BELOVED LA FORÊT RESTAURANT HAS NEW OWNERS: THE CARRUBBA BROTHERS – P4



SCENES FROM ALMADEN LAKE **PARK'S FOURTH OF JULY CELEBRATION** ON DISPLAY - P12



LELAND'S QUIXILVER ROBOTICS 604 TEAM PARTICIPATES IN POPULAR S.T.E.A.M. EVENT – P14



YOUR BEST SOURCE OF COMMUNITY **NEWS FOR** FARS





A FORTUITOUS ACCIDENT Cancer survivor proves anyone can be a superhero

By Lorraine Gabbert Senior Staff Writer n Sept. 30, 2016, David Watkins was in a terrible car crash ... and it saved his life.

Watkins had just dropped off his daughter, Gracie, at elementary school. As the light turned green, he entered the intersection, preparing to make a lefthand turn. The next thing he knew, a black Toyota truck slammed into the side of his Mercury Montego sedan. The

As his mind cleared, Watkins' first thought was, "I dropped off

Pictured, left: David Watkins hiked Mission Peak after recovering from surgery, rising like a Phoenix from the ashes.

force of the impact threw his body forward, causing his head to hit the steering wheel. He was left bloody and confused. Luckily, the seatbelt held firm, saving his life, but left him bruised across his shoulder and chest, and his back in agony.

See WATKINS, page 18

neighborhood for **National Night Out** Are you planning a National Night Out event this

Register your

year in your neighborhood? Want to get to know your neighbors or build community and police relations?

The deadline to register your neighborhood for this year's National Night Out event, Tuesday, August 1, with the San Jose Police Department is Friday, July 21.

To register your neighborhood for National Night Out 2017, visit www.sjpd.org.

You may contact the District 10 San Jose City Council office with any questions by callling 408.535.4910 or email district10@sanjoseca.gov.

Call for blood by American Red Cross

The American Red Cross is facing a critical blood shortage and is issuing an emergency call for eligible blood and platelet donors of all blood types to give now and help save lives.

The emergency call for blood and platelet donors was issued after 61,000 fewer donations were given during the last two months, causing a significant draw down of the Red Cross blood supply.

The shortfall is the equivalent of the Red Cross not collecting any blood donations for more than four days. Donations are critically needed now so that patients can continue to receive lifesaving treatments.

To schedule an appointment to donate, download the free Blood Donor App, or visit redcrossblood.org or call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767).

Pioneer High School soccer fields closer to reality

By William Bellou Publisher

here has been talk about building a soccer field behind Pioneer High School in Almaden Valley for years.

Finally, there is some movement that will eventually transform the 3.71-acre plot of land that will someday be shared by students and local residents.

The parcel is located behind Pioneer's main sports field and adjacent to property owned by the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

The San Jose City Council and the San Jose Unified School District board recently voted to enter negotiations over acquisition and development of the parcel.

"We're giving the parcel that could contain two soccer fields and expand Pioneer's land



Almaden Valley Youth Soccer has agreed to both help pay for the soccer fields and to continue community outreach in exchange for their use.

space," said District 10 Councilmember Johnny Khamis, representing Almaden Valley. "The parcel, most suitable for a sports field, will help the city meet a demand for more soccer fields in District 10." Almaden Valley Youth Soccer

has agreed to both help pay for them and to continue community outreach in exchange for using them regularly, which includes free soccer clinics taught by professional soccer players and promoting a scholarship program that lets children from lower income families play for free.

The estimated cost of creating each field is estimated at \$2 million, depending on whether natural or artificial turf is used.

The Almaden Soccer League will host a fundraiser, Almaden Soccer Golf and Banquet, on August 28 to help pay for a portion of the project. The League is celebrating its 50th year providing soccer opportunities.

The inaugural golf tournament and dinner banquet event will bring soccer families together with the wider community and raise awareness and funds for the club and our mission to continue the outstanding work being done on and off the field.

For more information, visit: almadensoccer.org/golf2017

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La Forêt restaurant

Carrubba brothers

By Sean Eastwood

Times staff writer

fine dining — are

the new owners of

Almaden Valley's

upscale restaurant,

La Forêt closed in

March when its

longtime chef-owner,

John Davoudi re-

tired for health rea-

The Carrubbas are

now planning some

minor renovations

before reopening the

restaurant in Sept-

La Forêt.

sons.

wo brothers, Maurice and

Giuseppe Carrubba, who

has new owners: The

This Week:

BUSINESS

New state of the art storage facility to open **July 17: PAGE 6**

COMMUNITY

Sacramento bus trip participants voiced concerns about education: PAGE 8

SENIORS

Electrical contractor still on the job at age 90: PAGE 10



HONORS

Unicorn Thrift Shop lunch honors outgoing and incoming executive board members: PAGE 16

ALSO

Realtor Guide: PAGE 22 Worship Guide: PAGE 21 **Classifieds: PAGE 23**



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Vallev Currents

cur-rent (adj.) Present, topical, timely, newsworthy. (n.) Movement in a definite direction, a flow.



The Hacienda Hotel, pictured above from 1919, eventually would become the La Foret Restaurant, after a run as Cafe Del Rio (below).



Sacred Heart

By William Bellou

Publisher

Campaign school supplies drive

their children to receive the nec-

essary school supplies required

Parents have begun registering

on Friday, July 7.

acred Heart Community

Pack A Back Education

Service began its annual

for their first day of school. Sacred Heart will be registering 3,300 kids to receive backpacks kicks off 15 years on August 11th. of 'Pack a Back'

Budget cuts in education mean there is a less money this year to equip classrooms with school supplies. This summer, teachers send out lists to parents of items kids need to be ready on the first day of school. Sacred Heart's Pack A Back program helps offset the cost of these supplies for local families.

"Pack-A-Back" is important in our community because every dream begins with a backpack,"



said Sacred Heart Summer Academy Instructional Coach, Jaime Calderon. "Our children need support and the necessary tools in order to achieve success."

For 15 years, our community has joined together to ensure that children have all the supplies

available with new weekly specials with perhaps wild game. "The purchase is great news for Almaden Valley," said Times publisher, Almaden





operated as a boardinghouse until the 1930s, when it became the Cafe Del Rio.

view, built in 1884,

La Forêt was the

first two-story hotel in California and

they need for school. It takes a generous community to ensure children have the supplies they need for school. Every donation-from a binder, to a backpack, to providing shoe gift cards to an entire classroom--counts to ensure that every kid starts school on a level playing field. By being a part of the Pack A Back campaign, people are investing in the future talent of our community.

Visit sacredheartcs.org/pab to learn more about the program, make a donation, or start a backpack drive.

THE ALMADEN TIMES HEAR FROM YOU! Send your letters to editorial@timesmediainc.com or mail to: Almaden Times, Silicon Valley Business Center, 1900 Camden Ave., San Jose, CA 95124





Giuseppe Carrubba

John Davoudi

workers from the quicksilver mines. It



for the Carrubbas including the iconic maitre d' Sami Deeb, who has worked there since the early 1980's. Diners' favorite dishes will be





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Times **Community News**

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Jungling of Almaden wins national DAR American Heritage award

Merican Heritage, the Los Gatos chapter of The Daughters of the American Revolution announced that DAR member, Barbara Jungling of Almaden

Valley, has won



Barbara Jungling

the national American Heritage DAR literature & Drama: Poetry 1-15 lines contest.

The American Heritage Committee was established to preserve our rich American heritage in the fields of art and sculpture, crafts, drama and literature, fiber arts, and music.

The 2016-2017 Theme is "Moving Family Traditions Forward with the Arts." Judging Criteria– subjective to judges

• 50 points–Quality of work

• 20 points–Originality

20 points-Incorporation of theme
10 points-Written expression of

theme

Jungling's winning poem:

SAVING A LEGACY

POETRY... A Fine Tradition! "Art" within our family tree. Hibernating 'till fruition, Grandmas, grand-dads, mother, me. Pass it down for all to see! POETRY... It's Self Expression! Voicing feelings, from our core. Metered out from packed compression Making room for plenty more. Then in binder safely store. POETRY... For Reading, Writing! Versify with family members. Make it fun and most exciting. Keep it safe from death by embers: If it dies, no one remembers!

Ternullo makes Dean's List

Jacob Ternullo of Almaden Valley, who is studying electrical engineering, made the Dean's List for the 2017 spring semester at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Rochester Institute of Technology is home to leading creators, entrepreneurs, innovators and researchers. Founded in 1829, RIT enrolls about 19,000 students in more than 200 career-oriented and professional programs, making it among the largest private universities in the U.S.

The university is internationally recognized and ranked for academic leadership in business, computing, engineering, imaging science, liberal arts, sustainability, and fine and applied arts. Global partnerships include campuses in China, Croatia, Dubai and Kosovo.

Johnson named to Benedictine College President's list

Benedictine College has recognized those students who have distinguished themselves academically during the last semester.

Julia Johnson of Almaden Valley has been named to the President's List for the spring semester.

Of the 1,924 full time undergraduate students on the Atchison campus, 557 made the Dean's List and 132 made the President's List.

Founded in 1858, Benedictine College is a Catholic, Benedictine, residential, liberal arts college located on the bluffs above the Missouri River in Atchison, Kansas. The school has been named one of America's Best Colleges by U.S. News & World Report.

New state-of-the-art self-storage facility to open July 17

By William Bellou

Publisher new state-of-the-art self-storage facility, Little Orchard Self Storage, is scheduled to open on July 17 near Almaden at 1833 Little Orchard Street in San Jose.

The new 200,000 square foot facility utilizes an advanced high tech security system utilizing a high definition closed circuit system monitoring 24 hours per day. The facility is 200,000 square feet with 100,000 square feet devoted to storage.

There are 913 individually alarmed storage spaces with more than 20 cameras connected to 24 hour video recording. The facility is well-lit indoors and outdoors and for added safety there's a



13 ft. walled perimeter with coded entry and exit. There are also wide driveways, short hallways and for added convenience, all storage lockers are on ground level with an on-site general manager to assist and help with any questions or concerns.









Architecturally stunning Tuscan Villa designed and built with the finest materials, attention to detail and craftsmanship available. Spectacular mountain & city light views atop a private wooded 2 acre lot. 7,179 square feet of living space offers, 6 bedrooms and 6 + lavish baths plus, recreation room, gym with steam room, library and a media/theater room. The Stately Epicurean kitchen offers Lachanche French 6-burner range, quartz island, Graceful arches, soaring ceilings and South American Teak floors just to name a few amazing details of this home. This is a must see property!

Just Listed! 6762 Mount Pakron Drive

Updated Ranch home boasts 2.080 square feet of single level living space offering 4 bedrooms and 3 baths. Designed for style and livability this versatile floor plan promotes formal and informal living for all demands and is situated on almost 8,000 square feet of well-maintained grounds with a beautiful pool and spa Offered at \$1,478,000.



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Times **Community News**



The group hears from the Controller's office. Photo by Andy Nguyen Photography.

Sacramento bus trip participants voiced concerns about education

By Supervisor Dave Cortese

Special to the Times he youngest members of our Bus Trip to Sacramento 2017 were prepared.

They had done their homework for the May 31 forum with our Legislators, and, although shy at first, they raised their hands along with the grown-ups to ask questions on high school exit exams, violence prevention in the classroom, government efficiency and women in politics.

Asked a young woman sitting in the middle of the auditorium: What can you do to get more girls interested in government so they will run for office some day?

Women don't get involved in politics because no one asks them. We expect someone to ask us to do it," said Assemblywoman Anna M. Caballero, who is one of 26 women in the 120-member California Assembly and Senate.

"Find something you're passionate about and want to get done. If you see something that isn't right and needs to be changed, you've got to be ready to lead the battle and change it," she said. "Figure out how to get organized. No question that we need more women."

Among the 155 participants on our 15th annual Bus Trip for Education, which is sponsored by my office and the Silicon Valley Education Foundation, were students from the Evergreen School District representing Chaboya and Leyva Middle Schools. As we arrived at the Capitol, Assembly Members and Senators were in full speed trying to get their bills approved by the deadline on Friday, June 1.

"We're a little stressed right now," said Assemblyman Mark Stone, who was the first to meet with us. Assemblyman Ash Kalra joined him at the podium before they both had to rush off for a 10 a.m. session.

Stone talked about his efforts to ensure health care for children, including mental health services, and addressing issues around a youth's competency to stand trial. He and other Legislators or their representatives expressed concerns about proposed cuts to the federal budget and how that would affect state spending. The 2018 U.S. Education Budget proposes to slash funding for the Education Department by 13.5 percent.

"It would be devastating to education," Stone said. "We're waiting to see what the federal government does and what we need to do.³

Among Assemblyman Kalra's bills is AB830, which would eliminate the high school exit exam and remove it as a condition of receiving a high school diploma. The exam had been suspended in 2015 because it was outdated.

We also heard from Evan Goldberg, Office of the Controller; Leilani Aguinaldo, State Board of Education member; Ted Lempert, Children Now President; Trevor Taylor, Office of Senator Bill Monning; Annie Pham, Office of Assemblyman Kansen Chu; Monica Tong, Office of Assemblyman Evan Low; Chris Reefe, Office of Assemblyman Ash Kalra; Ellen Green, Office of Assemblyman Marc Berman; Sunshine Borelli, Office of Senator Jim Beall; Jeff Barbosa, Office of Senator Bob Wieckowski; and Patrick Welch, Office of Senator Jerry Hill.

Thank you to all participants and speakers.

Please let me know if you have suggestions and ideas for next year's trip. You can reach my office at 408.299.5030 or email me at dave.cortese@bos.sccgov.org.



Assemblywoman Anna Caballero speaks to the assembled participants.

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Times Local News





Electrical contractor on the job at age 90

By Gail Valle

Special to the Times Wesley John Fredericksen, 90, is possibly the oldest full time independent electrical contractor in San Jose.

Born on March 9th, 1927, in Oakland CA, Fredericksen has worked with Peerless Electric, 1162 El Abra Way, as an independent electrical contractor for more than 30 years.

A part of his work remains crawling in attics, crawl spaces and climbing 30 foot ladders he is in good shape!

We can say that Fredericksen exceeds a "double dipper," as he retired from teaching back in the 1970's, only to open his own business as an electrical contractor.

Fredericksen taught chemistry and physics full time at Lynbrook HS, and taught at DeAnza College in the evenings. He shifted over to teaching the electrical trade at San Jose's vocational school for more than 15 years, only to retire and open up his own electrical contractor business three decades ago.

"I still bump into many of my former students at Electrical Distributors when purchasing supplies," said John. "They still

call me 'Mr. Fred' which is my student to teacher pet name."

When his customers ask how old he is, he replies "just over the speed bump on the Audubon".

Fredericksen lives by PMA "Positive Mental Attitude", and enjoys healthy eating; grapefruit each morning, black coffee and a juice glass full of red wine every night.

As his daughter I can say, dad is an example of how we should all live; he would drop everything to help you, interested, full of life, kind, thoughtful, lover of animals, ambitious and never lets the rain stop him. His idea of a date is a walk across the Golden Gate Bridge and back; he's always out for an adventure.

I like the way my dad is easy going, likes to go places and loves adventure. He is in excellent health and a "Rock a long" kind of guy, meaning, he'll pick up and go anywhere at the drop of a hat!"

His customers love John and often after doing work in their homes they end up becoming friends. They just adore him and at his recent 90th birthday party many came with a present and had some birthday cake with him.



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ping, great schools, & freeways.Nahid Garmani,
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PAGE 12 ■ ALMADEN TIMES ■ JULY 14 – JULY 27, 2017

SERVING ALMADEN VALLEY **SINCE 1986 ONLINE: ALMADENTIMES.COM**









PHOTO ALBUM Scenes from Almaden Lake Park's Fourth of July celebration







Storage

Continued from page 6

The new facility utilizes the most up-to-date technology, including ultramodern lighting which contributes to the complex's overall energy efficiency. The facility has polished concrete floors and other finishes, ensuring a positive visual appeal both inside and out. Customers can download an available app on their smart phones to remotely monitor their individual storage space at any time.

The local owners of the new Little Orchard Self Storage have successfully operated Cochrane Road Self Storage in Morgan Hill since 1997. They have invested into the community with contributions and by partnering with several deserving Silicon Valley Turning organizations: Wheels for Kids; The Edward Boss Prado Foundation; Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council; Boy Scouts of America; The Stroke Awareness Foundation; and others.

For more information and to schedule a guided tour, or to reserve your space, call 408-297-2883. The address is 1833 Little Orchard Street, San Jose, CA 95125; or visit www.littleorchardselfstorage.com

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1112 Pine Avenue, Willow Glen

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Times Feature



Leland High School FIRST Robotics Team 604 Quixilver members participated at the S.T.E.A.M Festival at Reid-Hillview Airport on Saturday, July 8. Quixilver members are pictured (I to r) Thuy N., Nathan D., Rohan B., Rajan N., Binh N., and Aanya S. with their 2014 robot "Skyhammer."

Planes, cars draw huge crowd to S.T.E.A.M. event

Almaden Quixilver Robotics 604 Team participates

By Sean Eastwood Times staff writer

ot San Jose Nights presents S.T.E.A.M., the annual charity car Land airplane show returned to Reid-Hillview Airport with a 20,000 attendance record on Saturday, July 8, braving hot temperatures.

The opening ceremony at noon included a flyover and a parachute Flag Jump

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and the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by Mike Hugill and Debbie Zimmerman.

Robotics creations, were a big hit with crowd. A number of spectators were given an opportunity to control a number of robotic vehicles and toys.

Leland High School FIRST Robotics Team 604 Quixilver members participated at the S.T.E.A.M Festival. The team showed off their 2014 robot "Skyhammer."

See HOT NIGHTS, page 17



ALMADEN TIMES JULY 14 – JULY 27, 2017 PAGE 15



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Thrift Shop's outgoing President, **Shyamala Venkateswaran**, presented a check for \$30,000 to **Darren Demonsi**, Associate Director of Fund Development of Uplift Family Services, the proceeds from just the last six months of Unicorn sales.

Unicorn Thrift Shop luncheon honors outgoing and incoming executive board members

By Leela Viswanathan

Special to the Times nicorn Thrift Shop held its Annual Installation luncheon, to honor its outgoing Executive Board and welcome the incoming Board for 2017 – 2018 on June 20.

The "Beach" themed luncheon was held at Joint Venture Church in Almaden and was attended by officers from Uplift Family Services, Unicorn volunteers and spouses.

A resale and consignment store for clothing, home goods and other items, Unicorn has been thriving in the South Bay Area for the last 23 years. The nonfor-profit charity shop subsists entirely on donations, with all proceeds going directly to Uplift Family Services (UFS), a nonprofit agency dedicated to helping children and adolescents with complex behavioral challenges rebuild their lives. Formerly known as EMQ, the new name highlights the agency's focus on families by providing the largest and most comprehensive network of mental and behavioral health treatment programs in California.

Unicorn Thrift Shop, nicknamed by some customers as the "Nordstrom of Thrift Shops" for its routine influx of designer goods, plays an integral role in that care. As Vernon Hills, Director of Fund Development of UFS, noted in his speech, "This is no ordinary store." A resident of Almaden neighborhood himself, Hill says "Going there is an experience. It's a store people love going to."

The luncheon's "Beach" theme was brought vibrantly to life with centerpieces featuring miniature lighthouses and seashells, courtesy of Lois Heron, a Unicorn volunteer for over a decade. The guest speaker, Heather Thomsen, is a Senior Training Partner in UFS and grand-daughter of Barbara Moody, one of Unicorn's original founders. Thomsen related the story of how the name of the shop was chosen "The original founders wanted an animal name and decided upon "Unicorn" for its one-of-a-kind feel," she says

And indeed, the shop, run entirely by

volunteers, has a unique role in the community. Local residents play dual roles, both contributors and customers. Nancy Pyle, a former San Jose Councilwoman and a frequent visitor to the shop says "I love this shop for what it does. It offers high schoolers who volunteer credit for community service, as well as an opportunity to meet people they might not normally meet."

And the results have a tangible effect. At the luncheon, outgoing President Shyamala Venkateswaran presented a check for \$30,000 to Darren Demonsi Associate Director of Fund Development of UFS, the proceeds from just the last six months of Unicorn sales.

Unicorn Thrift Shop runs entirely on donations and volunteers—and with regards to both, the more the better. With the upward surge in Bay Area population and the subsequent increase in customers, Unicorn is facing a greater demand for volunteers, who work only eight hours a month. Anyone can drop by the shop to fill out a simple application. Donations of gently used items–clothing & accessories, housewares, books, electronics, children's items–are encouraged.

Unicorn recently underwent a facelift with new paint, new carpet and flooring, and better lighting. Bargain-shoppers looking for hidden gems are always welcome.

Pro Tip: keep an eye out for the frequent sales, often around the holidays, with discounts being anywhere from 25 -75 percent off.

The Unicorn Thrift Shop is located at 1181 Redmond Avenue in San Jose and is open Monday through Saturday, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and 10:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Thursday. The thrift shop is known throughout Silicon Valley as a treasure trove of vintage clothing, housewares, jewelry, collectibles and much more! All proceeds benefit the children and families served by Uplift Family Services. Volunteers are always welcome! Located at 1181 Redmond Avenue off Almaden. Telephone 408-997-9188. Times Feature

Hunter competes for 2017 Miss Teen Title

By William Bellou Publisher atalie Hunter of Almaden Valley has been selected to participate in the 2017 Miss Teen pageant taking place on Sunday, July 23.

Hunter learned of her acceptance into this year's competition when the pageant announced their selections following local interviews with this year's pageant coordinator. She will compete for her share of thousands of dollars in prizes and specialty gifts distributed to all contestants. At the national level, the prizes total more than \$30,000.

Of the four age divisions, including young ladies ages 7 through 20, Hunter will compete in the Miss Teen division. In each of three divisions, contestants compete in modeling routines including casual wear and formal wear. Most importantly, Hunter will display her personality while interviewing with this year's judging panel. In each phase of the competition, the panel uses personality as the number one criteria for judging.

If Hunter is successful and wins the title, she would represent San Jose at the National Pageant taking place in Orlando, Florida. Each winner receives an expense paid trip to Florida for six days and five nights.

Community businesses, organizations and private individuals



becoming an official sponsor for her. Through sponsorship, each contestant receives all the necessary training, rehearsals and financial support, which will allow Hunter the confidence and preparation for this year's Preliminary Pageant.

Editor's note: Businesses, organizations and private individuals can become a Natalie Hunter sponsor. For more information, contact the Miss Teen. If you would like to become a sponsor. contact Miss Teen Pageant Coordinator at 1-877-910-4190.



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Hot Nights

Continued from page 14 The Girl Scouts "Space Cookies" robotics team also displayed their robot.

Nearly 200 sports, muscle, antique, and custom cars were on display. A big hit this year was a 1928 red Oldsmobile and a 1930 Packard that was purchased in San Jose in 1930 for \$5,480. The owner posted the original receipt in the window.

Military tank personnel gave family members free rides to show off the tanks maneuverability. Free tank rides were available for the first time this year. Many visitors climbed into the cockpit of vintage aircraft, and children under 17 were given short flights in a Cessna aircraft.

Live music took the center stage with all day performances by Big Mike & the HartBeats. Square dancing was also featured at this year's event.

A number of notable citizens organizations including and



Leland's "Skyhammer" robot can catch a ball.

Second Harvest Food Bank, Sal Pizarro, Kathy Jackson, Rich Alvari, Dick King, Ken Palmer, Dan Montsier, and Steve Angus were presented with awards for their contributions to the community. Food collection barrels from Second Harvest were filled to capacity.

Hot San Jose Nights presents S.T.E.A.M. and Airport Day is sponsored in partnership with Chris Wilder, CEO of Valley Medical Center Foundation, County Supervisor President, Dave Cortese and 2nd District County Supervisor. Cindy Chavez. One hundred percent of the money raised during the event is donated to charitable organizations.

PAGE 18 ■ ALMADEN TIMES ■ JULY 14 – JULY 27, 2017

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Superheroes **Steve Lam** (Superman), **Dan Nitschke** (Captain America) and **Watkins** (Batman) bring hope and happiness to hospital patients.

Watkins

Continued from page 1

my daughter at school. She's okay." The truck had crushed the passenger side door behind the driver's seat. His second thought was how narrowly he'd escaped. "If I had been driving any slower, it would have been me," he says. The car was totaled.

The truck driver had plowed through the previous intersection and two red lights before colliding with Watkins, hitting two other cars along the way. "He was having a really bad day," says Watkins.

With the adrenaline rush, Watkins managed to move his car out of the intersection. Jim (last name unknown), who was in the second car hit, called the police and came to Watkins' aid. "Are you okay?" he said. "I saw what happened. You better sit down." After the police and fire department arrived on the scene, the truck driver was taken away by ambulance. Watkins' wife, Lisa, arrived soon after he called her and drove him to Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center.

A SAN JOSE

Once at Kaiser, she insisted he have a CT scan to make sure there were no internal injuries. The scan revealed something they hadn't imagined: a tumor in his right kidney. They scheduled an MRI for the following week.

In the meantime, although he still suffered excruciating back pain, Watkins returned to work at Nob Hill Foods. He was happy just to be alive. The MRI results were sent to a urologist and radiologist, just in case. About a week later, Watkins received the phone call he'd been dreading: they believed the tumor to be cancerous. It was an emotional moment for him and his wife. They scheduled surgery for Oct. 28. "I had no idea there was something in me that had been growing for years right above my right kidney," he says. "There were no symptoms at all."

Watkins shares Evander Holyfield's belief that, "It's not the size of the man, but the size of his heart that matters." While working at Nob Hill, he developed friendships with some of his regular customers. He has one such special relationship with Karan Khanna, who lost his son a few months before the car accident. "I feel like I have no family or

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Times Cover Story

friends," Khanna told Watkins one day. "Think of me as your family. Think of me as your friend," Watkins said. "If you feel alone, come here and we'll talk. I'm here for vou."

After the accident, Khanna noticed Watkins wincing and moving slowly and asked what was going on. "I was in a car accident and I have surgery coming up," said Watkins. "Other than that, I'm fine. I have cancer and they need to remove a kidney, but otherwise I'm great." Khanna gave him his phone number and leaned towards him, saying earnestly, "If there's anything you need, you call me." It touched Watkins deeply.

He also shared news of his upcoming surgery with other close customers and coworkers. "They gave me hope and love," he says. He received a card signed by the staff wishing him well, along with comic books and Starbucks gift cards. He appreciated their thoughtfulness.

The day of the operation, the urologist discussed all the possible good and bad outcomes of the surgery with Watkins, his wife and mother. "Have you filled out a will?" he asked.

Watkins was given 30 minutes to change into a hospital gown and await surgery. It gave him a lot of time to think about the 'what ifs.' He knelt on the cold floor and prayed, "God, just some more time. If things do work out, help me be a strength for the weak and a light for those who feel lost," Sometime near the end of his prayer, he heard an answering, "I am here." He stood up, tears streaming down his face and with outstretched arms, he cried, "I want to live!'

Hours later, he awoke from surgery and thanked God that everything went well. His wife said, "Hi, honey" and gave him a hug. His mom said, "Son," and gave him a hug. The doctor came in, and gave him something even better than a hug: hope. "Mr. Watkins," he said, "We removed your right kidney, along with your tumor. You had Papillary renal cell carcinoma. Mr. Watkins, it's gone as far as we know and you are 100 percent clean."

Watkins was advised to take it easy for four weeks to allow his body time to heal. He missed dressing up for Halloween with his daughter, but Thanksgiving meant more to him and his family than ever before.

It was because of his wife's concern that Watkins had the CT scan to being with. "She is



Gracie told him

my Wonder Woman," he says. "She's stronger than I am. She's been a special education high school teacher for over 10 years. She has arthritis and is in constant pain every day, but she does it anyway. She loves the kids, staff and us."

The day after the four weeks of recovery, Watkins was at the gym. His back still hurt, but he wanted to get into shape. The following day, he returned to work to a sea of applause.

In December, Nob Hill held a fundraiser for Second Harvest Food Bank, gifting customers with 'Buster Cozy' teddy bears in exchange for a donation. They had extras and decided to donate them to a hospital. Watkins suggested Kaiser Permanente Santa Clara Medical Center, where he had his surgery. Shortly before Christmas, he and two friends visited the emergency wing dressed as superheroes: Steve Lam as Superman, Dan Nitschke as Captain America and Watkins as Batman. "If this was a movie, we would be walking three abreast in slow motion and rather than weapons, we'd whip out teddy bears," says Watkins.

If a patient requested Batman, Watkins would say in a Christian Bale voice, "Hey do you hear that guys? He wants me! Not you, Suppy. Not you, Cappy. They want the real deal. See WATKINS, next page



ALMADEN TIMES JULY 14 – JULY 27, 2017 PAGE 19



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Times Cover Story



Watkins

Continued from previous page They want Batman." He'd stride purposely towards the child saying, "How you doing crimefighter? I got

you a gift straight out of Gotham. It's a teddy bear." The kids squealed with delight. When they

came upon a girl and her mother in an emergency room, the girl's face lit up in a huge smile when she saw them. "Look at my daughter," said her mother. "She's smiling! She hasn't smiled in weeks."

Watkins, who can relate to the fear the children and their families are going through, says



After surviving cancer, David Watkins has spoken at Relay for Life events, inspiring others.

> it felt great to deliver hope and caring in the form of a teddy bear. "With love, daddy, anyone can be a superhero," Gracie told him. "But first you have to shave." The superheroes plan to revisit the hospital this Christmas.

> After his surgery, Watkins wanted to do more than ever before. He pushed himself even harder at the gym and in February, he hiked Mission Peak and went indoor skydiving. In May, he did a Mud Race and hopes to do a Spartan Race in November. "I want more out of life now that I have been given this second chance," he says.

> At the gym, a man who had lost his wife to cancer suggested Watkins attend Relay for Life. Watkins not only attended, but spoke at Relay for Life kickoffs at Almaden Lake Park and Eastridge Mall, sharing his experience.

"Many people went through so much more than I did," he says, "but I want to inspire others to stay positive, no matter what happens in life. I was scared, but I got up from the cold floor saying, 'I want to live!" People at the rallies appreciated Watkins' words and thanked him for speaking. "You didn't tell me to bring kleenex," said a cancer survivor. "That was really touching."

"Had the car accident not happened," says Watkins, "the cancer would have gotten me. The urologist told me it was big and spreading towards my liver. If I hadn't had a CT scan, it would have spread from stage 3 to stage 4."

Watkins plans to live his life to the fullest and motivate others to do the same. With his striking blue eyes, easy smile and dark locks, he looks the part when he dresses up for Halloween as Superman, the Man of Steel. But, no matter which superhero persona he takes on, his heart is made of pure gold.

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Telephone: (408) 294-7254 x310. We are a community serving the Christ from the heart of the City, working to know Jesus and make Jesus known by serving, worshipping, and learning together. Worship services are at 10:00 AM at the Horace Mann Community Center (7th and Santa Clara Streets). Worship includes both

contemporary and traditional music, a message that is relevant to real life, based in the Bible, and meaningful to people of all ages and backgrounds. We work in our com munity to provide real assistance and long-term. life-saving solutions: food, housing, counseling, and spiritual direction. Our children's & families' ministries include Sunday classes, outdoor family activities such as bike rides and fishing trips. Come, Make a Difference and feel the difference God can make in your life!

GRACE CHURCH OF EVERGREEN www.GraceChurchSJ.Net

See you on Facebook 2650 ABORN ROAD at Kettmann, across from Evergreen Public Library. Serving Evergreen for over 50 Years. John S Goldstein, Pastor Christian Worship every Sunday at 11.00 am Together let us build lives toward excellence! Music Institute (408)791 7772 After School lessons on Piano, Violin Viola, Flute PreSchool Age 2-6 years caring for your child with God's love and affection (408) 791 7772 Immigration Services Call for Appointment (510)584 1824

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. Information on Faith Formation for children and adults can be obtained by calling our Catechetical Office at 408-997-5115. Get in the loop with our 3sixty High School Youth Ministry by calling 408-997-5106. Holy Spirit School serves grades Pre-K through 8th. and is located at 1198 Redmond Avenue. You can reach the school office at 408-268-0794

THE POINT CHURCH www.ThePoint.Church

3695 Rose Terrasse Circle. San Jose CA 95148. Located at the top of Aborn Rd and Murillo Ave. Come be inspired and build your faith as we worship together this Sunday @ 10:30 AM. KidsPoint is our children's ministry, serving infants through 5th grade. It is a fun and safe experience for kids as they grow in their walk with God. ONE is our student ministry, serving 6th through 12th grades. We help lead students into a growing relationship with Jesus through conversations,

fun and service. Because of the diversity of Evergreen we offer church services in 5 languages. each with their own auditorium and pastor

10:30 AM English, Mandarin, Cantonese and Cambodian. Spanish at 1:00 PM

SAINT ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH

We invite you to become a part of our hospitable, intimate Catholic parish. We are a caring community, promoting spiritual growth, reaching out to people in need and where you get to know people by name. We offer children's religious education (CREATE); Youth Ministry (BLAST & X-STATIC): Scripture Study (day & evening); Senior's Group and many other adult ministries as well. Saint Anthony parish is located in Almaden Valley at 20101 McKean Road, San Jose, 95120. Our weekend Masses are at 4 p.m. on Saturday at our historic church at 21800 Bertram Road in New Almaden, CA 95042 and on Sunday at 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 5:30 p.m. at the McKean Road location. Our Parish Office is open Monday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Tuesday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 - 4 p.m. For more information, stop by the Parish Office or call 1+ (408) 997-4800. or visit our website at www.churchstanthonv.com. Fr. Larry Hendel. Pastor

ST. BASIL THE GREAT GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH

6430 Bose Lane, San Jose, CA 95120

Church Office 408-268-3214 Clergy: Fr. Allan Boyd Experience our Lord Jesus Christ after the manner of the earliest Christians. All are welcome to our warm, multicultural Church community, where services are done primarily in English. What happens when you reunite created matter to its Creator? Come and see! Sunday worship: Orthros – 8:30 am Divine Liturgy – 9:30 am We also celebrate Liturgy on most

feast days.

ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH 5111 San Felipe Rd., San Jose, CA

95135 408-223-1562. www.stfrancisofas-

sisi.com 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 Preschool 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, Sunday11:00AM, 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-E 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!

Worship listing advertisements are \$495 annually. (408) 898-7534.

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Visit us at: www.Caspianvillage.com







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