end of my professional career to really try to add some value, especially at this tough time here in the city, when we have a \$60 million deficit," Salas said.

"We have the greatest people in the world, the greatest weather in the world, and I know I live the greatest opportunity in the world, right here in San Jose."

District 3 has been facing a lack of leadership and representation due to Torres' absence and ouster, so the City Council opted to fill the seat through a temporary appointment and special election, rather than a permanent appointment, which was an unpopular option

among District 3 residents.

Despite the challenges ahead, San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan touted Salas' experience and expressed confidence in his ability to serve District 3 residents ably.

Seven candidates will appear on the April 8 special election ballot. If none of the candidates receive 51% of the votes, a runoff election between the two highest vote-getters will be decided in the June 24 election.

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Times **Community**



Villages Community takes an active role on emergency preparedness

By Domingo Candelas

My heartfelt thoughts go out to the individuals and families affected by the Southern California fires.

With increasing droughts and rising temperatures, the reality is that fire season in California is year-round. As wildfires become more frequent and intense, it is imperative that all of our neighbors have a plan and are prepared.

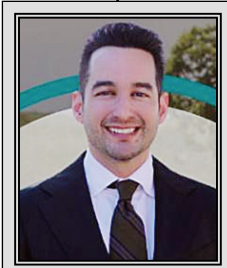
The San Jose Fire Department has various resources available for the public. From fire-resistant

landscaping to insurance preparedness, there is an abundance of information available to protect you and your loved ones.

Additionally, the Santa Clara County FireSafe Council provides education and project assistance to communities residing in vulnerable areas, like the East Foothills, to increase wildfire survivability.

On a more positive note, The Villages Community has taken an active role on emergency preparedness. This month, they were recognized as the first FireWise USA community in San Jose, making them the largest community in Santa Clara County to receive this certificate! Kudos for ensuring our neighbors are prepared.

My office is always here to support.



Council Report

Domingo Candelas, District 8 Councilmember

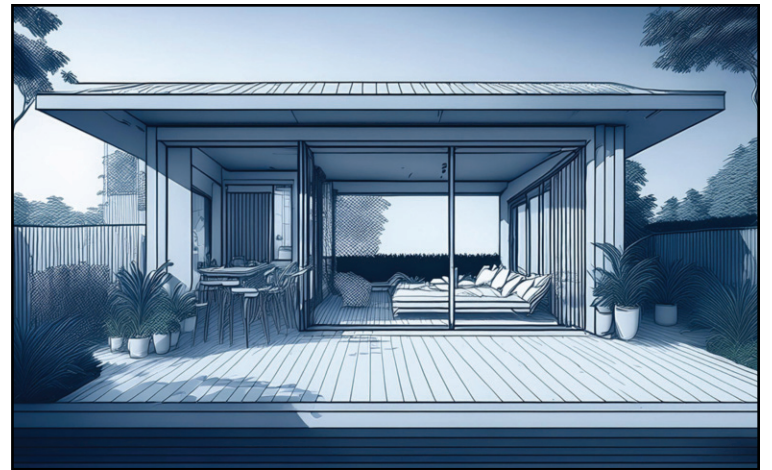
Diaster brings people together

By Matt Mahan

When disaster strikes, we see people come together. In its wake, we often see our government innovate and take bold action in response – prompted by newfound political will that was absent prior to the crisis.

We saw this play out during the pandemic with Operation Warp Speed, which developed and distributed new vaccines in less than a year. We saw this after the Great Depression, with the introduction of Social Security, unemployment insurance, and early banking regulation.

And we saw this after the 1906 earthquake that led San Francisco to deploy over 5,000 “earthquake cottages” to create housing for those who had been displaced. Some of these homes still stand – and have provided affordable-by-design housing for generations.



Now, we have a chance to take inspiration from the past and apply it to our most recent natural disaster.

The fires in Los Angeles have been contained, but the housing crisis exacerbated by their flames is only growing worse. Tens of thousands of people are flooding an already brutal housing market in Southern California, and rents are soaring by thousands of dollars in some areas. Though terrible and tragic, the fires are also a rare opportunity to tackle housing affordability, not just in Los Angeles but also in San Jose

and throughout California.

I am proposing that California establish a state program to negotiate the bulk purchase of up to 1 million factory-made backyard cottages – deploying them first to help those who have been displaced as they rebuild and then using them as deeply affordable housing stock that can generate income for homeowners and expand our housing supply at no long-term cost to taxpayers.

Backyard cottages or ADUs aren’t for everyone. But they can make a huge difference in our housing crisis, create income for middle class families, and extend the opportunity of homeownership to the next generation of Californians.



From the Mayor

Matt Mahan Mayor, San Jose

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Times **Local News**

San Jose breaks ground on seventh tiny home facility

By Joyce Chu
San José Spotlight

San Jose will add a seventh tiny home site to its temporary housing stock, giving dozens of people a roof over their head come fall.

After more than two years, the Cherry Avenue tiny homes project is about to begin construction,

with a planned opening in September. The \$18.3-million project will provide temporary housing for 136 homeless residents. This facility, which sits on Valley Water property, is funded by \$9 million from the state, \$7 million from Measure E — funds diverted from permanent housing— and \$2.4 million in philanthropic donations, including \$1 million from real estate developer John Sobrato.

“These projects don’t happen in a vacuum, and they don’t happen by luck or chance,” Deputy City Manager Omar Passons said Tuesday at the ground breaking. “They require political will.”

Two years ago, Valley Water Director Jim Beall proposed a change in the water district laws that would enable Valley Water land to be used to support housing for homeless residents camping along its property. The board of directors ap-proved the change.

“This is just the first one,” Beall said at the press conference.



Valley Water Director **Jim Beall** speaks at the Cherry Avenue tiny home groundbreaking site in San Jose on Jan. 21. The facility will sit on Valley Water land. *Photo by Joyce Chu.*

“We’re going to look at other surplus properties and other opportunities to collaborate.”

DignityMoves is the developer and will receive up to \$15 million to design and construct the site. The nonprofit helped raise the

philanthropic funding.

“We raise philanthropy for lots of our projects,” *DignityMoves* CEO Elizabeth Funk told San José Spotlight. “It takes, quite frankly, somebody like us to go around, pass the hat and try to pull some of that

(funding) together.”

Community support was also essential for this project to move forward.

“I’m ecstatic that we got the support of the community... with no pushback,” District 9 Councilmember Pam Foley, whose district sits within the project, told San José Spotlight. “They were completely embracing what we were trying to do here from the very beginning.”

The temporary emergency housing facility is being built across from the Hampton Inn where people are camped along the Guadalupe River. Homeless people within the vicinity will be given priority for residency when it is up and running.

City workers are compiling a list of people who are interested in living at Cherry Avenue.

“We’re doing outreach and have our case managers basically identifying who’s living in the area and making sure that we’re able to offer them a unit when it becomes available,” Mayor Matt Mahan told San José Spotlight.

The housing will have central laundry, private bathrooms and an outdoor picnic area. It will include case management, security and other services to help people transition into permanent housing. The city has not chosen its homeless service provider yet. Once operational, it will cost about \$5 million annually to operate, or \$37,500 per bed.

The Cherry Avenue site is part of the mayor’s plan to add 1,000 tiny home beds over the next year to reduce the amount of people living on the streets and along waterways. The city has approximately 500 beds across six tiny home sites.

San Jose has 6,340 unhoused residents, with more than 4,400 of whom are unsheltered, according to Santa Clara County’s 2023 biennial count of homeless people. More than 9,900 people are homeless countywide and nearly 4,300 households experienced homelessness for the first time last year — a 24% increase from 2022 — according to county data.

After the Cherry Avenue location is up and running, a no encampment zone will be enforced from Blossom Hill Road to Branham Lane.

“Two years ago, I stepped into this office and pledged that the city of San Jose is going to end the era of encampments,” Mahan said at the presser. “We in government have a responsibility for building basic dignified shelter, interim housing and treatment centers... when they’re available, people have a responsibility for coming indoors and taking advantage of those services.”



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IN MEMORY

Mary Louise Vanderbosch

100 years old, San Jose

Mary Louise Vanderbosch, age 100, passed away peacefully in her home on January 21, 2025 in San Jose, California.

Born on January 14, 1925, in South Bend Indiana, she was the firstborn child of Kenneth and Dorothy Reiter and the oldest of 8 siblings. Mary Louise attended St Patrick's Elementary School and graduated from St. Joseph's Academy.

In 1952 she met her future husband, Thomas Vanderbosch on a blind date. They married on April 16, 1955, and shared a loving marriage of 62 years, raising six children together. Mary Louise dedicated her life to her family as a devoted mother and wife.

A long-time parishioner of St. Christopher's Catholic Church in San Jose for 58 years, Mary Louise was deeply rooted in her faith and community.

She is survived by her children: Tom of Denver Colorado; Patti, Beth, Sue, Jill and Jim, all of San Jose, California. She also leaves behind brothers John Reiter of South Bend, Indiana and David Reiter of San Diego, California and a sister Peggy Christian, of Fort Meyers, Florida. There are also nine grand-



children and 3 great grandchildren who brought her immense joy. Mary Louise was predeceased by her beloved husband Thomas, siblings Joanne Kavanaugh, Terry McKayley, Kathy Reiter, and Dennis Reiter; her grandson Noland Iseman and other cherished family members.

Mary Louise Vanderbosch's legacy lives on through the love she shared with her family and the memories treasured by those who knew her. May her memory bring comfort to all those who mourn her passing.

A memorial service was held at St. Christopher's Catholic Church.

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SEE PAGE 6

150 nature walks
to visit in 2024
SEE PAGE 9

win their fourth
city Championship

Helps make
more inclusive

NEWS

Public meeting for city-
of Course Redevelopment

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EvergreenTimes

Seek alternatives to herbicides

By Matthew Frazier
*Qualified Water
Efficient Landscaper*

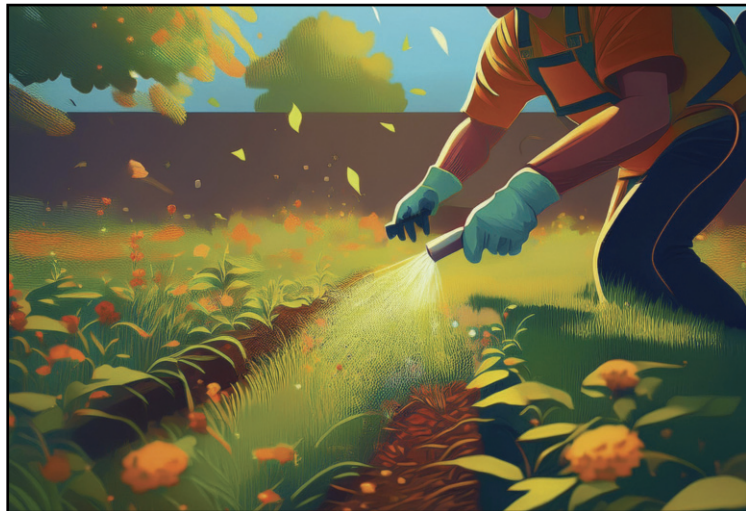
The juxtaposition of green turf lawns and the natural greenery of the Evergreen Valley brings forth a critical discourse on sustainable landscaping practices.

While the region's scenic beauty is undeniable, the environmental implications of glyphosate—a common herbicide employed for weed control—merit serious consideration.

My observations, rooted in years spent in garden centers and nurseries, reveal a persistent inclination among clients to resort to chemical solutions rather than seek alternative methods. This raises a critical question: Where might we discover viable, environmentally friendly alternatives to chemical herbicides? Mechanical weed control offers a natural approach worth exploring.

Should mowing practices be adjusted?

The Evergreen Valley, along with its ambient hills and the prominent Evergreen Valley College, contributes significantly to the overall vibrancy of the area. The evenings present an exceptional opportunity for star gazing, emphasizing the region's intrinsic beauty. However, the leisure of walking on a freshly irrigated turf lawn is tainted by the risk of inadvertently introducing glyphosate residues onto one's footwear. In light of this, I advocate for a paradigm shift: allow grass to thrive by adjusting mowing practices. By setting mower blades to a height that trims only the upper third of grass blades, one can promote healthier turf growth while retaining valu-



able clippings for mulch.

Wildflower meadows, floras and mallow

Though aeration of turf lawns is often posited as beneficial, an alternative approach of permitting lawns to evolve into wildflower meadows presents significant ecological advantages. Among the flora that may emerge is mallow—a genus characterized by its striking lavender and purple blooms, which serve as a magnet for bees and other beneficial pollinators. Furthermore, mallow has documented culinary applications that extend beyond mere salads, offering an interdisciplinary avenue for exploration. A thorough investigation via literature and academic texts focused on mallow is highly recommended for those wishing to deepen their understanding.

Native Valley flora

The aesthetic contribution of mallow to landscaping should not be underestimated. The interplay of dark and light greens, accentuated by floral displays, creates a visually compelling garden landscape, especially when juxtaposed with

low-growing annuals and perennials. I advocate strongly for the integration of native valley flora, which has thrived in the region before the encroachments of urban development. Numerous resources exist to catalog these native species, including botanical and horticultural programs at local colleges and universities, where seasoned educators often serve as rich resources due to their professional affiliations and published works.

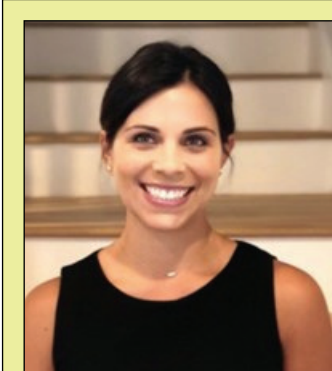
Nurturing the gardens

In closing, the thematic significance of "the majesty of mallow" transcends mere rhetoric. By nurturing mallow within our gardens, we can foster a refuge for beneficial insects, enhancing pollination within our ecosystems. I would like you to explore Mallow's culinary, medicinal, and ornamental virtues and see how these insights can be integrated into your practices. As we reflect on this discourse, let us collectively appreciate the elegance of the Evergreen Valley, the manifold beauty it encompasses and the opportunities it presents for sustainable landscaping. Thank you for engaging in this discussion; may your journey include many encounters with the remarkable mallow, which we can all share and celebrate in our communities.



Water Wise
Matthew Frazier,
Certified Water
Manager

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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.


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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

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