

San Jose Women's Club celebrates its 130th anniversary at historic downtown clubhouse
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Saarthak Shankavaram, Associate Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra.

Philharmonic Orchestra to perform Beethoven's 5th Symphony at final season concert June 7

By William Bellou
Publisher

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra presents its 2024-25 Season Finale Concert on Saturday, June 7th, 2 p.m. at the California Theatre, 345 S. 1st Street in downtown San Jose.

This premier orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, is made up of the most advanced students in the San Jose Youth Symphony.

The Final Season Concert will open the concert with George Gershwin's *Funny Face Overture*, from his musical, *Funny Face*, which featured Fred Astaire on Broadway, dancing for the first time in top hat and tails.

Featuring orchestra violinists as soloists — Saarthak Shankavaram and An-Po Chen — the orchestra will perform Sarasate's virtuosic *Navarra for Two Violins and Orchestra*, a work inspired by Sarasate's birthplace in the Navarre region of Spain.

The concert closes with the most well-known and dramatic works, Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, a great musical experience for the whole family! *See CONCERT, page 5*

San Jose parks face budget cuts amid ongoing work backlog

By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

San Jose Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services continues to wrestle with budget cuts and backlogs, and the upcoming year isn't going to be easy.

The city is facing a projected 2025-26 budget deficit of \$35.6 million — and the parks department won't go unscathed. The budget is expected to decrease park funding by \$2.8 million next year, according to Sheena Talosig, spokesperson for the department.

"We do everything we can to stretch our resources — grants, partnerships, volunteers and contractors all help us maintain parks," she told *San José Spotlight*. "We're also always looking for ways to be more efficient, but the bottom line is that we just don't have enough staff to meet the need. With a \$550 million maintenance backlog, it's clear that sustainable fund-



Kathy Kleinsteinber designed a native pollinator garden at Cahalan Park in San Jose. She said more volunteers are needed to help with park maintenance. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

ing for park staffing is critical to keeping our parks safe, clean and accessible."

Maintenance and preserving parks is at the department's core, Avi Yotam, deputy parks director, said at a May 12 Almaden Valley Community Association meeting. He said the \$2.5 million in budget cuts includes the loss of \$100,000 for community forestry. Other cost savings will come from the city's closure of Yosemite Family Camp due to wildfire damage this summer, with a one-time savings of

\$240,000 while being repaired, Yotam said.

The City Council is also considering the privatization of Lake Cunningham Action Sports Camp, a skateboard and bike park, which could save the city \$879,000 annually.

To ensure equity in park upkeep, the department uses the Healthy Places Index to guide its decisions and in prioritizing maintenance in neighborhoods with the greatest need, Talosig said.

See BACKLOG, page 3

Top three professional Pickleball player comes to Almaden Valley Athletic Club June 14th

AVAC to Host Pro Clinics with Kaitlyn Christian, No. 3 on the PPA Tour

With nearly 20 million players in the US, pickleball is the fastest growing sport in America, known for its tight knit community that's both welcoming and supportive.

The sport has many benefits including physical, mental, and social, but perhaps most important, it's fun, and it's addictive.

To help players looking to advance their skills and add more strategy to their game, the Almaden Valley Athletic Club (AVAC), announced it will host two pro pickleball clinics on Saturday, June 14th, led by Kaitlyn Christian, the world's 3rd ranked women's pickleball player.



Whether you're currently stuck in the "3.0 - 3.5 wall" or you're playing at an intermediate-to advanced level and want to progress, this professional series is for you. Kaitlyn will lead the clinics alongside AVAC's Director of Pickleball, Josh Martin, with coaching support from HappyDinker, a community-driven movement. In between clinics, participants will have the opportunity to connect with Kaitlyn for photos, autographs, and a chance to hear about life on the PPA Tour.

"I'm excited to bring my experience as a pro on the PPA Tour to the San Jose pickleball community," said Kaitlyn. "It's always inspiring to

see how much excitement and camaraderie there is around the sport. I'm grateful to be a part of it and share my passion and skills with fellow players."

"This is a big win for the South Bay pickleball community," said Josh Martin, AVAC's Director of Pickleball. "Having Kaitlyn at AVAC not only brings the PPA Tour closer to home, it's also exciting and a rare opportunity to train with an elite player in a small group setting."

Each 3-hour clinic includes:


- Two hours of drilling focused on technique, skill development, positioning and strategy
- One hour of match play against Kaitlyn, Martin and HappyDinker coaches
- Small group setting (16 players max, 4:1 coach ratio)
- Free HappyDinker t-shirt

Clinic Schedule:

1:00 PM – 4:00 PM: Intermediate to Advanced Players (3.4+ DUPR Verified)
5:00 PM – 8:00 PM: Intermediate Players (3.0 – 3.5; No Verification Required)

For more information or to register, contact Josh Martin at jmartin@AVAC.us or call (408) 445-4915.

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Times **Community News**

Silicon Valley's demographics are shifting as birth rates in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties have dropped by 34% over the last 33 years, while residents 65 and up have grown by 28% since 2013. File photo.

Silicon Valley faces challenges as its population gets older

By **Brandon Pho**
San José Spotlight

Although Silicon Valley has a reputation for attracting young, tech-savvy workers, the cycle may no longer be true as statistics point toward older adults shifting the dynamic and the area being ill-equipped for the looming change.

Fewer births and longer life expectancies will have Americans age 65 and up outnumbering children by 2030, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. But local leaders warn the boom will happen much sooner in Silicon Valley. Birth rates in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties have dropped by 34% over the last 33 years, while residents 65

and up have grown by 28% since 2013, according to this year's annual report on economic and demographic trends known as the Silicon Valley Index. Yet the region is failing to address its future and needed changes to housing, long-term adult care and mobility as the population grows older.

"It's happening around the country, but it's going to happen much sooner here — and more dramatically — than around the rest of the country," Joe Simitian, former District 5 Santa Clara County supervisor, told San José Spotlight. "That generates a whole cascade of things on a 'to do' list that we should be working on now."

See AGING, page 8

Backlog

Continued from page 1

She added the department is looking at how park funding can be restructured, after the city cut developer fees that took funding away from parks. This summer, the department will begin community outreach to better understand what people want and need from city parks. The feedback will help shape a potential ballot measure to secure sustainable maintenance funding and a new park master plan focused on how to make the system more flexible and equitable city-wide, she said.

The existing maintenance backlog has impacted community centers, park grounds, playgrounds, restrooms, picnic areas, sports facilities and trails.

City parks receive funding from construction, property transfer taxes, development impact fees, general fund allocations, gifts, grants and partnerships. Although the department receives \$40 million annually from the construction taxes, council members — in an effort to accelerate housing construction — have reduced funding allocations.

Yotam said the Parks and Recreation Master Plan will balance immediate maintenance needs with long-term aspira-

tions. "Using our California Park and Recreation Society's standards for park maintenance, we assessed how many staff we ought to have as a park and rec department for the city," he said. "We found we're about 100 people short."

Kathy Kleinsteinber has volunteered with planting pollinator gardens at local parks for years. The city asked her to choose plants and design a pollinator garden at Cahalan Park, which she maintains with other neighborhood volunteers.

"It would be nice to give money to parks because they don't have enough money to maintain them," Kleinsteinber told San José Spotlight. "Most of our parks look like heck. The budget cuts are making it even worse."

Parks Manager Veronica Schulte said the park service depends on volunteers and is pursuing additional grants. In fiscal year 2002-03, they had about 227 full-time staff in park maintenance covering 1,475 acres, she said. This dropped to 183 full-time staff responsible for 1,801 acres of park land during this past fiscal year. "Fast forward to this year, we have more acreage but less staff. We're stretched very thin over the additional parks," she said. "Having more parks means less services over time for each of the parks on a day-to-day basis, because they have more to do on their routes than they did before with less people."



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Senior Safari is back this summer.

Visitors ages 50 and up are invited to visit San Jose's iconic Happy Hollow Park & Zoo for free on the 4th Thursday of each month from May to October. The next date is Thursday, June 26th. Get some fresh air and exercise as you enjoy free admission, free parking, early entry to the park, the zoo, animal meet and greets and much more. To get in free, you must arrive between 9 and 10 am.

Summer Concert Series 2025:

ACC's staff is again presenting music in the park on Thursdays in July. Each Thursday, enjoy the sounds of local bands at Greystone Park at Camden Ave and Mount Carmel Dr, from 6:30 to 8pm. Here are each week's bands...

July 10th – Misspent Youth

July 17th – Identity Problem

July 24th – House Rockers

July 31st – The Iconics

Bring your blanket, chairs, food and experience a wonderful evening of music and fun. The Almaden Senior Association is sponsoring the band The Iconics on July 31st. Reminder: alcohol is not allowed in the park.

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Women's Club celebrates its 130th anniversary

By William Bellou
Publisher

The San Jose Woman's Club celebrated its 130th anniversary at its historic downtown clubhouse on May 22.

The club was born in December 1894 when nine women — described as “public spirited” in a 1929 newspaper article — gathered at the downtown studio of Fannie Estabrook.

Two of the big topics of discus-

sion in 1894 were women's suf-
frage and Prohibition. And there
were definitely points of disagree-
ment, according to historians.

The club and its members helped
found the San Jose Day Nursery
and were early supporters of the
Sempervirens Club to save the red-
woods in Big Basin.

Over the years, the club champi-
oned education and advancing
women's rights. In 1939-40, the
club sponsored the San Jose Junior
Woman's Club for women under
40, and one of its first members
was Betty Ann Chandler. At 107, the
club's oldest and longest-serving
member and still makes occasion-
al appearances at events.

Today the club has 167 members
— and that number has been trend-
ing upward since the COVID-19
pandemic, as the club continues to

host events for its members and
rent out its Landmark Ballroom to
other organizations.

Google joins state in media assistance

*Partnership will help
industry, but some say
funds fall short of goal*

By William Bellou
Publisher

Details regarding a hard-
fought partnership between
California and Google pro-
viding financial assistance toward
the state's news media, an indus-
try that shrunk dramatically in the
digital age were revealed last
week.

The creation of the California
Civic Media Fund, a partnership
between news media, Google and
philanthropists, would dole out a
mix of public and private funds to
media outlets.

Critics, including a former state
senator, say the agreement falls
short of earlier proposals that
would have forced Google and
other tech giants to pay newspa-
per publishers for using their con-



tent or harvesting data.

Google's parent company Alpha-
bet has agreed to contribute at
least \$10 million for the project's
first year and has also agreed to
pitch in “additional matching dol-
lars if more public, private or phil-
anthropic money is raised,” Wicks'
office said in a news release.

Alphabet says it will continue
funding other programs, includ-
ing the Google News Initiative.
Last year, the company threat-
ened to axe the program as law-
makers attempted to regulate the
company.

The agreement is on pace to fall
short of Google's pledge in August
to contribute nearly \$173 million
to the fund over five years, along
with the AI accelerator. Howev-
er, the company could contribute
more in future years.

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Times **Local News****Concert***Continued from page 1*

Saarthak Shankavaram, Associate Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra, is a junior at Prospect High School and has been playing violin since the age of 9. He has served as Concertmaster of String and Chamber Orchestras at his high school since his freshman year and has been a member of the San Jose Youth Symphony for the past four years. He has also won first prize in both the Chamber Orchestra's Concerto Competition in 2021 and the Philharmonic Orchestra's Young Artist Competition in 2022.

An-Po Chen, Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra, has been with the San Jose Youth Symphony since 2022. Now a senior at Archbishop Mitty High School, An-Po is currently studying violin, conducting and chamber music at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music's Pre-College Academy. An avid chamber musician, his octet, which he led as 1st violinist, was named Ensemble Winner at Indiana University's 2024 Final Gala Concert. He also performed as a soloist with the Philharmonic Orchestra as a winner of that orchestra's Young Artist Competition in 2022.



An-Po Chen, Concertmaster of the Philharmonic Orchestra

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over seven decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

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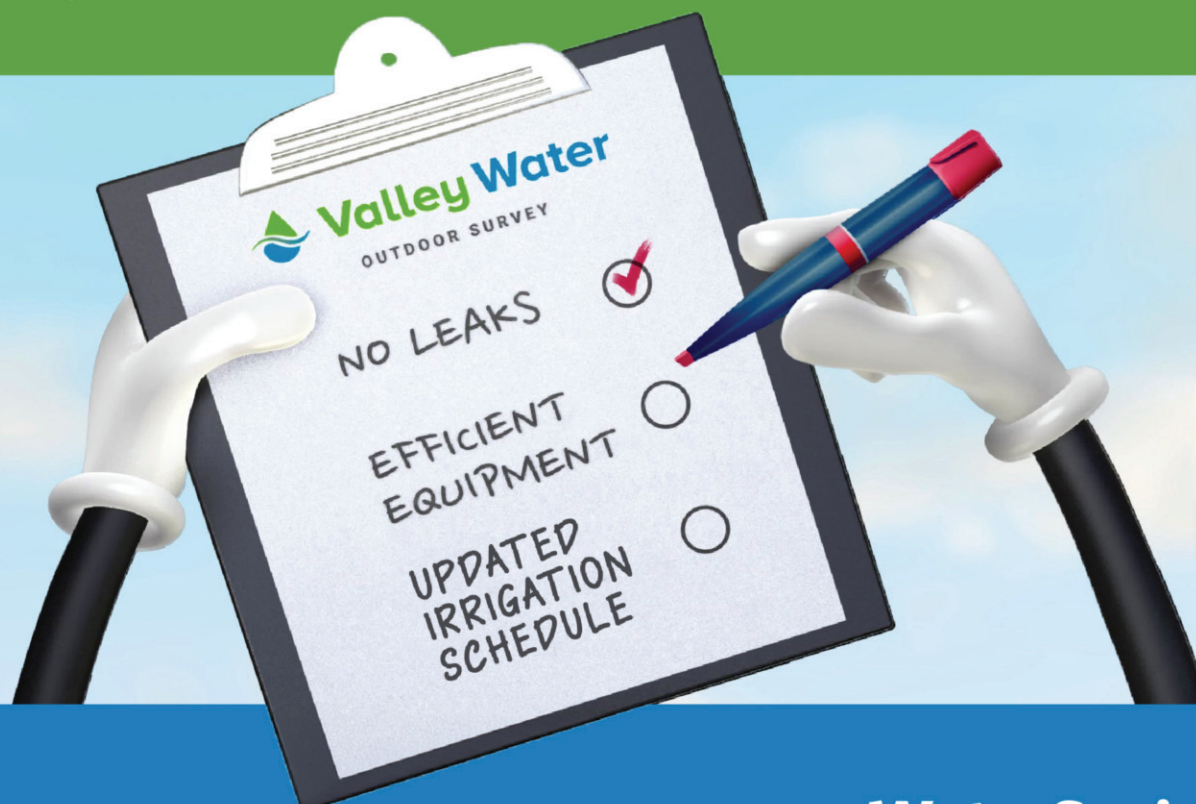
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Need for Santa Clara County senior meals outgrows budget

By Annalise Freimarck

San José Spotlight

Amy and George Hsu look forward to lunch five days a week at Sunnyvale United Methodist Church. It's where they socialize with dozens of older adults, listen to a lively jazz band play "Blueberry Hill" and get a meal with fresh fruit and vegetables they wouldn't be able to budget for on a daily basis.

"Every morning, first thing ... 'Oh, we have lunch. We have to go,'" George Hsu told San José Spotlight with a smile. "So it moves you forward."

About 37 senior nutrition programs serve 16,000 older adults a free or low-priced lunch across Santa Clara County, according to 2024 county data. The programs keep growing every year, as the region's aging population on a fixed income struggles to purchase affordable, nutritious food and find activities to combat loneliness. The county's roughly \$12 million budget for the programs can't keep up with rising demand, even with hundreds of thousands of dollars in reimbursements for extra meals. The situation is leaving the programs in a financially unpredictable state.

The Sunnyvale program the Hsus attend overserves meals outside its county-allocated budget. Santa Clara County funds about 138 meals a day, but program volunteers said they dish out 150 to 170 meals Monday through Friday, with food like chick-



Older adults receive free lunches of chicken cordon bleu, bread, broccoli and butternut squash at one of Sunnyvale's senior nutrition programs. Photo by Annalise Freimarck.

en cordon bleu. It's the same story for 14 programs in San Jose, two in Palo Alto, one in Los Gatos and multiple others across the county.

Ronald Nathan, chairperson for the Sunnyvale program volunteer committee, said they rely on church funding and county reimbursements to subsidize extra meals. He constantly worries about having to turn people away because the county budget fluctuates, especially with a potential \$70 million in federal funding cuts this year. County and church funds cover the nearly \$500,000-a-year program, which couldn't feed many older adults without govern-

ment support.

"We don't turn anybody back unless we've absolutely run out of food," Nathan told San José Spotlight. "There's a budget and (there's) the people who need it. How do you balance that?"

Santa Clara County is trying to address the need.

Vandana Puri, manager of the county senior nutrition program, said the county is adjusting the fiscal year 2025-26 contracts of every program that has overserved.

The 2025-26 county budget proposes giving the whole program \$1.5 million to make up for the gap left by pandemic dollars it no longer receives. The county even stepped in last year to fund more than \$100,000 in meals for San Jose services.

It's not enough in a county facing an elder boom. By 2030, county officials predict adults aged 60 and older will comprise more than 25% of the population.

Related Stories

Puri said the county has never fully funded individual senior nutrition programs, adding it's about collaboration.

"How we move all these pieces to be responsive to the growing need is something we rely on each organization to help us understand, so we can be effective in how we support the program as a whole," she told San José Spotlight.

The Los Gatos program, which serves about 90 older adults daily, relies on a com-

bination of resources. The county is reimbursing it about \$20,000 for overserved meals, according to program management. It also typically receives \$22,000 from the town and \$25,000 from Los Gatos Thrives Foundation, an older adult nonprofit.

Even with that combination, Executive Director Kathy Mlinarich said the program is often in the red. It will still have a roughly \$23,000 deficit after the county reimbursement. It's unclear if it will get town funding while Los Gatos is contending with its own shortfalls.

Mlinarich said without the county's reimbursements, which she called "Band-Aids," the program could run two more years before it would have to turn people away.

"It's just going to keep growing," she told San José Spotlight. "I'm just going to keep asking for money like a teenager."

The Portuguese Organization for Social Services and Opportunities relies on fundraising for its extra meals as a program in one of the poorest parts of San Jose.

Executive Director Elsa Oliveira said the county funds 122 dine-in and 77 delivered meals a day, but the nonprofit often sees 130 people eating in its facilities and delivers extra meals.

"They're elderly, and so it's just a really precarious situation," Oliveira told San José Spotlight. "A lot of them are very housing insecure. You have multiple stressors combined with a low income, so it just exacerbates that need."

The organization is set to receive \$26,000 in county reimbursements for some of its overserved meals. Oliveira said it will likely have to pay for about 1,200 extra meals — food that helps residents such as Dolores Perales.

"This really helps me a lot because I couldn't afford it if I had to go to the store and buy it," Perales told San José Spotlight. "It's so expensive. I just love coming here and eating."

Amy and George Hsu have been regulars of the Sunnyvale program for a year, with no plans to stop. They've benefited from the food and the many friends they've made.

"For the senior people, we are kind of isolated," Amy Hsu told San José Spotlight. "Over here, we go out and we chat with the people — makes me happy."



Older adults dance to a live jazz band at one of Sunnyvale's senior nutrition programs. Photo by Annalise Freimarck.

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Report: 2024's States with the Best & Worst Early Education Systems

With early education shown to boost future earning potential but few states offering free preschool programs, the personal-finance website WalletHub just released its report on 2024's States with the Best & Worst Early Education Systems, as well as expert commentary. In order to determine the best early education systems in America, WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across 12 key metrics. The data set ranges from the share of school districts that offer



a state pre-K program to the number of pre-K quality benchmarks met and total reported spending per child enrolled in pre-K. Quality of Early Education in California (1=Best; 25=Avg.):

- Overall Rank: 29th
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- 1st – Income Requirement for State Pre-K Eligibility
- 1st – Total Reported Spending per Child Enrolled in Preschool
- 14th – Total State Head Start Program Spending per Child Enrolled in Preschool
- 1st – Monthly Child Care Co-Payment Fees as a Percent of Family Income

Note: With the exception of "Total Score," all of the columns in the table above depict the relative rank of that state, where a rank of 1 represents the best conditions for that metric category.

For the full report, please visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/states-with-the-best-and-worst-early-education-systems/62668>



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Aging

Continued from page 3

Housing is going to become a major challenge. Older adults are staying put and younger people are leaving the area, which has one of the highest housing costs in the nation. It spells a future of fewer working-age people, such as caregivers and health care workers, who can't afford to live in the valley and will have to commute from outside the region making immediate, ongoing care difficult.

The more people age and their incomes become fixed, the less likely they'll move out of homes with lower tax rates, according to Joint Venture Silicon Valley CEO Russell Hancock, who oversees the study of regional economic and demographic trends every year.

"That locks (older) people into their houses," Hancock told San José Spotlight. "The elderly are actually stuck in that house which is probably too big and that introduces inefficiency in a region that needs efficiency – we need all those extra rooms."

Elder boom

During Simitian's 12 years as county supervisor, his office explored ideas to support the region's future older adult boom. That included adult day care, which gave caregivers respite during the day and helped older adults remain in their homes over costlier living facilities. He studied support programs for caregivers



through training. His office even doled out funding to refurbish homes and community centers to make them age-friendly.

"But unfortunately, the county budget situation is not as robust as it once was," Simitian said.

A widening structural financial deficit could put the county's critical social safety net services on the chopping block. The county's largest funding source for its public health care services could vanish if Congress follows through on proposed spending cuts to Medicaid. This could put more social services on the back-burner as officials grapple with absorbing the county's worst fiscal crisis since the pandemic.

Taylor Taylor, chair of the Santa Clara

County Senior Care Commission, said it's difficult for his panel to make real progress when it doesn't have the ability to provide more input on budget decisions regarding elder care and services for the aging population. He said the commission should have a more active role in weighing in on staffing levels for older adult protective services and senior nutrition programs.

"You schedule speakers, hear presentations and present recommendations to the Board of Supervisors. It's an indirect route," Taylor told San José Spotlight. "There should be a fiduciary layer to the work — we don't have to be necessarily assigned a budget, but the commission should be able to make decisions on bud-

eting. Without that, there's really no teeth."

Mobility challenges

At a more local level, efforts to increase older adult mobility have become disjointed. Cities who initially shrugged off the obligation to help fund elderly ride-share services are now starting their own different costlier shuttles.

One of Simitian's and Taylor's biggest strides was championing the 2017 roll-out of the county's Reach Your Destination Easily (RYDE) program, a curb-to-curb transportation and local trip planning service for adults 65 and up. It predominantly serves the West Valley — Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga. The service recently expanded into parts of San Jose and Morgan Hill. Taylor said the program has applied for another round of funding to help expand into Gilroy.

But RYDE faced challenges getting communities to buy in. One reason was that RYDE didn't have an app. Cities that helped launch the program through seed money ended up launching their own, according to Taylor, whose Saratoga-based non-profit Successful Aging Solutions & Community Consulting oversaw the service for the county.

"These shuttle programs are much more expensive," he said. "We asked these cities for \$20,000 to \$30,000 to help support RYDE, when Cupertino a year or two after spent \$2 million to start their shuttle program."

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- Know how to download your camera footage
- When mounting cameras, please be aware of places where people may have a reasonable expectation of privacy (examples: their backyard or interior of their home)
- Focus and mount your video on key points of entry or concern
- Exterior Mounting Location Options: Front door, rear door, side gate, driveway/front parking lot, second floor wide view and street view.
- Keep batteries charged in your cameras.
- Consider lighting around your cameras.

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- All information is confidential. Registration is voluntary and there is no cost associated with registration.

<https://www.sjpd.org/community/crime-prevention/security-camera-registration>

Times **Feature**

Career Column

Just Keep Going

By Angela Copeland

Layoffs and scary headlines are all over the news right now. From the looks of things, you might think there's no hope. And, if you were recently impacted by a layoff, things may feel pretty bleak; but, don't give up hope.

When you are impacted by a layoff, it can legitimately feel worse than you had even imagined. It can be hard for friends or family to relate to what you're going through unless they've been through it.

These days, it's not uncommon for an employer to lay off workers with no notice and no severance. It's like a breakup, except there may also be an immediate loss of income, healthcare, and other benefits.

On top of the financial loss, there is often a loss of identity. Until it



happens, many people don't think about how much of their identity is tied up in work. But, if you've worked at your company for fifteen years, for example, you may be used to introducing yourself with your job title. It's who you are, and what you do every day. It's where your friends are.

A sudden lack of purpose and structure can get anyone down. Even those who are the most resilient may find themselves in a slump. And, it's an easy thing to have happen. When applying for jobs, it may feel like there are countless applicants for very few jobs openings.

In an effort to be supportive, a friend or family member will often offer advice. Sometimes, that advice is that you should consider becoming self-employed. You could make your own hours and earn way more money. And it would be easier than finding a job, right? Think again.

Being self-employed is a tremendous amount of work. This is especially true early on in your entrepreneurial journey. Sure, other business owners make it look easy. This is because they don't want to be perceived

as a failure. They want their business to appear to be on solid ground. The reality is that being an entrepreneur is hard work. Rarely can you get by with just one client. Typically, you need at least five clients at any given time.

Imagine how hard it is to find one job. Then, multiply that times five. And, subtract out things like business expenses. Plus, there will also be times that you may make no money at all, such as over holidays.

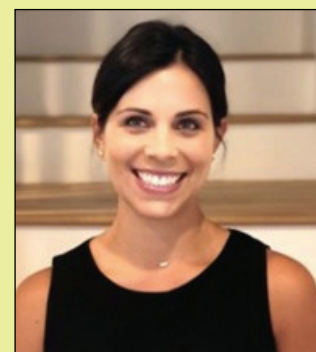
Don't get me wrong. For some people, entrepreneurship is in their bones. If that's you, you probably already know it.

For everyone else, keep applying to job openings. Keep revising your resume. Keep updating your LinkedIn profile. Keep scheduling networking meetings. I know it's hard. But eventually you will find one job. And, that one job will likely provide more stability and more money in the long run than being self-employed.

I know it's hard. Starting over always is. But the only way is to go through it. Keep going.

Angela Copeland, a leadership and career expert, can be reached at www.angelacopeland.com.

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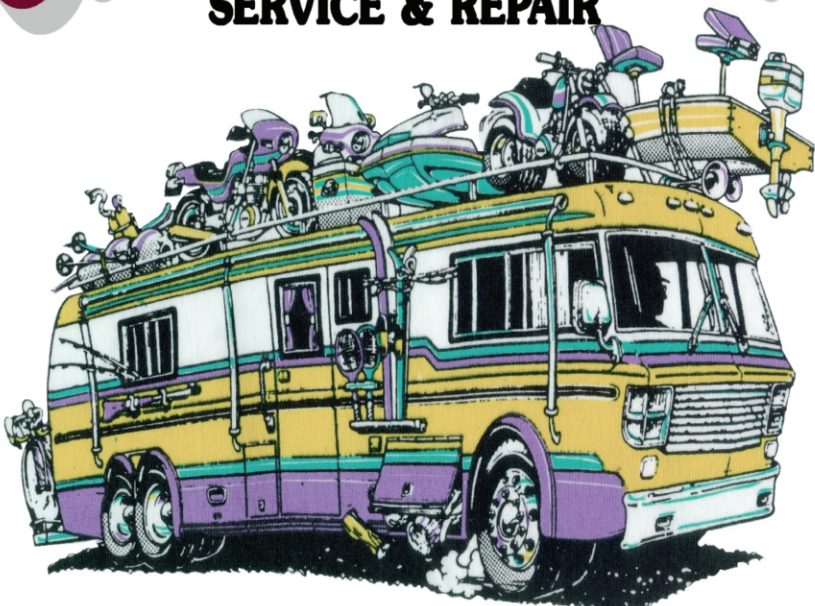
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are Muslims, and what
is the Quran?
A) Islam is a faith and
way of life. Islam
began in the 7th centu-
ry. People who follow
Islam are known as
Muslims. The Quran is
the Divine book that
guides Muslims to

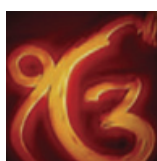
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