

An underwater photograph of a jellyfish with a white bell and purple spots, surrounded by brown seaweed in clear blue water. Sunlight rays are visible at the top.

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Summit Sisters
Jammin' at the Crows Nest
April 17th at 7pm



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COMPASS

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Our Cover

Photo by Bruce Sudweeks

The purple-striped jellyfish,
chrysaora colorata,
 is a California coastal
 species.

It is somewhat elusive,
 so it is a welcome find.

The bell (body) of the
 jellyfish can grow to over
 two feet in diameter.

The tentacles typically
 consist of eight marginal long
 dark arms, and four central
 frilly oral arms.

Their sting is rather painful,
 but not deadly to humans.

Bruce photographed this
 individual near
 San Carlos Beach
 in Monterey.

See more of Bruce's photos
 on page 22.

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events



95033free Swap Meet Miriam Watson

Join us for the next 95033free swap meet on **Saturday, April 4**, from 9 a.m. to noon, in the Loma Prieta Gymnasium, 23800 Summit Road. It's like a giant garage sale where everything is free.

Bring along clean, usable items in good working condition—anything from a single item to a truckload—to share with neighbors. Skip anything that's better suited for the landfill. If it's not something you'd give a friend, it probably doesn't belong at the swap.

You don't need to stay with your items, but please return at noon to pick up anything that wasn't claimed.

If you don't have anything to contribute, a \$5 donation allows you to take what you need for personal use. Collecting items for resale is not allowed from 9 to 10:30 a.m.

For more information, email Leslie O'Malley at h2ominded@gmail.com or Miriam Watson at ilovethemountains@gmail.com.

95033 Flea The Flea is Back Carol Gibbons

The 95033 Flea Market will open for the season on **Sunday, May 3**, with a Mother's Day theme. If you have treasures to sell, email cmvgibbo@gmail.com to reserve your space. You can reserve a selling space for a day, or subscribe for the season. Admission for shoppers is free, so come out and shop for bargains.



The market is held the first Sunday of every month through November, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., in the Building Blocks Preschool parking lot, 23845 Summit Road.

April 2026

Pizzeria Vittoria Mike Lerman

Pizzeria Vittoria invites you to our Easter Sunday pregame on **Sunday, April 5**. Whether you're headed to an Easter egg hunt or your inlaws' house, stop by the restaurant between 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. for hot coffee, mimosas, micheladas, and gooey cinnamon rolls. We'll also offer a special line up of curated gift boxes to take with you. We'll be closed the remainder of the day.

Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool starts a third Thursday family night on **April 16**. Watch for food and drink specials for National Garlic Day (**April 19**), Earth Day (**April 22**), and National Arbor Day (**April 24**). Happy spring.

Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue Barbecue

Miriam Watson

Mark your calendars and bring your appetite to the beloved Loma Prieta Volunteer Fire and Rescue Firefighters barbecue on **Sunday, June 7**, at 11 a.m., at the Mountain Community Complex (23845 Summit Road).

This long-standing mountain tradition brings neighbors together for a day of great barbecue, family fun, and community spirit. Enjoy a delicious lunch hot off the grill, activities and games for kids, fire engines and emergency demonstrations, and the always-popular raffle featuring fantastic prizes donated by local businesses.



Most importantly, every dollar raised helps support our volunteer firefighters who respond to wildland fires, medical calls, and emergencies across our mountain communities.

More details will be shared next month. Save the date and plan to join your mountain neighbors for a great day supporting our firefighters.

If you or your business would like to donate an item for the raffle, email jvskochil@lomaprietafire.org.



Los Gatos Community Concert Lauren Jelencovich

Join us for a captivating and inspiring afternoon of musical brilliance. The Los Gatos Community Concert Association presents a performance with Lauren Jelencovich on **Saturday, May 3**, at the Los Gatos High School Theatre, 20 High School Court in downtown Los Gatos.

Lauren is a radiant soprano vocalist, celebrated for her dazzling stage presence and emotional depth. Winner of *Star Search* and Andrea Bocelli's World Scholarship, Lauren has performed alongside luminaries such as Renée Fleming and toured globally with Yanni. Her program weaves together beloved classics such as *The Prayer*, *O Mio Bambino Caro*, and *Over the Rainbow*, inspiring audiences of all ages. Yanni has described Lauren's voice as "the most beautiful sound I've ever heard."

Tickets are \$30 for adults, \$5 for students, and \$25 for seniors. You can purchase a family pass for \$65.

Doors open at 2 p.m., and the concert begins at 2:30 p.m. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit lgcca.org. Don't miss this unforgettable opportunity to experience the powerful, poetic artistry of Lauren Jelencovich.

After a full year of enjoying the original Nonno's menu, the Vittoria Family is ready, with your support, to bring you something fresh in April. Check out our site for updates and get in to try out a couple new items. You can still count on - pizza, sandwiches, BBQ, ice cream, beer & wine.

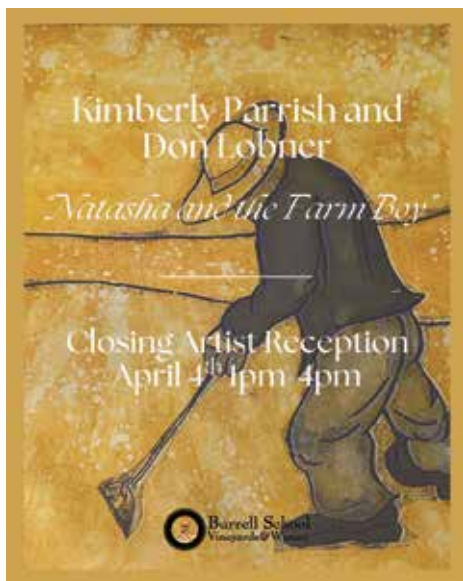


events

Burrell School Winery April Events Rich Leonetti

Burrell School Vineyards and Winery will host a closing reception with local artists Kimberly Parrish and Don Lobner on **Saturday, April 4**, from 1 to 4 p.m. Their artwork has been on display in our tasting room since the beginning of the year. Visit us to enjoy some wine, meet the artists, and view their amazing artwork.

The Los Gatos Wine Walk will be on **Saturday, April 25**, from 2 to 5 p.m. This event celebrates our vibrant local wine culture. It draws wine enthusiasts from all over the Bay Area to sip and stroll their way through more than 30 downtown Los Gatos shops and restaurants while enjoying live music. More information is at www.losgatoschamber.com/wine-walk.



Crow's Nest Summit Sisters

The Summit Sisters will perform at the Crow's Nest in Santa Cruz on **Friday, April 17**, beginning at 7 p.m. Enjoy world-class views and a lively dance floor while you listen to the Summit Sisters perform memorable hits from the '60s and '70s.

Twenty years ago, this self-described "mom band" in the Loma Prieta area got their start playing at a cast party for Theatre in the Mountains. They named the band the Summit Sisters, since the band members all lived off of Summit Road.

Fronting this group of talented women is their versatile lead singer, Marisa Thompson, who studied under artists such as Quincy Jones and Herbie Hancock. Her vocal strength, backed by the Sisters' sweet harmonies, powers through their rock, folk and soul repertoire. Their fun stage presence, groovy pants, and perfectly blended harmonies regularly fill music venues and gather new fans along the way.



The Summit Sisters perform throughout the Bay Area. View their schedule or book your private party at TheSummitSisters.com.

The Crow's Nest is located at 2218 E. Cliff Drive, next to the Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor.

Defensible Space Zone Zero

Regulations Workshop

CA Board of Forestry and Fire Protection

On **Thursday, April 23**, the California Board of Forestry and Fire Protection will hold a workshop to collect public input and possibly finalize "Zone Zero" regulations for properties in designated high-fire-hazard areas. The workshop will be held in-person in Sacramento, but you can register to observe the workshop remotely.

Background. In 2020, California enacted Assembly Bill 3074, mandating the creation of an ember-resistant zone, referred to as Zone Zero, within five feet of structures in high-fire-hazard areas. Zone Zero serves as the first line of defense to reduce the risk of homes igniting from wind-driven embers during wildfires.

Despite the law's passage, implementation has faced delays. Originally set to take effect in 2023, the regulations have not been finalized, leaving many homeowners uncertain about compliance requirements.

In response, Governor Gavin Newsom directed the State Board of Forestry and Fire Protection to expedite the adoption of Zone Zero regulations. Their hope is to approve the regulations at this April meeting.

Topics to be covered in this workshop include regulations for creating ember-resistant zones, materials that are allowed or prohibited, and strategies for homeowners to implement these guidelines effectively. Additionally, there may be discussions on balancing wildfire safety with environmental concerns and community input.

For more information, including workshop times and to register, visit bof.fire.ca.gov.

South Skyline Sudden Oak Death blitz Jane Manning

Help our beloved mountain forests by volunteering for the 2026 Sudden Oak Death blitz. It's easy and free.

All you need to do is complete a mandatory online training module that takes about 30 minutes. Then, pick up sampling packets at CalFire Saratoga Summit Station 21, 12900 Skyline Boulevard, between **Friday to Sunday, May 8 through 10**. Take bay leaf samples anytime during the weekend according to the training instructions. Then, drop off your packet at the fire station by 7 p.m. on **Monday, May 11**.

The training and more information about the 2026 SOD blitz are at www.sodblitz.org.



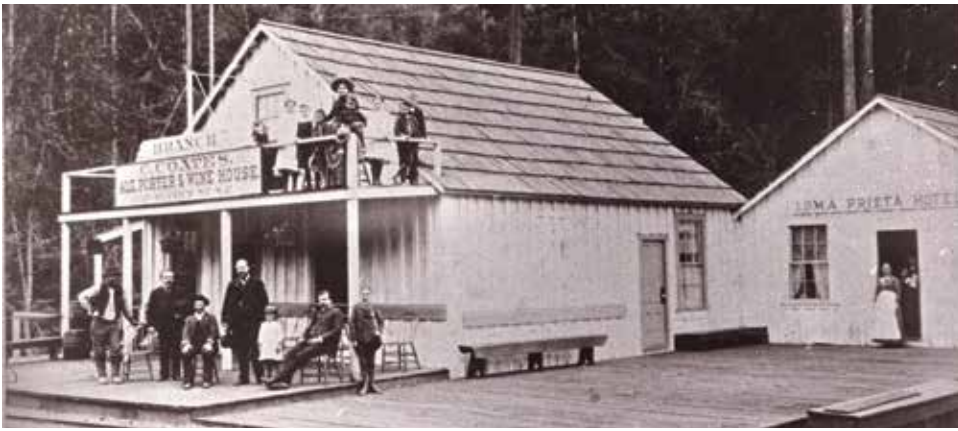
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Vineyards & Winery

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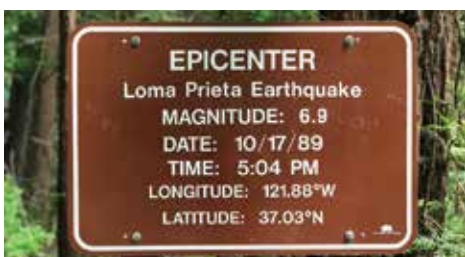
Loma Prieta Museum
The Lost Town of Loma Prieta
A History Presentation and
Tour of Nisene Marks State Park
Roger Mason

Join us for a free community event showcasing the interesting and educational history of Nisene Marks State Park on **Thursday, May 7**, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Loma Prieta Elementary School Forum. California State Park interpreters Paul Karz and Ryan Ortiz will share their knowledge and pictures of the park and the “lost” town of Loma Prieta.

To delve further into the history of this area, Paul and Ryan will lead a tour of the park on **Saturday, May 9**, from 9 a.m. to noon. The tour will explore not only the lost town of Loma Prieta, but other historical sites, including the epicenter of the 1989 earthquake. We’ll meet at the Porter Family Picnic Area for the relatively easy two-mile hike. Check our website for more details.

Santa Cruz County History Fair. The annual Santa Cruz County History Fair will be held at the London Nelson Community Center, 301 Center Street in Santa Cruz, on **Saturday, May 16**, from noon to 4 p.m. About thirty local museums and parks will display history at their booths. If you like history, this one-day event is well worth attending.

We offer some local history books for purchase. They include *A Howling Wilderness*, Dr. Stephen Payne’s book about the early settlers of the Summit Area (\$25); *Harvest of Change*, Stephen’s book about the history of Santa Clara County (\$35); and



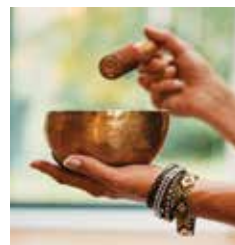
Holy City, a book about the history of Holy City by Betty Lewis (\$25). If you would like to receive these books and/or donate to our museum, email LomaPrietaMuseum@gmail.com or text 408-529-0254. You can write a check to “LPCF” with a memo “For LPM” and mail it to Loma Prieta Museum, 22951 Summit Road, Los Gatos, CA 95033.

For more information, visit www.LomaPrietaMuseum.org.

Cups of Yoga
Beltane Sound Bath
Jaime Domond

Celebrate the energy of Beltane, the ancient May Day fire festival that marks the blossoming of spring and the approach of summer. Cups of Yoga invites you to join us on **Saturday, April 25**, from 1 to 2:30 p.m., for an immersive sound bath that allows you to slow down, rest deeply, and reconnect with the fertile, creative energy of the season.

Crystal singing bowls, Tibetan bowls, Koshi chimes, and other healing instruments will guide your nervous system into deep relaxation and restoration. The afternoon begins with a gentle meditation and reflective journaling inspired by Beltane themes of passion, fertility, creativity, and abundance, followed by a transformative sound bath. We’ll close with time to rehydrate, reflect, and share. Bring a yoga mat, pillow, eye pillow, and water. The studio will provide bolsters, blankets, and blocks.



The cost for this workshop is \$45 per person. Book online at www.cupsofyoga.com. Email hello@cupsofyoga.com, or call 831-200-8802 for more information. Our studio is at 24900 Highland Way.



Theatre in the Mountains
Mountain’s Got Talent:
A Community Talent Show
Chris Arns

Do you sing, dance, juggle, strum, or surprise? This summer, Theatre in the Mountains invites performers aged eight to 100 to audition for Mountain’s Got Talent. We welcome solos, duos, and groups. This community talent showcase will be performed for three nights under the open sky at the Redwood Amphitheater behind the Loma Prieta Playfield, 23845 Summit Road.

Whether you’re a seasoned performer or stepping into the spotlight for the first time, we want to see what you’ve got. Want to be in the in the show, but not sure what to do? We can help you workshop your talent.

In-person auditions will be held on **Thursday and Friday, May 14 and 15**, and **Friday, May 22**. If you can’t make it in person, submit a video audition by **Friday, May 14**. Performances will be **Friday through Sunday, August 14 to 16**.

For more information and to sign up, visit TheatreintheMountains.com.



Promote your local event in the Mountain Network News.

Submissions are due the 10th of the month prior to publication.

Email

kathy@paralleldesign.com
or call 408-529-1431.

Los Gatos Farms Farm and Adventure Camp Toni Kent

At Los Gatos Farms, our Farm and Adventure Camp is where big laughs, muddy shoes, brave moments, and fun are abundant. We invite children ages five to 12 to unplug and explore in our farm and forest setting. From pony rides and barnyard animals to zip lines, boom sticks, and toboggan slides, every day is designed to spark curiosity, build confidence, and encourage joyful exploration.

We believe summer is an opportunity for children to get outside, where imaginations run wild and learning happens naturally. Campers are guided by caring and energetic staff who prioritize safety and kindness in everything they do. Our staff is passionate about empowering campers to discover what they're capable of, all under the shade of the redwoods. Your child can sign up for equine-enrichment activities such as Horse 101, private riding lessons, and equine expressive art. Whether your child is cuddling a chicken, climbing rocks, dancing in the barn, or laughing with their friends, Los Gatos Farms

is a place where children feel connected, capable, and truly themselves.

Los Gatos Farms is proud to have been part of the Redwood Estates community for over 25 years. Summer camps are a part of our legacy. I am excited to introduce our new camp director, Darleen Patton, onto the team. With nearly a decade of experience at camps and schools throughout California, Darleen brings even more action, joy, and whimsy to our farm adventures.

Darleen and I will create a safe, joyful, and explorative summer where every child feels excited to grow and glow in nature. Camp is a place to create lifelong bonds with other people and animals. We'd love to welcome your camper to our farm this summer. Registration is open now. More information is at lgfsummercamps.com.

Photos by Faizi Samadani



Midpen Regional Open Space District Building Resilience: Strategic Pile Burns in Sierra Azul Ryan McCauley

As part of a sustained commitment to ecological health and regional safety, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (Midpen) recently concluded a series of strategic pile burns within the Sierra Azul Open Space Preserve. From November 2025 through mid-March 2026, the project successfully eliminated approximately 475 cubic yards of combustible vegetation. By burning roughly 200 constructed piles near Los Gatos, Midpen reduced fuel loads to more natural levels, a critical step in our Wildland Fire Resiliency Program.

Returning fire to the landscape is vital for mimicking natural processes that local ecosystems rely on to thrive. This method honors historical land-management practices used by indigenous peoples, while providing modern ecological benefits. The resulting ash and char recycle essential nutrients into the soil, while the heat and smoke trigger the germination of native species like mariposa lilies and manzanitas.

Safety and environmental stewardship remained top priorities throughout the operation. Trained biological monitors inspected every pile for wildlife before ignition, and burns only proceeded under strict weather and air-quality conditions.

These burn piles serve as a necessary precursor to a larger-scale prescribed burn planned for this fall in partnership with CalFire. By collaborating with agencies like the Santa Clara County Fire Department, we continue to build the long-term health of our local ecosystems. This work complements broader initiatives, such as the Los Gatos Creek Watershed Collaborative and the maintenance of hundreds of miles of fuel breaks, ensuring a more resilient future for our open spaces.



**Friends of Bear Creek Stables
MidPen Agreement Approved**
Kathy McKinney

In late February, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District approved an agreement with Friends of Bear Creek Stables (FBCS), to transform the historic stables into a public educational center for equine- and nature-based programs. This agreement comes after a two-year process of gathering community input, investing countless volunteer hours, and a substantial fundraising campaign that raised \$250,000 through donations and grants to begin operations. FBCS will steward the facility.

Located in the heart of Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve, the stables date back to the Dr. Harry L. Tevis estate. Tevis originally built the stables in 1916 to house his Tennessee Walking Horses. "Horses will continue to be the focal point for programs, along with other nature-based programs. Both welcome the public into the natural environment to experience the preserve's beautiful setting, where outdoor learning and exploring happen naturally," said Rick Parfitt, president of FBCS.

FBCS will begin offering programs for all ages this spring. Their programs will incorporate five facets: joy of learning, wonder of nature, healing power of horses, whispers of history, and value of community.

Rick shared, "We are eager to welcome the public to the restorative setting of the stables. We are truly grateful and appreciative of the community's generous donations.



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For more information, email Rick Parfitt at info@friendsofbearcreekstables.org, or visit FriendsofBearCreekStables.org.

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Dr. Zibae, DVM

community

Alma Equine Summer Camps Katja Wick

Alma Equine and ArtHouse Studio offer multi-faceted summer camps that include creativity projects, nature hikes, and experiences with horses. In June, we will offer a tuition-free camp for underserved children thanks to a new non-profit partnership. We will also offer two weeks of summer camps for paying participants from **July 20 through August 3**.

Our camps are designed to create a nurturing and healing environment for students ages 10 to 14. Camps are limited to 12 students per week and are hosted on a private property near the Oakmont neighborhood overlooking Lexington



Reservoir.

Alma Equine recently conducted a one-day sneak peek to share the new camp concept. Environmental-education specialist and nature guide C.B. Edmonds led a group hike with Jess the mustang and gave campers the opportunity to examine animal tracks and learn about native plants while exploring the natural beauty of a local hilltop trail. They enjoyed a few moments of silence and found inspiration and materials for an ephemeral art project. They discovered that with a little imagination, a simple pile of leaves and twigs can magically transform into a beautiful underwater scene or a simulated campfire. Students then selected a few natural objects to bring back to camp for closer examination under the dissecting microscopes.

After returning from the hike and some rest in the tranquil surroundings of Alma Equine's barn, the children worked in small groups with Jess to hone their horsemanship skills.



They used a microscope to study leaves, lichens, galls, and other natural materials they had collected on their hike. The afternoon ended with a snack and a fun-filled sing-along that even Jess seemed to enjoy.

More information is available at almaequine.org, or email info@almaequine.com.



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**Lago Lomita Vineyards
Vineyard Cover Crops**
Robin Porter

I have written a lot about the vines at Lago Lomita. But what about the space between the vines? If you plant the vines, you also need to manage the land throughout the vineyard.

Winegrape growers plant a cover crop. What you plant depends on what you are trying to achieve in the vineyard. Some growers, especially in Napa and Sonoma, use mustard seed. There is even a mustard season that is marketed for tourists to come off-season. The growers like it because it reseeds and comes back in subsequent years after planting. It's useful as a natural pesticide, and its deep roots help break up clay soils. It creates a yellow carpet over the land, which helps control erosion during the rainy season.

Other cover crops are useful as well. We sometimes choose bell beans and barley. Legumes like bell beans and peas help bring new nitrogen from the air into the soil. Barley helps control erosion and adds organic matter. Sometimes we order a vineyard mix from our seed supplier.

The California poppy naturally populates our vineyards, and I think it's prettier than mustard. We can see sweet peas coming up all over the vineyard this time of year. These grow through the winter, controlling erosion, water, soil health, nutrients, weeds, and pests. In the spring, we till or mow them to add all these nutrients into the soil.

When you drive past a vineyard this time of year, look between the vines. There's life support down there!



**Redwood Estates Pool
Lifeguards Wanted**
Jeffrey Bates

Redwood Estates Services Association (RESA) is hiring lifeguards for the upcoming 2026 pool season. Come be a part of the community, meet new friends, and earn excellent wages.

This job requires lifeguard certification and CPR with AED. (RESA will reimburse 50 percent of the cost of your lifeguard certification upon completion of your first pool season, and the remaining 50 percent upon completion of your second pool season.)

The pool is open Saturday, May 23 through Monday, September 7, with the option of running through the end of September on a limited basis. Work hours are 11:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 11:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. on weekends.

To apply, email officemanager@redwoodestates.info, or call 408-353-1866 for more information.



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Community

Skyland Firewise Progress Nancy Cole

In late February, Miles Wynn announced at a Skyland Firewise meeting that the community has met all requirements to be approved for the 2026 calendar year. Our three-year project list is in development, as well.

Miles' presentation covered information on the proposed requirements for the five-foot area around the perimeter of a home, termed "Zone Zero." This area must be free of any combustible materials, including plants and mulch, to prevent flying embers from collecting and starting a fire that would move onto the structure. Bare dirt or gravel are recommended.

We discussed the 12 new home-hardening discounts for homeowners who are covered by the California Fair Plan. They include five discounts related to the areas immediately surrounding the home, five specific to features of the structure itself, and two community-level mitigation designations, including being a member of a Firewise Community. If you have a California Fair Plan insurance policy, you should have received a letter detailing the requirements for these discounts. If you have not received the letter, contact your insurance broker.

Joining Miles was the rest of the steering committee: Warren Barnes, Cheryl Clifford, Shelly Kanady, Deana Arnold, Peggy Johnson, and Nancy Cole. Warren shared the community map, which consists of approximately 200 properties. Cheryl managed the group-discount purchase of metal-reflective address-number signs from the Zayante Fire Protection District. The signs were available for pick-up at the meeting.

Last October, the first Skyland Firewise workday was held on a lower portion of Skyland Road. Although initially planned for two days, the team was able to clear 0.6

miles of roadside and chip 287 cubic feet of brush in only nine hours.

Many volunteers helped with the organization, physical labor, and providing water, snacks, and lunch to the team. Homeowners contributed to pay for the equipment: Ryan DalPorto's excavator and a chipper from SCM Landworks. A second workday is being planned for this spring to complete the work on south Skyland Road. To volunteer, scan this QR code with your cell phone.



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**Firewise
Real Estate Impact
Keith Kanady**

Living in a Firewise community is like being part of a superhero squad, but instead of capes, you've got rakes, fire-resistant siding, and a deep commitment to not letting your neighborhood go up in flames. If you live in a fire-prone area like the Los Gatos Mountains, being Firewise isn't just smart. It's a survival skill. Let's dive into why being Firewise is wise.

A Firewise community is a neighborhood that's collectively decided, "Not today, wildfire!" These neighborhoods work together to reduce wildfire risks through teamwork, planning, and a healthy dose of brush-clearing. Firewise communities create defensible space by clearing brush and debris from their neighborhoods, encouraging the use of fire-resistant building materials, and educating neighbors with fire-safety tips. It's like a neighborhood watch, but instead of looking out for suspicious characters, you're looking out for suspicious sparks.

Being Firewise doesn't just make you safer, it can also be better for your wallet. In wildfire-prone areas, finding insurance can feel like trying to find a unicorn. Being in a Firewise community makes your property look like a safe bet, and insurers are more likely to cover you. Some insurers even roll out the red carpet with special policies for Firewise homeowners. You might get wildfire-mitigation reimbursements or extra coverage for fire-resistant upgrades.

If you've ever had your insurance policy non-renewed because of wildfire risks, you know the pain. Being Firewise can help you avoid this challenge by showing insurers you're serious about protecting your home. Buyers love a home that says, "I'm safe and responsible."

It's not just about your house. Firewise initiatives make everyone safer, and that's a win for all.

Being part of a Firewise community protects your home, lowers your insurance premiums, and gives you serious bragging rights at the next neighborhood barbecue. If you're in a fire-prone area like 95033, joining or starting a Firewise community is a no-brainer. Plus, it's a great excuse to finally clear out that pile of brush you've been ignoring.

Keith Kanady is a real estate Broker Associate with Compass in Los Gatos.

Call him at 408-316-1666.

**Mr. N's Second Chance
The Power of a Second Opinion
Dr. Fahimeh Zibae**

When Mr. N's family first heard the words "inoperable liver tumor," their world stopped.

Mr. N, a sweet 10-year-old pup with a gentle spirit and a love for life, had suddenly gone from a happy companion to one with a devastating diagnosis. They were told that a mass found on imaging appeared to be a liver tumor that could not be surgically removed. Their only option, they believed, was to prepare for the inevitable. Trusting their instincts, Mr. N's family sought a second opinion at Summit Veterinary Hospital.

A Fresh Look, A Different Answer. During Mr. N's evaluation, our veterinary team performed a thorough physical exam, reviewed previous diagnostics, and recommended additional imaging. Upon closer evaluation, it appeared to be a large splenic tumor. Unlike many liver tumors, certain splenic tumors can be surgically removed through a splenectomy. While still serious and requiring urgent care, this diagnosis meant Mr. N had a fighting chance. Surgery was recommended promptly.

A Critical Surgery and Careful Recovery. The very next day, Mr. N was taken to surgery. Splenic masses can be fragile and prone to bleeding, making these procedures both delicate and intense. We worked carefully and efficiently to remove the affected splenic mass and control any internal bleeding.

The hours that followed were focused on stabilization, pain management, and

close monitoring. Recovery from splenic surgery requires vigilant care, especially in senior pets, but Mr. N proved to be a fighter. After surgery, the mass was sent out for biopsy so we could better understand exactly what Mr. N had been facing. Day by day, he regained strength. His appetite returned. His tail began to wag again. When the biopsy results came back, Mr. N's family received the news every pet parent hopes for: the mass was benign. What had once been feared to be a devastating diagnosis turned out to be something that surgery had fully resolved. Thanks to quick action, careful evaluation, and a little persistence from his family, Mr. N was given the chance to move forward with a healthy future.

Living His Best Life. Today, Mr. N is back to doing what he loves most, enjoying time with his family, soaking up sunshine, and living fully. His journey is a powerful reminder that hope sometimes lies beyond the first opinion.



Midpen Open Space District Mountain Bikers Cheer New Trail Faizi Samadani

In mid-December, the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District board voted to develop a new trail at the Beatty property, east of Lexington Reservoir. This is a significant win for the Los Gatos outdoor community. The tentative date for construction to start is in 2028. The last time a multi-use trail opened within the Lexington Reservoir basin was the Aquinas and Serenity Trails (around 25 years ago), which followed the Serpentine Trail (around 30 years ago).

Midpen funded this project through a \$650,000 grant for the Alma Bridge Road Newt Passage Project. This project offers ways to protect newts from being killed around the Beatty property, where there has been a significant rate of mortality documented. Santa Clara County has owned Alma Bridge Road since 2021, and Midpen has partnered with them to resolve this ongoing issue. The new agreement addresses this issue by opening the trail seasonally, when newts aren't migrating during the rainy seasons.

"This compromise proves that the tension between resource protection and public access doesn't have to be a zero-sum game," said project manager Mark Brandi.

Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that advocates for increased mountain-bike trail access with land-management agencies. Whether that means opening existing trails to mountain bike use or developing new ones, SVMTB builds relationships and advocates for that cause. Mountain resident and realtor Ed Dee is the vice president of SVMTB, and speaks with great excitement about this recent



development. It promises hope for this trail and potentially more opening in the future. "This is huge for the community," said Dee, explaining that local mountain bikers will be able to get out into previously inaccessible areas. There was a trail used in the late 1970s that was closed about a decade later, to the dismay of the Los Gatos biker community, he recalled.

New trails on the horizon. Another reason that outdoor enthusiasts are thrilled with the news is because it sheds light on the potential for other closed-off regions to be opened. "This is an example of environmental concerns and the mountain-biking lobby working together for a solution," said Dee, stating that any trail that's open for multi-use is going to include hiker access. Local hikers will be able to access the trail from downtown Los Gatos.

Jeff King, one of the SVMTB directors, wants local youth to be able to reap the benefits of the nature that surrounds the town, rather than being on their phones at home. Another SVMTB official, Dirk Franklin, shares his enthusiasm over the new trail. "I am really excited for the upcoming

Beatty Property trails and the additional projects funded by Measure AA," he said. "These will help make Los Gatos a true trails destination. It's great for recreation and local businesses."

The first step, according to Dee, is to educate the residents of Los Gatos with the hope of gaining some traction around the less visible territories in the mountains of Los Gatos. "The mountain-bike community has been greatly misunderstood by land managers for a long time," he said. "The misunderstanding comes from land managers thinking all mountain bikers want an abundance of man-made technical features like jumps and burns. We love the environment and we just want to get on our bikes and ride. We are responsible, and we're not going to run people off the trail. Most mountain bikers just want to ride around in nature."

Dee explains that the work that he and his peers do at SVMTB is to educate and work with other trail user groups—many with environmental concerns. Dee said that mountain biking is one of the largest growing segments of the outdoor-recreational industry in the world, and that in his role



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**Jeff King, Dirk Franklin and Ed Dee, board members for Silicon Valley Mountain Bikers, descend quickly along a gravel path.
Photos by Faizi Samadani**

as vice-president, he and his colleagues try to translate the passion held by bikers in the area. A multiuse trail is currently in the planning stages for Bear Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. They are targeting construction for that trail to begin in spring of 2027. This preserve currently does not have trails open to bikers.

For more information, visit openspace.org.

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24295 SKYLAND ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$2,500,000**
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600 RIDGE TOP ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$2,495,000**
3 Beds | 3.5 Baths | 3,322 SF | 13 Acres



22430 SUMMIT ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$1,850,000**
3 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,892 SF | 1.39 Acres
+ 650 SF APT | 1 Bed | 1 Bath



22575 SUMMIT ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$1,699,000**
3 Beds | 2 Baths | 1,504 SF | 29,187 SF Lot



23584 SKY VIEW TERRACE
Los Gatos | **\$1,699,000**
4 Beds | 2.5 Baths | 2,992 SF | 1.2 Acres



19118 OLD VINEYARD ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$1,589,000**
3 Beds | 2.5 Baths | 1,923 SF | 1.18 Acres



24035 STAGE STOP WAY
Los Gatos | **\$1,588,000**
3 Beds | 2.5 Baths | 2,889 SF | 2.5 Acres



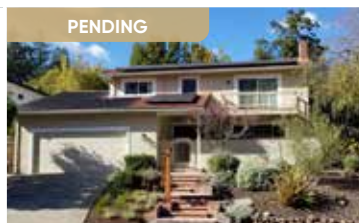
21386 SUNNYSIDE ROAD
Los Gatos | **\$1,545,000**
3 Beds | 3 Baths | 2,889 SF | 11,356 SF Lot



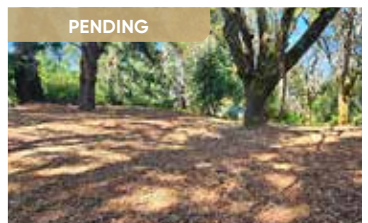
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calendar

SPECIAL EVENTS

Wednesday, April 1

Registration for the Santa Cruz County Resource Conservation District's spring chipping program opens. More information is at www.rcdsantacruz.org/spring-chipping-information.

Saturday, April 4

95033free swap meet is from 9 a.m. to noon, in the Loma Prieta Gymnasium, 23800 Summit Road.

Goodwill donation drive is from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., in the C.T. English Middle School parking lot, 23800 Summit Road.

Burrell School Vineyards and Winery hosts a closing reception with local artists Kimberly Parrish and Don Lobner, from 1 to 4 p.m.

Thursday, April 9

The Bookmobile visits the mountains:
Lakeside School, 9:45 to 11:45 a.m.
Building Blocks Preschool, 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. and 2:30 to 3:45 p.m.
Redwood Estates Pavilion, 4:15 to 5:15 p.m.



Friday, April 17

The Summit Sisters perform at the Crow's Nest in Santa Cruz, at 7 p.m.

Lakeside School hosts a family movie night under the stars at 19621 Black Road. Purchase tacos beginning at 6 p.m. The movie starts at sundown.

Thursday, April 23

The Bookmobile visits the mountains:
Lakeside School, 9:45 to 11:45 a.m.
Building Blocks Preschool, 12:15 to 12:45 p.m. and 2:30 to 3:45 p.m.
Redwood Estates Pavilion, 4:15 to 5:15 p.m.



Saturday, April 25

The Los Gatos Wine Walk in downtown Los Gatos is from 2 to 5 p.m. More information is at www.losgatoschamber.com/wine-walk.

Cups of Yoga hosts a Beltane sound bath, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. Book online at www.cupsofyoga.com or email hello@cupsofyoga.com.

Saturday, May 2

Goodwill donation drive is from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Lakeside School, 19621 Black Road.

Sunday, May 3

95033 Flea Market will be at the Building Blocks Preschool parking lot, 23845 Summit Road, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Email cmvgibbo@gmail.com for more information.

Lauren Jelencovich performs at the Los Gatos High School Theatre. Doors open at 2 p.m., and the concert begins at 2:30 p.m. For more information and tickets, visit lgcca.org.

Mountain School's annual May Day celebration is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at 19621 Black Road. Join us for live music, games, the Maypole dance, a farmer's market, auction items, and more. For more information, visit www.lgsons.org.

ON-GOING CLASSES AND MEETINGS

Mondays

Alcoholics Anonymous meets at Skyland Church, 8 p.m. Join us on Zoom: Meeting ID 364 362 970, PW: 046518

Outdoor yoga on the mountain, 10:15 to 11:30 a.m. Email anouk@anoukyoga.com for information.

Tuesdays

Town walking group meets at 9:30 a.m. at the Adult Recreation Center, 123 Main Street in Los Gatos.

Vinyasa Flow from 9 to 10 a.m. Book at www.cupsofyoga.com, or call Jaime at 831-200-8802.

Qigong class on Zoom from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Email Amandaring@gmail.com for information and Zoom URL.

Gentle Restorative Yoga with Amy Schendel from 6 to 7 p.m. Book at www.cupsofyoga.com, or call Jaime at 831-200-8802.

Wednesdays

Flow and Unwind yoga with Erin from 5:30 to 6:30 pm. Book at www.cupsofyoga.com, or call Jaime at 831-200-8802.

Thursdays

Gentle Flow from 9 to 10 a.m. www.cupsofyoga.com, or call 831-200-8802.

Loma Prieta Amateur Radio Club meets the first Thursday of the month at 7 p.m. at the Burrell CDF station on Highland Way.

Alcoholics Anonymous, Redwood Estates Pavilion, 7:30 p.m.

Fridays

Power-inspired Vinyasa from noon to 1 p.m. Book at www.cupsofyoga.com, or call Jaime at 831-200-8802.

Saturdays

Summit Speakers meets on Zoom from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. For more information, call 408-497-5102, or email smbeauchamp885@gmail.com.

Summit Ultimate Frisbee meets from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Loma Prieta Elementary School field. More information at summitfrisbee.org.

Sundays

Summit Ultimate Frisbee meets from 9 to 11 a.m. at the Loma Prieta Elementary School field. More information at summitfrisbee.org.

Vinyasa Flow from 9 to 10 a.m., and Gentle Flow 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. Book at www.cupsofyoga.com, or call 831-200-8802.

exploring

A Hidden Treasure

Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve

Neil Wiley

Forty years ago, I was exploring the Bay Area in my new white Mustang convertible. My map showed me a road up to Skyline Blvd called Alpine. I was nearing the summit when my car sunk a wheel into a deep hole. It took some digging, but the Mustang and I reached the ridge.

In March of 2026, I drove up Alpine again. This time I was driving up the same road to discover a place to hike. I turned left from Highway 280 just north of Arastradero road to the Alpine Road exit. I turned left to take a relatively smooth Alpine Road about 3.6 miles to roadside parking located just before Willowbrook Drive. (If you are using a GPS, the street address is 4860 Alpine Road.) Across the road is the main entrance to Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve of Portola Valley Ranch.

From this entrance, you can walk over 10 miles of trails in more than 425 acres of open space. Most of the hiking loops include a combination of Toyon, Coalmine, and Old Spanish trails. Toyon and Old Spanish connect at several points, but also run parallel for almost the entire length of the preserve. They connect the Preserve of Portola Valley Ranch with the Open Space of Blue Oaks.

Signage marking the intersections are helpful, but a map and compass could help avoid confusion. You may use mapping on your cell phone, but it doesn't always work.

Paper maps are usually available at the entrance, but you can get one online at www.cmrnp.org.



On my hike, I followed the three main trails. My favorite was the return walk on Old Spanish. Although all paths are single width, much of Old Spanish is wider, downhill, and with more views to the east that display San Francisco Bay and Mount Diablo. Other trails offer views to the southwest, including the hills of the neighboring Midpen's Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

The trails I took offered mild climbs on shaded single-tracks. Maples and oaks provided excellent shade and soft, leafy paths. It was a pleasant and comfortable environment with some occasional views. By the way, don't look for coal. The mine was buried in a major landslide in 1890. Even with no coal, I hope to see more of Coal Mine Ridge Nature Preserve.

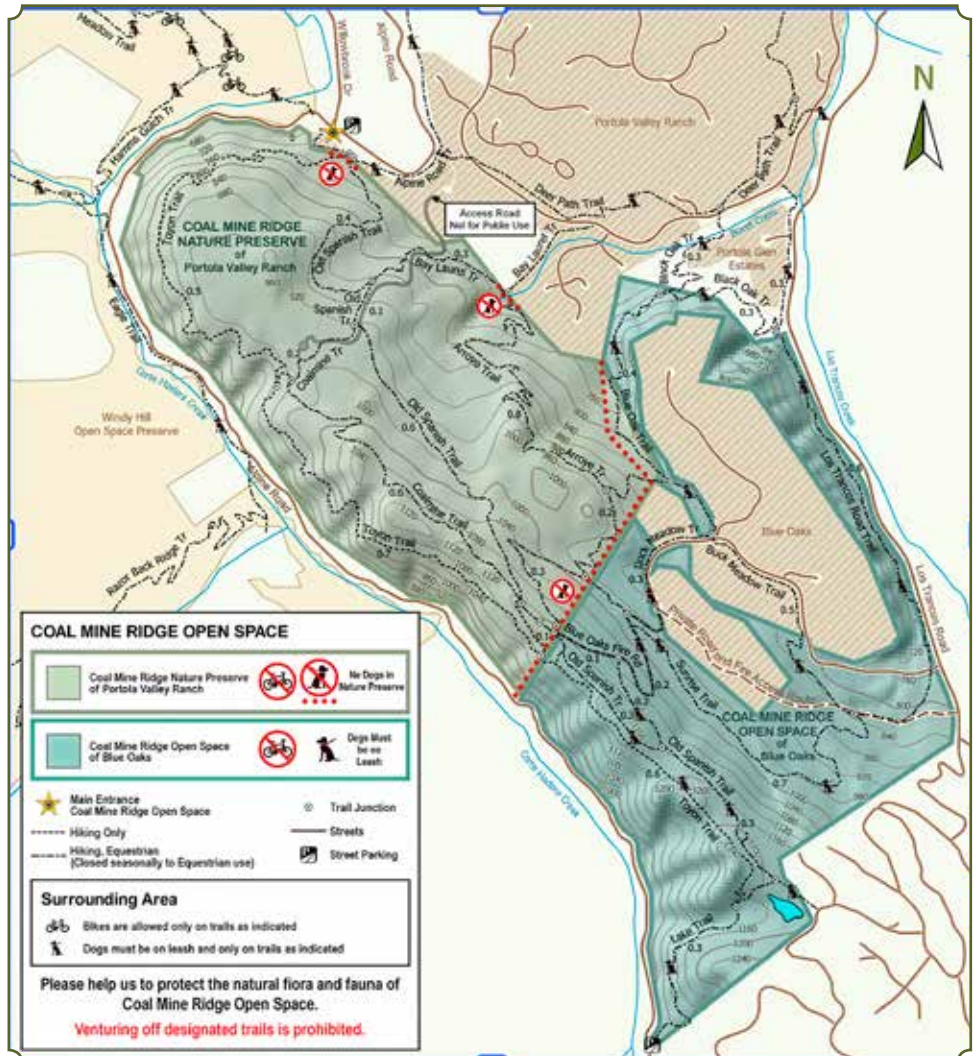
There are some minor negatives. No water fountains or bathrooms are available. You can't bring dogs or bicycles. Some trails are closed seasonally to horses. And you are asked to not take flora or fauna home.

One more thing. Don't wander off trails. You could get lost.

I was sure to not violate these rules or go farther on Alpine. (The road is closed past the Coal Mine Ridge entrance.) Instead, I extended my trip with a drive down Alpine and north to Highway 84 (Woodside Road) and up to Alice's Restaurant on Skyline Blvd. for a hamburger and a visit with the owner. He told me that more than 20 percent of his business is from hikers. I also discovered a large map of mountain parks bordered by brief descriptions at Alice's.

Do you have a favorite park or trail near Skyline? Leave a message for me at 408-353-1546.

Happy exploring!



history



J. W. Lyndon

The Father of Los Gatos Debra Staab

The life of J.W. Lyndon truly epitomizes the “rags to riches” story. John Weldon Lyndon, the eldest of seven children, was born in Quebec, Canada, in 1836. The family moved to Vermont in the early 1850s, and at age 23, John struck out alone for California with only 65 cents in his pocket.

After arriving in San Francisco in 1859, John made his way to San Jose and then to Lexington, where he found work. His first job was as a grocery clerk. Not long after that, he started his own general store, which sold groceries and lumber. Within a few years, he started buying land, including a 160-acre parcel on Black Road. After the Civil War ended in 1866, John’s brother James joined him in Lexington, where he established a lumber yard. In 1894, James was elected sheriff of Santa Clara County.

John had no formal education, but he was an extremely shrewd businessman. By 1868, he sold his general store and purchased the Ten Mile house, a roadhouse ten miles from San Jose located where the Los Gatos Post Office is today. A need for cash forced him to sell the roadhouse, but within a few years he was able to buy it back. In 1872, he renovated the hotel and renamed it the Los Gatos Hotel.

When the Pacific Coast Railroad came to Los Gatos in 1878, they wanted to use the



site of the Los Gatos Hotel for their train station. John agreed to deed the parcel to the railroad, and in turn they paid to move/rebuild the hotel to the other side of the street. Sadly, the building burned to the ground just eight years later.

Within a year after the Los Gatos Hotel fire, John rebuilt, this time christening the structure as the Hotel Lyndon. The new building was constructed with luxury in mind, having 175 feet of frontage with a wide front porch, a bright white exterior, a red shingle roof, 60 deluxe bedrooms, velvet carpets, two large dining rooms, gardens, and cottages in the back. The interior space featured a gentlemen’s sitting room and a ladies’ parlor with a piano. Beautiful palm trees stood like sentinels on both sides of the building.

Records show that James Lyndon’s lumber yard produced more than 300,000 board feet of redwood from the Santa Cruz Mountains to construct the Lyndon Hotel. The grand opening took place in 1899. It was reported

that most of the town came out for an all-day celebration. The venue became the place to be and served banquets, weddings, dances, recitals, and meetings. Famous visitors included John Steinbeck and Charlie Chaplin.

This first-class hotel eventually fell into ruins and was demolished in 1963. In its place, the Lyndon Plaza office building was constructed. Today you can sit at Willow Street Pizza or Main Street Burgers enjoying



**Demolition of Hotel Lyndon,
1963**





couple had three children, Clyde (died at age 4), Ora, and Irma. Theresa also had a son from her first marriage. Theresa donated land for an Episcopal Chapel in 1883, which unfortunately burned down in 1901. The new church has a window

the street view and admiring the original palm trees left from Hotel Lyndon's glory days.

In 1871, John married Theresa Rector Starr, a young widow from Oregon. The



Lyndon Heights, circa 1886

in her honor. Theresa died in 1888 at just 45 years old.

Just two years later, John constructed the "Theresa Block" of shops near North Santa Cruz Avenue and West Main Street in her honor. In 1891, John married Marion Mace Parsons, a woman from Maine.

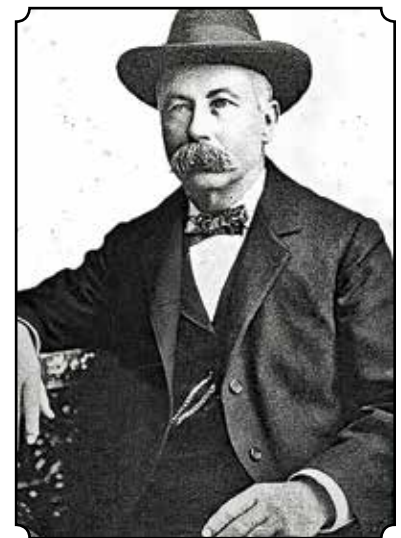
With John's businesses flourishing, he created a magnificent Victorian-style mecca on 11 acres in 1886, which he named "Lyndon Heights." The massive estate featured a three-story redwood house with 24 rooms, six fireplaces, and an elevator. The outside was painted a dark reddish on the bottom and a light yellow-green on top.

John was also very active as a community member. He owned stock in the Los Gatos Bank and the Los Gatos Fruit Packing Company, was a school trustee, and founded

the Los Gatos Gas Company. Los Gatos town was incorporated in 1887. He served as mayor from 1888 to 1892. His dedication to building up the downtown earned him the title "the Father of Los Gatos".

John and Theresa's daughter Irma married James D. Farwell in 1902. Farwell was an active member of the community as vice president of the Bank of Los Gatos, the manager of Glen Una ranch, and president of the Los Gatos Telephone Company. He donated land to the school district and to expand Memorial Park. The Farwells maintained Lyndon Heights until Irma's death in 1964. In 1969, the splendid house was demolished and replaced by the Los Gatos Meadows retirement home at 110 Wood Road. The cupola from the original carriage house now sits atop the bandstand in Oak Meadow Park.

John Lyndon died in Los Gatos in 1912. He is buried next to Theresa and their son Clyde at Oak Hill Memorial Park in San Jose. Marian died in 1920 and is also buried in Oak Hill Memorial Park. The Farwell family still own some of the commercial property in downtown Los Gatos. Our community owes many thanks to John Lyndon, the "Father of Los Gatos."





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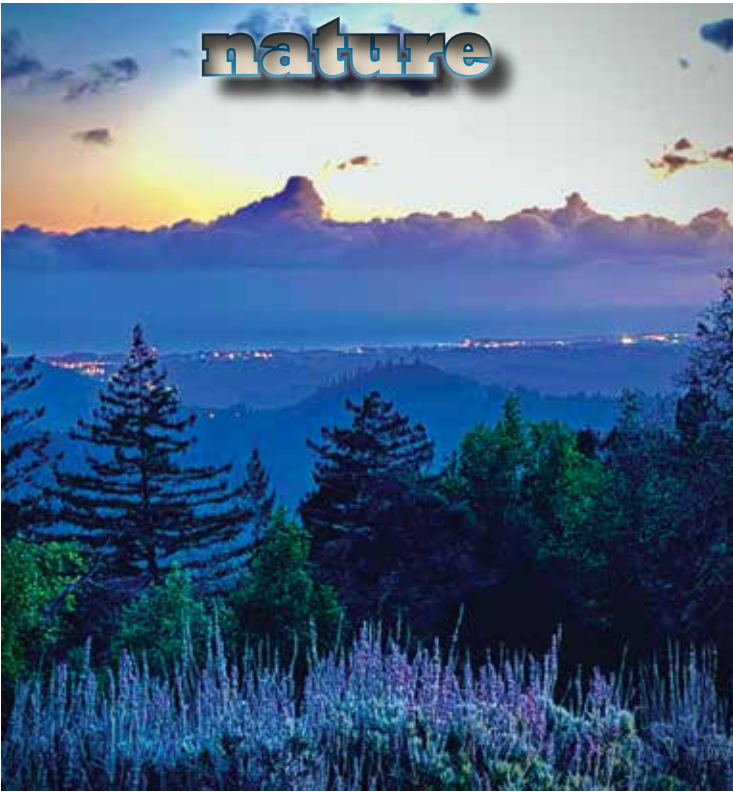
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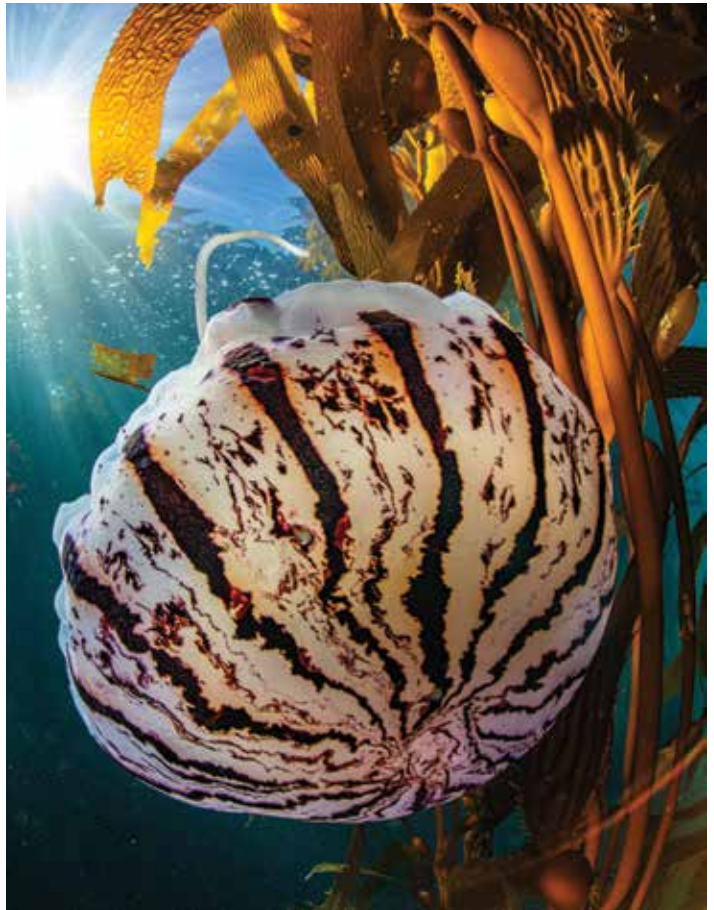


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nature



*Teton clouds over Santa Cruz
Photo by Sandy Mitchell*



*Purple-striped jellyfish
Photos by Bruce Sudweeks*



*Great blue heron at Vasona Park
Photos by Brian Weselby*



*Condors at Pinnacles National Monument
Photos by Mercury Freedom*



*Grebes at Calero Reservoir
Photo by Mercury Freedom*



schools

**Building Blocks Preschool
and Mountain School
Love and Dedication
Convention and Bus Tour
Jessie Thorsen**

Building Blocks Cooperative Preschool and Mountain School proudly welcomed over 150 early-childhood educators from across California. They were official host sites during the recent California Council of Parent Participation Nursery Schools (CCPPNS) annual convention bus tour. This event was a labor of love and dedication.

For those who may not know, both Mountain School and Building Blocks are members of CCPPNS, a statewide professional organization supporting cooperative preschools throughout California. While our schools are rooted in our small mountain community, we are connected to a much larger network of families and educators who share a commitment to parent involvement and play-based education.

This year's convention brought that connection to life. Educators and parents gathered for professional-development and parent-education sessions. The topics ranged from play-based learning and social-emotional development, to building positive body image and cultivating communities of care within cooperative schools.

Behind the scenes, Mountain School's co-director, Amanda Demers, and Building Blocks' director, Teacher Nicole, as well as other local directors, spent months organizing and preparing for this convention. Their leadership highlighted that community-building isn't just a philosophy, it is how we sustain our schools, support families, and raise children together.

While Black Road and Summit Road can sometimes feel miles apart, the mountain has a way of connecting and inspiring people across generations. Two Building Blocks teachers, Jessie and Yorlenny, are Lakeside alumni who were taught by Anna Rainville, the daughter and esteemed educator of Mountain School founder Betty Peck. Anna Rainville was on the bus tour. It





is a reminder that the roots of our schools run deep in this community.

During the bus tour, Mountain School and Building Blocks showcased their learning spaces, and also the strength of a rural community with strong roots. Our programs are different; we do not offer identical cooperative preschool experiences. Yet both schools provide something foundational: a strong, connected community for families with young children that is built on leadership, caregiver involvement, care, and an eternal gratitude for our outdoor spaces. It was a truly magical night.

Thank you to our generous donors, Summit Store, Trader Joes, and Whole Foods, and to the amazing families who showed up and worked hard to prepare for this event. Local wineries generously stepped up to provide beverages for the bus ride. Thank you to Silver Mountain Vineyards, Regale Winery, Burrell School, and Birichino.



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schools

Lakeside School News Kathy McKinney

In March, Lakeside students enjoyed an energetic assembly with ZunZun Tunes, an educational musical group teaches about water conservation, watersheds, and ocean health through music and movement.

In science, our students were treated to a visit from Peter Winch, an educator, naturalist, and artist who works for the Greater Farallones National Marine Sanctuary near the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. Peter brought crab costumes, traps, and most importantly, live purple shore crabs to teach students about their importance to our local marine environment. Students dressed up as crabs, danced like crabs, drew crabs, and held crabs. It was a huge hit with students of all ages (and adults, too). The next day, our first- and second-grade class took a field trip to Natural Bridges to see tide pools, so it was perfect timing.

We welcome the community to our family movie night under the stars on **Friday, April 17**. Bring a blanket or lawn chair, purchase a delicious taco dinner prepared by the Agrillo family, then stay for the movie. Tacos will be served beginning at 6 p.m., and the movie will start at sundown.

At the Lakeside School Community Foundation's most recent Goodwill fundraiser, we collected over 4,000 pounds of donations to earn almost \$600. Mark your calendars for our next Goodwill drive on **Saturday, May 2**.

Our students are gearing up for the annual May Day celebration on **Friday, May 1**. This cherished tradition brings



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joy, color, and community spirit to school each year. With their heads adorned with flower crowns, our students will participate in springtime music, culminating with the fifth-grade Maypole dance. This time-honored ritual of weaving an intricate ribbon pattern around the pole dates back generations at Lakeside School.

Photos by Heather O'Donnell

Mountain School Amanda Demers

Save the date for Mountain School's annual May Day celebration on **Sunday, May 3**, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. This event will be at the little red schoolhouse on the Lakeside School campus, 19621 Black Road.

Join us for live music, carnival games, the Maypole dance, lunch, a farmer's market, auction items, and more. The cost is \$75 for a family pass that includes two adults and two children.

If you are exploring preschool options for your child, our May Day celebration is a great way to see our school environment and meet other families. Enrollment is now open for summer camps and 2026-2027.

We offer a nature- and play-based, child-directed program. Children explore and develop social skills in a natural environment built for collaborative learning. The emergent curriculum develops language and school-readiness skills through conversation, discussions, science projects, and special materials. Hikes and field trips challenge children's physical abilities and encourage their emerging independence.

For more information, visit www.lgsons.org, or email info@lgsons.org.



Lexington School News

Jason Deppong

Multilingualism Week took place in February. Lexington dedicated a week to the importance of learning and appreciating languages. As an IB PYP school, offering an additional language is a requirement. Staff members encourage students to use home languages and practice additional languages. For Multilingualism Week, students taught each other languages and participated in a multilingual scavenger hunt and game day. Parents helped students write multilingual Valentine's Day cards.

To commemorate the UN's Mother Tongue Language Day, students placed a flower and a name of an endangered language around a "Mother Language Monument" banner provided by a Bangladeshi family. Mother Language Day originated in Bangladesh. Next year, we hope to build our own sculpture.

We also celebrated the Lunar New Year. This year is the Year of the Fire Horse.

Families and staff with Asian connections helped organize and lead an assembly. We learned some of the differences between Lunar New Year celebrations in China and Vietnam. Parents organized a Chinese student fashion show. The assembly concluded with an amazing Home and School Club funded Lion Dance performance by USA Prancer Development Group. Yellow and red lions performed acrobatic maneuvers and interacted with the audience. Parents led recess activities such as





Chinese calligraphy and paper cutting.

TK-5 student-led conferences were a celebration of student learning. Every spring, students show their parents what they have been learning over the past few months. Students might read to their parents, talk about the progress they are making within a unit of inquiry, demonstrate math concepts through games, share projects, reflect on writing, teach a few words in Spanish, or tour parents around campus.

Lexington's biggest Home and School Club fundraiser, the Wildcat Color Run, occurred during Holi, an Indian holiday that celebrates the coming of spring. It is all about joy and love.

At Lexington, it also includes running! Students raise funds from family and friends depending on the laps they run or as a single donation. Each class has thirty minutes to run around the track as many times as possible. While doing so, parents toss colored chalk similar to what might happen at a Holi celebration in India. Our HSC also brought back a fantastic Dhol drummer to help inspire our runners. It was a beautiful day of community building, health, and spirit.

Lexington concluded its International Baccalaureate Primary Years Program five-year evaluation visit. After a three-day virtual visit by members of the IB organization, IB PYP Coordinator Anna Kearney and I presented their initial findings to the Lexington community. Lexington was commended for the growth it has made as an IB program over the past five years, the staff's understanding and passion for the IB's pedagogy, district support of our program, and how the students and parents embrace



the IB's philosophy in developing global citizens. Lexington looks forward to continuous improvement over the next five years and setting new goals for its unique program.

We welcome the mountain community to visit Lexington's Open House and 5th grade IB PYP Exhibition presentation on **Thursday, May 14**, from 5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. Come see what the IB Primary Years Program is all about.



Photos by Jason Deppong

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