

San Jose could lose thousands of trees to invasive beetle
SEE PAGE 6



Steinway Society celebrates 30 years of premier classical piano performances **SEE PAGE 7**



SEPTEMBER 2024 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 9

Willow Glen Times

SERVING WILLOW GLEN, SAN JOSE ■ WWW.WILLOWGLENTIMES.COM

Willow Glen High School bomb threat call

An “unverified” bomb threat was called into Willow Glen High School on Thursday, August 29 at approximately 2:45 p.m. resulting in a school-wide evacuation. The San Jose Police Department cleared the campus at 5:35 p.m. and reported that “no suspicious devices were located.”



The proposed Luke’s Rooftop Beer Garden and Restaurant at 1093 Minnesota Ave. in San Jose’s Willow Glen neighborhood. Rendering courtesy of E2 Architecture. The building would be adjacent to well-known chains such as Starbucks and Pizza My Heart.

Rooftop bar and restaurant envisioned for Willow Glen

By Vicente Vera
San José Spotlight

Willow Glen residents are one step closer to getting a new two-story restaurant and rooftop bar in their neighborhood.

A special use permit for the proposed Luke’s Rooftop Beer Garden and Restaurant was approved at a San Jose Planning Director’s hearing on Wednesday, where project representatives thanked city officials for their efforts helping move the project forward.

The proposed 4,765 square-foot project at 1093 Minnesota Ave. needed special review because the location is less than 150 feet away from residential areas — posing noise and traffic concerns from some in the area.

Russ Fukushima, co-owner of the restaurant Water Tower Kitchen in Campbell, proposed developing the rooftop bar after run-

ning Blush Raw Bar Lounge in San Jose’s San Pedro Square for almost 10 years. The lounge was among the many restaurants to close during the pandemic.

The rooftop bar still needs approvals from the building and public works divisions, with city employees aiming to finish reviewing the project by Aug. 21. It’s unclear when construction could start, but it will include the demolition of an existing building once home to the Minnesota Market convenience store.

“We appreciate the city staff’s help to get this thing pushed through. A lot of hard work was involved,” architect Jeffrey Eaton said Wednesday.

The proposed 1,000 square feet of outdoor dining on the second floor terrace with an ambient sound system is about 100 feet away from the first nearby home — triggering the need for a special use permit. A

See RESTAURANT, page 4



Earlier this year, AchieveKids received an email from Aneesha Janbandhu (right), a Leigh High School student from San Jose, working to make a difference in her community by helping “underprivileged special needs kids by providing them with essential things they need to live a happy life or even just a smile.” She raised funds by working various jobs during her summer break and chose to use those funds to purchase new PE equipment for both of the Palo Alto and San Jose AchieveKids campuses.

Cambrian Park teen helps underserved and special needs community through local initiatives

Aneesha Janbandhu imagined “Science Academy” initiative, currently hosted at Bascom and Willow Glen libraries

By William Bellou
Publisher

Aneesha Janbandhu, a rising junior at Leigh High School, is the Founder and President of the non-profit organization, Sunshine and Hope Foundation, which focuses on helping underserved and special needs kids in the community.

Founded in 2022, the overarching goal of her organization is to bring happiness to the kids by providing much-needed supplies and participating in hands-on activities. In her personal life, Aneesha is drawn to science, specifically biology.

Aneesha’s desire to work with special needs and underserved children in her community started from a volunteering experience with Animal Assisted Happiness (AAH). She witnessed first-hand the pure joy and happiness that simple animal interaction brought to her and those around her.

Aneesha has worked as a Youth Ambassa-

dor for Animal Assisted Happiness since 2021. The organization, a non-profit located in Sunnyvale, allowed Aneesha to see the gleeful expressions on the faces of the kids as they were holding the guinea pigs and the chickens in their laps.

“I think that was my aha moment,” said Aneesha. “It was magical! I will never forget it.”

Aneesha continues to help the special needs community by donating much-needed

See FOUNDATION, page 5



A Science Academy classroom

SEE OUR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE - PAGE 11

Times Local News

Foundation

Continued from page 1

supplies. In 2023, by working multiple jobs throughout the school year and beyond, she made a \$206 in-kind donation of items such as pop-it fidget toys (28), chew necklaces (30), and sensory stretch strings (30) to the Morgan Autism Center in San Jose.

Aneesha donated more than \$165 in-kind for sports equipment to AchieveKids in San Jose which was highlighted in their newsletter to the donors in December 2023. That same year, she donated \$367 in farm supplies such as chew toys, muck tubs, feed pans, waterers, and bird feed to Animal Assisted Happiness.

"I think it's the right thing to do. I work to disconnect from my school routine, and I know most of these organizations personally. My paychecks are used for the causes that I deeply care about, and I feel good doing it."

When asked how she feels about donating all her paychecks to the non-profits, Aneesha responded, "I think it's the right thing to do. I work to disconnect from my school routine, and I know most of these organizations personally. My paychecks are used for the causes that I deeply care about, and I feel good doing it."

Knowing how crucial opportunities for exploration ignite curiosity for science, in 2022 Aneesha visited her local libraries and discussed with librarians what kind of programs they were missing.

The librarians explained that they needed robotics, coding, engineering, and arts-related activities. Also, the libraries need programs focused on human biology and chemistry.

"I wanted to make my library program unique, fun, and hands-on for the elementary and middle school kids," Aneesha explained. "By researching online and through trial and error, I was able to combine human biology and engineering and that's how my first library lesson plan 'Human Body System' was born."

Wanting to fill the void, she imagined the "Science Academy" initiative, currently hosted in three different libraries: Bascom, Willow Glen, and Educational Park in the San Jose Public Library system.

This is her second year of hosting Science Academy with monthly sessions at the libraries with sessions lasting one hour. The sessions begin with a short lesson and then move on to the hands-on portion of the activity. This year's topic is "Chemistry Experiments" as part of her second-year contract with the libraries.

"We made slime in the first session, and I can't wait to share other things that I have planned for

the rest of the year," Aneesha said.

Wanting to expand and take her Science Academy initiative directly to the special needs kids, this summer Aneesha hosted a science-related hands-on activity for the students at AchieveKids, San Jose. They made colorful "sensory slime" by adding soft beads and charms. She plans to continue this initiative throughout the school year.

Combining her passion for science and the hope for more inclusive access to educational opportunities, Aneesha hopes to expand Sunshine and Hope Foundation to the Bay Area and beyond.

"Starting this non-profit organization has been a humbling experience on many levels. I have learned that there is a need in the community that we need to fill," Aneesha said. "My desire is to make science more accessible to the future generation of scientists, engineers, researchers, and more. We all can make a difference."

Editor's note: If you would like



to help Sunshine and Hope Foundation or become a member of Science Academy, contact Aneesha by email: janbcommunity@gmail.com.

To read more about the positive efforts of her organization and library session dates, visit sunshineandhopefoundation.com.

Pictured above: a donation to the Animal Assisted Happiness organization.



1078 SPYGLASS WOODS DR. | PEBBLE BEACH
3 bedroom | 3 bath | \$2,295,000

This stunning property, located in the prestigious Pebble Beach area, offers an unparalleled living experience with its luxurious amenities and prime location. The residence boasts three exquisite on-site suites, each designed with comfort and elegance in mind. The home features high ceilings throughout, creating an airy and spacious ambiance. This architectural choice of large windows enhances the natural light that floods the interior, adding to the overall sense of openness and tranquility. For car enthusiasts or those in need of ample parking, the property includes a two-car garage w/ electric car charger, complemented by a large driveway. It even has a special place to park your golf cart. With its combination of luxury, space, and convenience, this Pebble Beach listing is a true gem. Don't miss the opportunity to own a piece of paradise in one of California's most coveted locations.



Annette Boggs
REALTOR®/ FOUNDER
831-601-5800
Pacific Grove, CA 93950
DRE # 01317801



www.aboveandbeyondca.com