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Tulare Chamber of Commerce Board Chairman Eddie Gonzalez speaks August 22 during the State of the City and County presentation at the International Agri-Center in Tulare. RON HOLMAN/VISALIA TIMES-DELTA

State of City and County

Tulare officials highlight year of progress

Steve Pastis

Visalia Times-Delta
USA TODAY NETWORK

A large crowd packed the International Agri-Center in Tulare in August for the 2025 State of the City and County.

Elected officials and representatives spoke on projects completed in 2024 and 2025, as well as upcoming improvements to the city and county.

Tulare Mayor Patrick Isherwood started his presentation by thanking his fellow city council members and city staff for their teamwork. He also thanked the community “for trusting me in this position to carry forward our traditions and our strength that is Tulare.”

He then highlighted a few accomplishments.

“Our community has a community theater that’s opening and operating,” he said about the Encore Theatre.

“Our nine-year-olds in the Tulare Baseball Association won the Cal Ripken World Series,” he said. “How awesome is that?”

He also noted the eight national awards won by Danny Mendes of Tulare Meat Locker, and that “Tulare’s own” Richard Torrez, Jr., was still 13-0 in his professional boxing career.

“It’s a good day in Tulare,” Isherwood said.

He thanked the Tulare Fire Department and the Tulare Police Department for keeping the city safe, before talking about “job growth through new development.”

Tulare on the rise

“New development and construction is the core aspect of a diversity of jobs,” Isherwood said. “Development in our community helps employ the roofers, the electricians, the dry haulers, the architects, the engineers.”

Isherwood touched on the commercial and residential developments coming to the city, including Chick-fil-A and Chipotle.

“From south, north, west, east, all areas we have developments that are coming in a full circle to our community,” Isherwood said, pointing to a Power-

Point slide. “It represents over 2,700 new residential units in the city of Tulare in our future – 2,200 new starter homes.

Business development is a “key focus” for Tulare City Council, which includes the downtown master plan, he said.

He went on to highlight several projects in the works including the downtown building rehabilitation grant and the TASTE program that is “putting that surge in investment in our community to invest, grow, and have businesses.”

“We have a west side study that will be coming up with commercial developments, a commercial corridor study, an entertainment district, and an eatery district as well,” he added.

Isherwood reported on the planned International Agri-center improvements and the International Way interchange improvements, as well as on infrastructure.

“The city council has put forth over a \$120 million capital improvement plan that makes a large investment in all of our street and community infrastructure projects,” he said.

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Hiroshima survivor’s art is on display in Visalia

Reiko Yoshimoto, 96, shares traditional Japanese collage work in exhibit at Arts Visalia

Donna Orozco

Special to Visalia Times-Delta

Hiroshima bomb survivor Reiko Nakamura Yoshimoto will showcase her unique style of Japanese collages this month at Arts Visalia.

A reception for the exhibit will take place from 5 to 7 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 5 at the downtown Visalia gallery.

Although Yoshimoto grew up in Japan, she didn’t learn the Japanese art form until she had raised her family in East Los Angeles and retired from her job at age 65. Now 96, she spent over 20 years perfecting the exacting art form.

Chigiri-e (Chee ree gee-eh) is a traditional art form dating from the Heian Period (794 to 1185 AD). The word chigiri means “to tear” and “e” is an image. The word Chigiri-e means creating an image by tearing pieces of specially made and dyed paper called washi.

Yoshimoto is no longer able to travel, so her son, Bill Yoshimoto, a member of the Arts Visalia board, tells her story.

Surviving Hiroshima

Reiko was born in December 1928 in Hiroshima.

She was 16 when the atom bomb hit on Aug. 19, 1945. She would have been just a mile from the hypocenter (ground zero), but for some reason, perhaps illness, she stayed home from work that day. All older students had to work for the war effort.

She was roughly 3 miles from the hypocenter, and probably what saved her was the hill between Hiroshima and her town.

Three years later, she met her husband, Tadato Jim Yoshimoto. He was born in L.A., but he and his mother moved back to her homeland when he was 8. However, he was sent back to

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