

THE SALINAS *Weekend* Californian



Garcia shares Masters lead after two rounds. **Sports, 11B**

More ways to follow us

theCalifornian.com/twitter
theCalifornian.com/facebook

PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

April 8 - April 9, 2017

theCalifornian.com

Serving Monterey County Since 1871

City agtech attracts global delegations

Execs from Vietnam arrive in Salinas

AMY WU

On a rainy Friday, a delegation of Vietnamese business executives arrived in downtown Salinas energized by what they had seen.

The day before, they attended the Silicon Valley Forum's Seeds of the Future agtech conference. On Friday morning, the entourage toured Whiskey Hill, an organic farm in Watsonville, awed by the poly-cropping techniques. For most, it was their first visit to the U.S.

"Vietnam is an agriculture country, so no matter what kind of industry development they have now, agriculture is still the main industry in Vietnam," said Trung Trinh, head of Vietnam IT Development Group, a consulting firm in San Jose that led the delegation in conjunction with Monterey Bay International Trade Association. Businesses were keen on learning more about agtech in Salinas Valley, "because of the technology and because of the access to this market," he said.

Historically and currently, agriculture is the key economic driver in Salinas and the Salinas Valley and is a \$9 billion industry. Over 80% of the country's leafy greens are grown in the Valley showing up readily at supermarkets, salad bars, and restaurants. Some of the largest agriculture companies including Taylor Farms and Tanimura & Antle are based in Salinas.

But in these rapidly changing times in part driven in part by technology, the city of Salinas have sought to make changes to keep the city competitive.

Over the past four years, the city's leaders have expanded their vision seeking to transform itself into an agtech mecca.

The global interest in Salinas' agriculture and agtech sectors is important and shows a potential return on the

See AGTECH, Page 3A



JAY DUNN/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN
Instructor R. Burton Ward discusses teaching construction with forum attendees at Hartnell's Alisal campus. The event was part of Planting the Seeds for the Future, a three-day Silicon Valley Forum agricultural technology tour that included Salinas.

INDEX

Calendar.....4B Lotto.....10B
Comics6B TV.....7B
Crossword.....5B Obituaries.....2A
Editorials.....7A Sports11B
Living.....1B Weather10B

COLUMNISTS

Shad Powers7A
Pete Andresen.....7A

WEEKEND WEATHER

Today — High: 59, Low: 42
Sunday — High: 63, Low: 43



\$1 retail

For home delivery prices, see page 3A.

Vol. 156, No. 85 Copyright 2017
A Gannett newspaper
The Californian is printed
on recycled paper.



DELIVERY: 1-877-424-4917

Salinas, county officials must waive food bank fees



CIVIC CHRONICLES
JEFF MITCHELL

Since moving to Salinas from the East Bay seven years ago I have come to appreciate the people of this city and the Central Coast.

It's truly a beautiful place. But it's also a place of contradictions, some of those severe in nature. For instance, the Central Coast is

home to some of the wealthiest people who walk the earth. It's also home to some of the poorest and most food insecure. And, yes, that is an irony, considering that so many of them are farmworkers.

Helping these people is a variety of underfunded and struggling agencies and non-profits. One of the biggest of these -- one that has the most day-to-day impact on people -- is the Food Bank for Monterey County, which is led by the amazing Melissa Kendrick, its execu-

tive director.

A few years ago when some idiot attempted to burn down the existing food bank building on West Market, I was given the opportunity to work briefly alongside Melissa to rally you, the readers of The Californian and El Sol, to dig into your pockets and donate whatever you could to make repairs on the building.

In the process I learned just how generous a poor farming town like Salinas

See MITCHELL, Page 6A

18TH ANNUAL VICTIMS DEDICATION CEREMONY



PHOTOS BY CHELCEY ADAMI

Crime victim survivors release doves in the air at the close of the 18th annual Victims Dedication Ceremony.

Honoring victims, survivors of crime

Event also connects them with available services

CHELCEY ADAMI

At 1:32 a.m. on Nov. 11, 2000, Mark and Jenifer McLaughlin woke to the shrill ring of the telephone and learned that their daughter Brooke had been attacked.

The young woman had been walking on the trail near Lover's Point in Pacific Grove when two Marines grabbed her, stabbed her 15 times and slit her throat three times.

Her parents lived in Los Angeles, and Jenifer clearly recalls the speedometer's needle bouncing off the 120-mph mark as they headed to be at their daughter's side in the hospital where she remained in critical condition.

See CEREMONY, Page 6A



Jenifer and Mark McLaughlin shared the story of how their daughter was brutally attacked and how it affected their family during the 18th annual Victims Dedication Ceremony.

Villegas did not violate state elections law



JOE TRUSKOT/THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN
Salinas City Councilman John "Tony" Villegas as his 2016 swearing in.

AMY WU

A Monterey County District Attorney investigation has determined Salinas City Councilmember John "Tony" Villegas did not violate state election law.

In March, the DA's office started investigating whether Villegas violated elections law regarding his place of domicile during the time of campaign and general elections.

Villegas was elected to the District 6 council seat during the Nov. 8, 2016, general election and replaced longtime councilmember Jyl Lutes.

On July 26, 2016, Villegas filed his candidate papers with the city while he was living in District 6, where he had been living for at least 28 days before he filed the paperwork. Furthermore, he was

registered at that address to vote.

In mid-September 2016 Villegas moved from District 6 to a rental townhouse in Hollister after he and his then girlfriend broke up. Villegas voted by mail-in ballot for District 6 for the November election.

The investigation concluded that though Villegas didn't live in District 6 from mid-September 2016 through Feb. 18, 2017, his legal domicile was in District 6. Villegas and his new girlfriend lived in the Hollister rental, and he often split his time between Hollister and friends' places in Salinas in as many as three or four different residences. Villegas told investigators that he kept most of his things at friends' homes.

See VILLEGAS, Page 9A