

# SARATOGA

MARCH 2023

## *Spotlight*

An exclusive magazine serving the residents of Saratoga  
*The Heart of Saratoga*



*Susan  
Weiner*  
A Life's Journey



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Cover photo by Khushboo Goyal, Shutter Magic Photography

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Content Due:	Edition Month:
December 7 .....	January
January 7 .....	February
February 7 .....	March
March 7 .....	April
April 7 .....	May
May 7 .....	June
June 7 .....	July
July 7 .....	August
August 7 .....	September
September 7 .....	October
October 7 .....	November
November 7 .....	December

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# Dear Neighbors,

## Happy March...and Happy Spring!

This month, we have the pleasure of featuring Susan Weiner. Susan has lived an incredible life, from escaping Communist-ruled Hungary as a young girl to 50 years of teaching at West Valley College! We're sure you will enjoy learning more about Susan.

You'll also have a chance to read about community events and more in this month's issue.

Please feel free to send us any content you would like to share. At *Saratoga Spotlight*, we love sharing what's going on in our community!

See you in town,

*David Nielsen*

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# Susan Weiner

## A Life's Journey

Originally from Budapest, Hungary, Susan Weiner's life has brought her from governmental rule that threatened her freedoms and life to one that became more rewarding and fulfilling than she had ever imagined. She earned her education in Budapest, at Chemical High School and Hungary Technical University, majoring in Chemical Engineering.

At the time, in 1956, the Hungarian Revolution was ensuing, which was in protest against the USSR's domination of Hungary. Susan had attempted to escape the Communist rule but was not at first successful. Her initial attempt was across the Austria-Hungary border, but she was caught by the Hungarians and was ordered to return home. On her second attempt she was once again apprehended, this time by the Russians, who informed her that

if she were caught trying to flee again, they would shoot her. She returned home and told her parents that she was done trying to escape.

Susan was then introduced, through a friend of her mother's, to a trafficker who helped people cross the border. One day he came to their apartment and told them that the Yugoslavia-Hungary border had opened. Susan went with him to the border and, not knowing exactly where the border was, literally walked right across.

Once in Yugoslavia, Susan was placed in a holding area for a short time before continuing her journey to freedom. She proceeded to Italy and then to Austria, by possibly the worst imaginable means; by foot, through the Alps, in waist-high snow in January. When she finally arrived in Vienna, the authorities

were unsure of her intentions, as she arrived later than most other refugees. Not knowing if Susan was a plant or a spy, she was placed into jail alongside a murderer. Fortunately, she was released after about 10 days, but with no money to her name.

When released from jail she discovered that the president of the United States had made the decision that no more Hungarian refugees would be allowed into the country. Susan contacted the Canadian embassy and was offered a PhD scholarship through a prestigious university as they were pursuing those in the scientific field. However, her goal was to be in the U.S.

During this time, Susan was living with her father's cousin who one day excitedly told her that a Nobel Prize-winning Hungarian scientist, who had been working in Massachusetts, managed to convince the U.S. government to allow him the immigration of 3,000 Hungarian scientists. Since Susan had an engineering degree, she applied and was accepted into the program and finally was able to get to the United States.

Susan's parents had been preparing to legally emigrate to the U.S. and, three months later, they arrived. By this time, she had a job at NYU Medical School as a technician, where she was given a free scholarship and eventually earned her master's degree in chemistry. She was persuaded against going for a degree in chemical engineering, (which was her undergraduate), being told that, as a woman, she would never get a job. Which is why Susan went for her degree in chemistry. As it turned out, her first job was as a chemical engineer at UC Berkeley for 5.5 years where she specialized in sea water conversion.

*Stephanie Kashima, Susan Weiner, & Son Mark Weiner*





While Susan was at UC Berkeley, her husband was working at Dow Chemical. Dow had been looking for a research chemist and, after learning about Susan and what she was doing, asked that she come in for an interview. She got the job and worked for Dow for 3.5 years.

Her husband then got a job at Memorex in Santa Clara, at which time they were living in Martinez. Since the commute was too much for them, Susan left Dow and they moved to Los Gatos.

A technician Susan had worked with at Dow asked her what she was going to do next. She wasn't sure but considered going to a pharmaceutical company. He asked her if she had considered teaching. She told him that she had not and asked him why? He replied, "Because without you I would have never lasted in this job." Though Susan had no teaching experience, she decided to pursue this advice and began to visit colleges. When she walked into West Valley College her knowledge of quantitative analysis was exactly what they were looking for. She taught that class for 28 years, retiring in June 2020, after 50 years of teaching.

Susan has many fond memories of her time at West Valley. She had the most incredible time with her students, and there are many with whom she is still in contact. A couple of years before her retirement, a student who had been in her class in 1984 had sent her an email. She didn't recognize his name, but he explained that he was now a town planner and told her that how much he had enjoyed and never forgot her class. The final sentence was, "Thank you for being part of my life."

Susan has a son, Mark, and twin granddaughters, who are 25. One granddaughter, Chloe, is studying for her PhD at Columbia University and the other, Jordan, graduated from UC San Diego in computer science. Mark and his wife, Sue, live in Los Gatos. Mark is in high-tech marketing and teaches part-time at SCU and belongs to several volunteer organizations. He is also very active in sports activities and has run numerous half-marathons.

Susan loves to travel and usually does so once or twice per year. Her last trip was a river cruise in the U.S. and that is what she plans for her next trip as well, cruising from South Carolina to Florida. And, as much as she loves cruising, aviation is one of the true loves of her life. In fact, Susan got her pilot's license in 1982 and owned a Mooney 4-seat airplane for 16 years. Susan is instrument rated, meaning that she was trained to fly solely by reference of an aircraft's instruments.

Years ago, Susan employed a Bolivian housekeeper who spoke very little English. And, although Susan did her best to communicate with her in Spanish, she felt that her grammar could use improvement. And that is why she is now taking Spanish language classes. She has completed her first class and has just begun her second. Susan is enjoying the class very much and is very excited to be on the receiving end of learning.



*Standing, from left - Stephanie Kashima, Susan Weiner, & Son Mark Weiner. Seated, from left - Darrell Linthicum, Sue Weiner (Mark's wife), & Bob Zeiber*

Susan's return to learning was recently celebrated at Sara's Southern Kitchen in Los Gatos. She was joined by Jack Lucas, five-time former mayor of Monte Sereno and member of the board of trustees of West Valley and Mission Colleges; Khushboo Goyal, of Shutter Magic Photography; Stephen Guruwaiya, publisher; and Sara Williams, owner Sara's Southern Kitchen restaurant and Susan's former student.

As a Los Gatos resident since 1969, Susan would like to thank her neighbors for being as kind and attentive as they have been. It means a great deal to her. It's a wonderful area and has always been so convenient for shopping and commuting. Her "neighbors are terrific!" They are caring, helpful and provide a warm atmosphere. She could not ask for better people as her neighbors!



*Susan with her Mooney 4-Seater Airplane*

BY DAVID NIELSEN | PHOTOS BY KHUSHBOO GOYAL, SHUTTER MAGIC PHOTOGRAPHY



## "HEARTS, LEPRECHAUNS, AND FOOLS"

### NEW EXHIBIT FOCUSES ON TRADITIONS

The Saratoga Historical Foundation presents, "Hearts, Leprechauns, and Fools", a new exhibit exploring the impact traditions have on the fabric of the community. The exhibit covers over 30 holidays and associated traditions. The exhibit opens on February 11 and ends in June.

Traditions are the stories, beliefs, customs and routines that pass to us from older generations. They have been passed down, in the hope of keeping the tradition alive, until the next coming generations. Many traditions originated in Europe and were brought to the US by immigrants. Some have roots in religion.

Mother's Day is a tradition that originated in the US by a woman who wanted mothers to be recognized.

The Blossom Festival is a tradition that originated in Saratoga in 1900 celebrating our agricultural heritage. Participating in a tradition creates long lasting memories.

The Saratoga History Museum is located at 20450 Saratoga-Los Gatos Road in Saratoga. Admission is free. The Museum is open from 1pm-4pm on Friday, 10am-4pm on Saturday and 1pm-4pm on Sunday. For more information, go to [www.saratogahistory.com](http://www.saratogahistory.com) or call 408-867-4311.



BY ANNETTE STRANSKY, PHOTO BY ANNETTE STRANSKY, SARATOGA HISTORICAL FOUNDATION | COMMUNITY

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## SARATOGA MUSIC BOOSTERS *PANCAKE BREAKFAST*

**SAVE THE DATE: PANCAKE BREAKFAST**  
APRIL 30, 2023 - 8:00am-12:30pm  
SARATOGA HIGH SCHOOL

Saratoga Music Boosters (SMB) Pancake Breakfast fundraiser is a community favorite for many in Saratoga and Los Gatos. Watch live music performances from all music ensembles from grades 6-12. Indulge in freshly flipped pancakes, and don't miss amazing raffle prizes and one-of-a-kind auction items!!

Tickets will be available on [www.saratogamusicboosters.org](http://www.saratogamusicboosters.org) mid-March.

SMB is an all-volunteer, charitable organization supporting music education across elementary, middle and high school in Saratoga.

SMB is a registered 501(c)(3) organization, EIN#: 51-0187615. Donations are fully tax deductible.



BY CECILE COHEN-JONATHAN,  
PARLIAMENTARIAN AT SMB | COMMUNITY



# Growing 2 Shine!

## Growing Food & Community Together

### Tree Pruning

I recently purchased a new home and am guessing the olive tree in front had not been pruned since it was planted. It had a very dense, ball-like canopy and was leaning heavily toward the sidewalk. I decided to give it a major pruning to open up the canopy, remove all the crossing branches and dead wood and take the weight off the front side. I removed approximately 1/3 of the tree – which is quite a lot – but I am determined to either have a nice looking, healthy tree or, if necessary, remove it and start over.

It is incredibly important to prune young trees in order to create a sound structure. And (for fruit trees) ensure the production of good quality fruit.

As trees grow, there are two types of pruning you should practice.

Thinning cuts are those that are taken back to the trunk. Benefits:

- Encourage early fruiting
- Allow for air circulation and sunlight penetration
- Remove crossing branches, discourage suckers and overgrowth

Heading cuts (removing at least 1/3 of the branch) are used to remove buds or spikes at the end of a branch. Benefits:

- Create/maintain proper shape
- Stimulate growth for a taller, fuller, more bushy plant/tree
- Produce larger (but less) fruit

You generally want to do your pruning in February or March once the chance of frost has passed. Frost can significantly damage freshly cut branches and stems.

Many fruit trees, especially pears and apples, are subject to fire blight – a bacterial infection that looks like burnt wood. After removing branches affected by fire blight make sure to put them in the yard clipping bin, not in the compost pile and thoroughly clean your tools with an alcohol solution before using them on other plants.

### What to Plant in December

Key: • Seed | • Transplant | • Bareroot

- Arugula • Cauliflower • Lettuce • Asparagus • Chard • Mustard Greens
- Beets • Cilantro • parsley • Bok choy • Collards • Peas • Broccoli
- Dill • Potatoes • Cabbage • Fennel • Radish • Cabbage, Napa • Kale
- Spinach • Carrots • Kohlrab • Turnips

*Local nurseries should have a good supply of most of these.*

### Ready to Harvest Now

beets \* broccoli \* cabbage \* carrots \* cauliflower \* grapefruit \*  
kale \* leeks \* lemons \* oranges \* radishes \* raspberries  
\* strawberries



## Green Tip of the Month

Due to the abundance of rain we recently had, you can rest assured that our clay soil is retaining plenty of moisture – so established plants and trees don't need to be irrigated. If you have newly planted trees/shrubs (or ones potted in containers) you should water them about once a week.



*If you have a garden (or real estate) question for Rebecca, email her at: [rjepson@ggsir.com](mailto:rjepson@ggsir.com); or call 408-357-3990.*

**Growing2Shine.com**



BY REBECCA JEPSSEN | COMMUNITY





Emily Lo & Phyllis Tung

The 15th Hakone Lunar New Year Celebration on January 29, 2023, saw a record turnout of over 700 attendees. It has been three years since the last in-person Festival was held, so the community really appreciated its comeback.

Attendees enjoyed the Lion Dance, cultural dance, Tai Chi, and Chinese martial arts performances. Over 50 kids participated in the Children Costume Parade, carrying big smiles on their faces when they received the souvenir of a "plush rabbit" (in fact, the organizer ended up running out of souvenirs). Hot food and bubble tea were served. The arts and crafts booths, game and puppet booths were well-attended. People enjoyed their time at other vendors and exhibits as well. We could hear lively chatter, and feel the celebrative mood in the air.

One of the objectives of the Hakone Foundation is "To enhance the Gardens as a venue for building cross-cultural ties in our emerging global culture". The Lunar New Year Festival certainly speaks to that. Learn more at [www.hakone.com](http://www.hakone.com).

## HAKONE Lunar New Year FESTIVAL



Connie Yu & John Yu



Adrienne Apple & Lisa Liu



Kookie Fitzsimmons & Emily Lo



Stephanie Kashima



Kishimori Hajime, Yasushi Noguchi, Anna Esboo, Mrs. Noguchi, Otto Lee, & Kookie Fitzsimmons

BY EMILY LO | COMMUNITY INTEREST

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## MAYOR'S CORNER

There are so many treasures in Saratoga, and one near to my heart is the Saratoga Village. Some of my best memories have been made there, whether I was working at our family owned and operated businesses, volunteering with the Village Merchants Association and Saratoga Business Development Council, or frequenting some of my favorite shops and restaurants. The Saratoga Village is such a special place for businesses, residents, and visitors thanks to the support of many incredible people and organizations.

The Saratoga Chamber of Commerce is an incredible asset to our downtown and community as a whole. Saratoga's Chamber works with the City, neighboring Chambers, and other business-related agencies to promote the business interests of Chamber members. Their efforts are vital to the success of our business community. The Chamber of Commerce hosts a variety of events in Saratoga, including the Holiday Wine Stroll and Classic & Cool Car Show. These activities provide opportunities for locals to enjoy the Village they know and love, and for others to visit for the first time and discover places they'd like to return to. You can learn more about the Chamber of Commerce by visiting their website at [www.saratogachamber.org](http://www.saratogachamber.org).

The Saratoga Village Development Council (SVDC) is another organization dedicated to promoting the Village and businesses community. This group of Saratoga residents organize several events throughout the year so guests from near and far can enjoy Saratoga's downtown. Recently, we all saw the festive Love Notes decorating business windows in February. In March, SVDC hosts St. Paddy's Party where children can enjoy festive fun for the holiday. They are also responsible for organizing seasonal décor throughout downtown, including wreaths, scarecrows, and patriotic flags. Additionally, SVDC has funded several Village improvement projects, such as bronze plaques for historic buildings, signage, and banners. Learn more about SVDC online at [www.saratogavillage.info](http://www.saratogavillage.info).

Another jewel of Saratoga is Hakone Estate & Gardens, which is very near to the Saratoga Village. It has been a goal of the City Council's to develop a pedestrian walkway from the Village to Hakone Gardens, and eventually on to Quarry Park. All are popular destinations for residents and visitors alike. In fact, the many well-attended events at Hakone are so popular that the parking lot often becomes full. This pedestrian connection will encourage and increase foot traffic to all three locations and, most importantly, will provide a safer path of travel for pedestrians who are currently walking along the highway to reach Hakone Gardens.

I extend my sincere gratitude to Congresswoman Anna Eshoo who helped secure \$1.52 million in Federal funds to build the walkway from the Saratoga Village to Hakone Gardens. I also want to thank the many individuals who were champions of this project and worked diligently to demonstrate the importance of this project to our community, including Hakone Foundation Board Chair Ann Waltonsmith, Vice Chair Emily Lo, the Board of Trustees, former Mayor and Council Member Mary- Lynne Bernald, the Consulate General of Japan in San Francisco, and Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian.

I am deeply grateful to all who support the Saratoga Village, whether that's working with one of these incredible organizations, volunteering, attending events, or shopping and dining. I hope you will all visit the Saratoga Village soon, and if you see me there, please say hello!



BY MAYOR KOOKIE FITZSIMMONS | COMMUNITY

## INNER WHEEL WALKATHON



Saratoga Inner Wheel members held their 3rd annual 'Walkathon' to benefit their children's 'Myoelectric Limb Project' that provides myoelectric prosthetics to children ages 6 months to 18 years

who are missing upper limbs at birth, by accident, or disease. Rain limited the number of walkers, but not their spirit or enthusiasm raising money to 'Give a Child a Hand' to make their dreams realities.

For more information, please contact Janice LeFevre at [janicealefevre@gmail.com](mailto:janicealefevre@gmail.com) or (408) 867-4923.



BY JANICE LEFEVRE | COMMUNITY INTEREST





KHUSHBOO GOYAL

*Shutter Magic  
Photography*

*Photo Courtesy of Diep Duong,  
Warm Heart Photography*

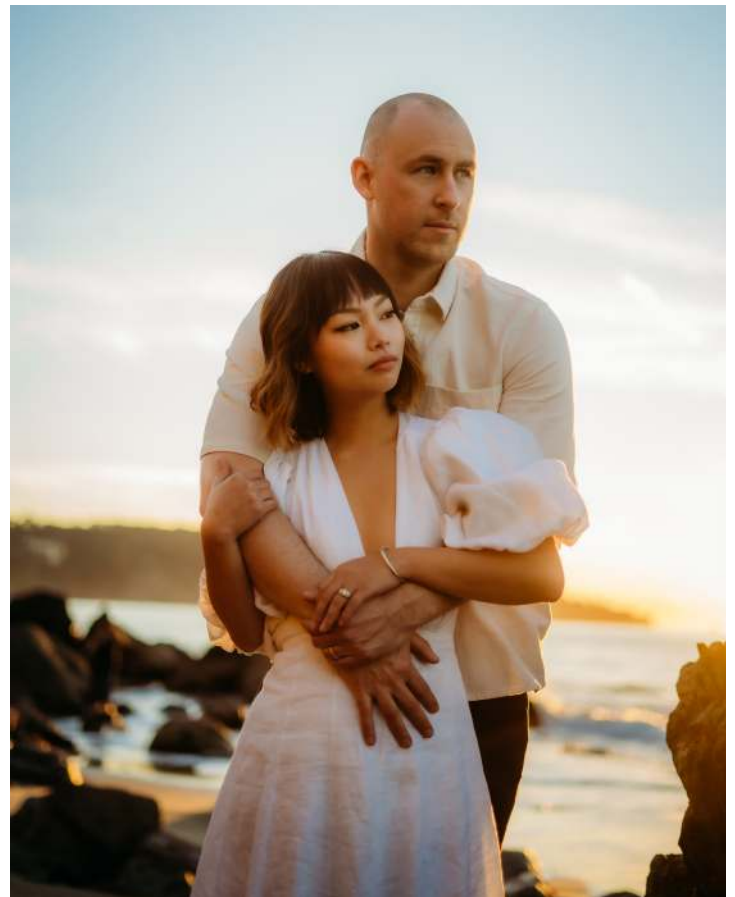
**K**hushboo Goyal had earned her MBA in Finance and Marketing, as well as a diploma in Accounting from UCLA, and was working as an accountant when she became pregnant. Once her first child, Adit, was born she put her career on hold to focus on motherhood. That was 8 years ago and is when her passion for photography began. Two years later Khushboo and her husband, Vibhor, welcomed their second son, Neel.

Khushboo decided to turn that passion for photography into a career a couple of years ago. She named her new business Shutter Magic Photography. Her mission is to help members of our community celebrate their lives by capturing memories that they may cherish and share with their loved ones for years to come. She takes pride in creating a visual story and is committed to capturing beautiful moments that her clients will treasure.

She understands that people are living busy lives, building futures for their families, and that sometimes our past is forgotten as a result. She wants to help people create beautiful, lasting memories; capturing those moments in time to remember every milestone of life. Professional photography is a great way to capture those moments and milestones that are shared as a couple, a family, or as an expecting mother carrying her baby.

Khushboo's biggest inspiration is capturing all stages of motherhood. Maternity sessions are those she enjoys the most, as it allows her to focus on the new life being created. It reminds her of the excitement and joy that comes with bringing a child into the world.

Shutter Magic Photography offers a wide variety of photo styles, yet Khushboo approaches each shoot with a free mind and creativity. Her



BY DAVID NIELSEN, PHOTOS BY KHUSHBOO GOYAL  
BUSINESS PROFILE





Photo Courtesy of Anastasia Novosyolova-Blatt, Gypsy Tales Photography

style is fun, fresh, and natural. And she is always open to listening to you and any ideas you may have. She gives her absolute best to you in the form of beautiful photos.

Her main focus is on maternity, fresh 48, and lifestyle newborn photography. Pregnancy flies by, and it's easy to miss the opportunity to not only document this tender moment in your life, but also find an intentional time to feel beautiful in your amazingly powerful body. So, it's important to document it with a Maternity Session. A fresh 48 session will take place while the mom and her baby are still at the birthing facility. It usually happens within the first 48



hours after the baby's birth. Babies change so quickly, so this is a precious and fleeting time to document! At-home, lifestyle newborn sessions are about the connection and love that family members already have for their newest addition. During this session, she'll capture special moments with each family member and the baby as well as the family all together. Khushboo also specializes in couples' photography, senior portraits, as well as family sessions.

"Seeing the beauty in life is what inspires me, and photography is my way of sharing that passion with others. I take pride in creating a visual story and I am committed to

capturing beautiful moments for my clients to treasure", says Khushboo.

Khushboo invites you to visit her website, shuttermagicphotography.com; on Instagram, [www.instagram.com/shutter.magicphotography/](https://www.instagram.com/shutter.magicphotography/); or phone her directly at (408) 402-1404. She would love to hear from you!

Document your story today!







Hi there! I'm Khushboo - a wife, mother of two adorable boys, and the owner of Shutter Magic Photography. My mission is to help you celebrate your life by capturing memories for you and your loved ones to share and cherish over the years. I take pride in creating a visual story and I am committed to capturing beautiful moments for my clients to treasure. Shutter Magic Photography specializes in couples, maternity, family and senior portraits.

*"The memories we make with our family is everything."*  
- CANDACE CAMERON BURE

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## County YMCA Partnership

### Brings Affordable After School Child Care to West Valley



#### WHEN I AUTHORED TRANSITIONAL

Kindergarten (TK) legislation as a California State Senator more than a decade ago, I envisioned a new grade level for our schools that would help “young fives” develop the academic and social skills needed to transition to a full day of school. Since then, TK has fulfilled its promise, growing into a vital “in between” grade for four-year-olds who do not turn five in time for the state’s age cut-off to start regular kindergarten.

Because school is usually half-days for our youngest students, pairing TK with supportive after school care—and making it accessible to all—is key. I’m gratified that my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors agreed, unanimously supporting my proposal to partner with the YMCA of Silicon Valley to help our most vulnerable kids and families succeed.

This school year, the County and the YMCA are helping more than 30 families with kids under the age of five access after school care in the West Valley and North County communities of my district, District Five.

With County funding, the YMCA offered nearly six times more scholarships to the Y After School Program than last year to families needing financial assistance. This newly available County scholarship funding is particularly timely with so many working parents still struggling financially post-pandemic.

The opportunity to coordinate TK and YMCA after school programming meant my efforts have come full circle—at a crucial time. The legislation I authored—Senate Bill 1381, the Kindergarten Readiness Act of 2010—was expanded by the Governor and the Legislature in 2021 to ensure all four-year-olds have the opportunity to enroll in TK.

This expansion of TK statewide means a growing number of kids under age five are eligible for TK this school year. That means working parents/caregivers have had to scramble to find safe, stable, and developmentally appropriate after school care for their children so they can focus on employment and housing stability.

The YMCA after school programs do exactly that, providing targeted childcare services that have a deep and deliberate integration with partner schools. YMCA caregivers are able to share information about academic, social, and emotional learning, as well as program attendance. In turn, school districts, principals, and teachers help identify, recruit, and refer students and families who have a high need for support to YMCA after school programs.

Running from the end of the TK school day until 6PM, five days a week, for 180 school days each year, the Y After School Program is available for kids under the age of five at schools in the West Valley—in Saratoga, Cupertino, and Almaden Valley. Because the program is provided onsite at


our schools, the YMCA has been able to reduce the challenges of cost, proximity, and transportation for many families.

Recently I had the opportunity to drop in on a Y After School Program in my district, where some of the youngsters were attending with support from the County’s scholarship funding. It made my day to see this quality program in action: kids engaged, laughing, and learning beyond the classroom; a public-private partnership that’s truly a win-win for kids and families.

*Joe Simitjan was elected to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in 2012 and re-elected in 2016 and 2020. He represents the Fifth District, which now includes Cupertino, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Saratoga, Stanford, and portions of San Jose. Joe’s public service over the years includes stints as a member of the California State Senate, the California State Assembly, Mayor of Palo Alto, President of the Palo Alto School Board, as well as an earlier term on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. He served as an election observer/supervisor in El Salvador and Bosnia and participated in refugee relief and resettlement efforts in Albania and Kosovo.*




BY COUNTY SUPERVISOR JOE SIMITJAN | COMMUNITY INTEREST



**OUR GOAL** Here at Reed Animal Hospital, our goal is to help you and your pets enjoy healthy, fulfilling lives together!

Our extraordinary team of veterinarians, technicians, and receptionists are prepared to help you with a wide range of services, including a large array of surgical procedures. In addition, we work closely with our sister facility, **Dr. Dave's Daycare, Boarding and Grooming**, to offer all the services your pet needs under one “woof!”





**Grooming  
Boarding  
Day Care**

**Reed Animal Hospital  
SARATOGA, CA**  
12840 Saratoga Sunnyvale Road  
Ste. 600, Saratoga, CA 95070  
408-647-2906  
Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM  
Saturday & Sunday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

**Reed Animal Hospital  
CAMPBELL, CA**  
1657 S Bascom Ave, Campbell, CA 95008  
408-369-1788 • 408-369-1850 (Fax)  
Monday – Friday: 8:00 AM – 7:00 PM  
Saturday & Sunday: 8:00 AM – 5:00 PM

[www.reedanimalhospital.com](http://www.reedanimalhospital.com)  
[www.drdavesboardinggrooming.com](http://www.drdavesboardinggrooming.com)

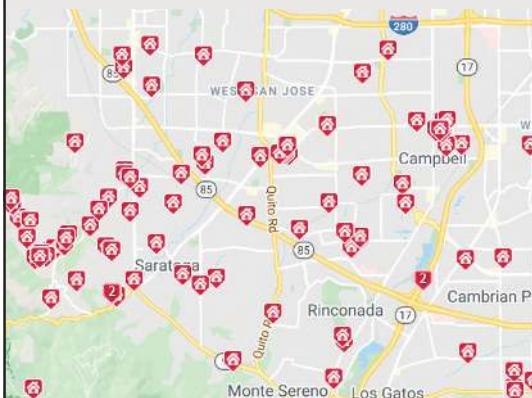


# TREE Lessons

*Great friends of my youth were trees;  
They never disappointed me like people;  
Unless I grew too bold and too reckless  
Among their branches when I suffered  
Falls from grace, exiled from their Eden.  
But undeterred, I'd soon again ascend  
Maples, birches, elms, oaks, alders, and,  
Above all, the towering, royal redwood  
In my front-yard. I climbed to its very top,  
Surveyed the whole city, radiant in spring,  
With pink blossoms adorning the blue sky.  
But later watching the orchards bulldozed  
And burned, smoke rising, day darkening,  
I grieved for our broken blossoms below.  
Great friends of today are still the trees;  
I don't climb as many redwoods but meet  
New trees from far away in this arboretum.  
Afghan Pine, Italian Alder, Norway Maple,  
Japanese Cypress, Himalayan White Birch  
Chinese Redbud, Hungarian Oak, and more:  
Near 90 species shade this place of peace;  
How soothing to sit among them, how green  
My thoughts, how undisturbed my mind, no  
Longer fixed on problems of days past or  
Soon to come, instead renewed and calmed,  
Awakened to the moment. From trees I have  
Learned to go branch by branch, leaf by leaf,  
Always up, up, so very high up--to the stars!*

BY BILL PECK | COMMUNITY

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Are you aware that West Valley College boasts one of the premier athletic programs in California over the past 9 years?

Over the course of that time, the Vikings have won a state championship in women's water polo, have had 3 state champion swimmers, 3 state runner-up finishes in men's water polo, state runner-up finishes in basketball and volleyball, and 2 state runner-up finishes in the beach volleyball pairs tournament. Additionally, Viking athletic teams have won 25 Coast Conference championships in that time.

With a focus on academic excellence, athletic competitiveness, community engagement, and capital improvements, West Valley College is an ideal destination for student-athletes looking for an opportunity to compete at the college level while keeping the dream of a Division I scholarship alive.

Boasting 5 men and 7 women teams, Viking athletics offers a diverse offering of programs suited to meet the needs of the community.

Viking student-athletes also find success in the classroom. Two recent graduates gave the Valedictorian address at their respective commencement ceremonies, one of which was named the California Community College Athletic Association's Scholar Athlete of the Year. Several student athletes have been recognized as Academic All Americans at the state and national level. The women's tennis team has been named an Intercollegiate Tennis Association All-Academic Team three straight years, from 2020-2022. The overall athletic department g.p.a. is above a 3.0, while Viking student-athletes earn more than 31 units per academic year on average.

8 of the 9 West Valley College head coaches are products of the community college system, making them relatable to our student-athletes as they were once in the same place as our current crop of student-athletes. Women's water polo coach, Erika Vargas, made history as the first female head coach to win a state championship in water polo in 2021. West Valley alum and current softball coach, Vicky Piatt, represented the United State of America in the 2008 Beijing Olympics. Basketball coach, and WVC alum,

Danny Yoshikawa, has served as an assistant coach at 3 NCAA Division I institutions, including top 20 St. Mary's College of Moraga. Men's water polo coach Willo Rodriguez serves as the head coach of the Puerto Rico national team and volleyball coach Armen Zakarian was an assistant coach for the U.S. squad in the Pan-American Games.

Additionally, West Valley College is home to many of the best athletic facilities in the country. One of the country's most spectacular softball facilities, Viking Field, opened in Spring 2022. The beach volleyball facility is the envy of all and rivals any complex in the United States. Valhalla Park, home to the West Valley College baseball team, is in the final stages of construction and should be opening in the near future. Lastly, thanks to the community's passing of Bond Measure W, West Valley College will soon begin to plan and break ground on a new Wellness Center that will be available for all.

For more information about the West Valley College athletic department, or to view a calendar of upcoming events, please visit [www.athletics.westvalley.edu](http://www.athletics.westvalley.edu).

BY JOHN VLAHOS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INTERCOLLEGIATE ATHLETICS, WEST VALLEY-MISSION CCD COMMUNITY INTEREST

# GO WEST GET FUTURE READY at West Valley College

**NO. 1 IN TRANSFERS**

**Register for Spring Now Through Feb 12**  
Spring Semester | Jan 28-May 26

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- ▶ **LEARN** from top-tier faculty and get personalized attention
- ▶ **EXPAND** your mind and take in breathtaking views on 143 acres of classroom space!



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The Sneider family and our wonderful staff have devoted our lives to helping support and care for seniors that are afflicted Alzheimer's / Dementia and related disease. Our communities provide our beloved seniors with maximum independence in a comfortable home-like living environment.

## *Our services include:*

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- ✓ Providing a care team who is trained in the latest techniques to deal with the challenges of caring for those with memory impairments
- ✓ Medications issued with licensed nurses oversight
- ✓ Emphasis on appropriate medication reduction to promote physical activity and engagement
- ✓ Optimizing functional independence through all stages of memory loss
- ✓ Continuum of care services: including companion and hospice care by interdisciplinary teams, to allow residents to age in-place and reduce traumatic changes in surroundings
- ✓ Robust activities and enrichment programs focused on maintaining residents' physical and emotional wellbeing through engagement and participation
- ✓ Open, landscaped environment with secured perimeter for safety
- ✓ Pet friendly communities
- ✓ High quality gourmet meals and nutritious snacks available throughout the day
- ✓ Our rate structure is all-inclusive, meaning no point system/no add-ons



*After what seemed like a never ending search for a perfect facility for Mom, we found Palm Villas. Our Mom had special requests and Gary agreed immediately saying, "We can do that."*

*When she entered Palm Villas, she was an elderly frustrated woman just waiting for her life to end. In less than 6 months, our Mom was a new person, enjoying life and looking forward to each new day. A special thanks to Garry and Michael for helping to make the transition from the family home our mother lived in for over 60 years to her new home. We thank Lu for all the activities he provided which gave her many hours of joy and happiness.*

*The Harter Family*

**Please call us direct or  
visit us anytime at:**

**PALMVILLASFAMILY.COM**

**Come visit us at either of our locations!**

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# SARATOGA

0407

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