



# OUR TOWN

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

JUNE 2015



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*Feather Mandala*

## JEWELRY INSPIRED BY NATURE

Meryl Urdang's jewelry reflects the beauty and intricacy of patterns found in nature.



*New Beginnings*



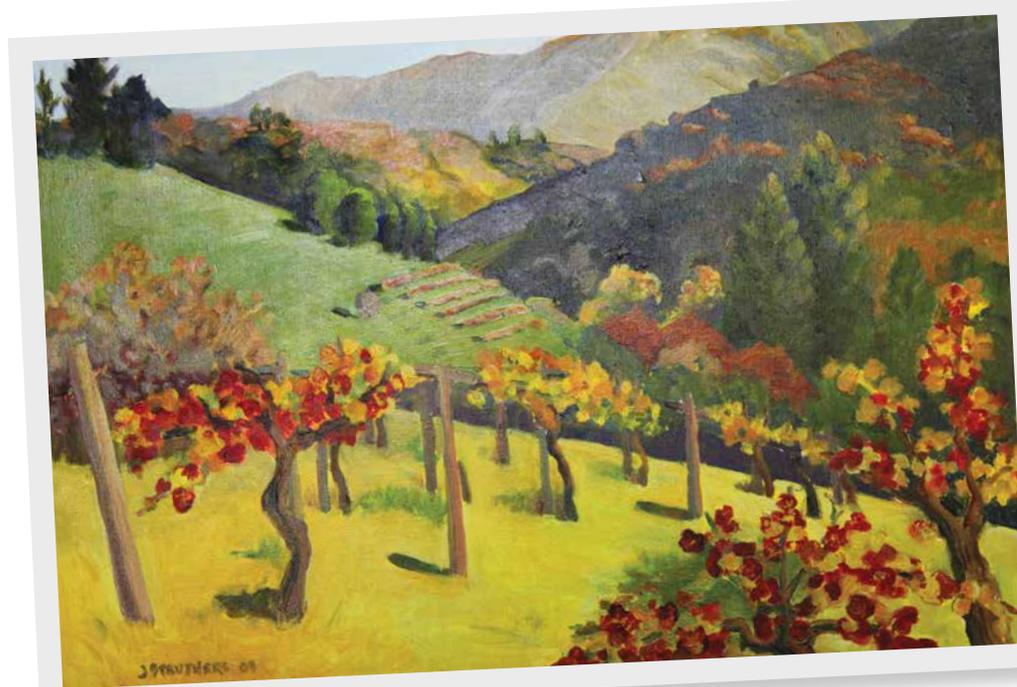
*Treasure Box*



*Maple Leaf Earrings*



*Baubles*



## Art Inspired by Nature

**T**hroughout history, nature — untamed, beautiful, majestic, and mysterious — has captured the imagination of artists, poets, and writers. Each work of art that interprets nature in a unique, personal way represents a thread woven into the grand tapestry of mankind's cultural identity and reaffirms our deep connection to the natural world, our planet. The expression of nature's profound beauty can be found in Claude Monet's "Water Lilies," Vincent van Gogh's "Wheatfield Under Clouded Sky," Georgia O'Keeffe's "White Palace," and John James Audubon's "Golden Eagle," to name just a few. But closer to home, many artists are inspired by the town's complex, colorful features and breathtaking vistas as seen through a window or during a quiet stroll on a meandering path. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]



**Tell us about your passion for plants and your connection with Hidden Villa.**

I have been a gardener and plant nut all my life. I got very involved in the California Native Plant Society after converting our horse pasture into a native plant garden. Around 1985, I went to a wildflower show at Foothill College put on by the native plant society. I joined the plant society, and got a job at Yerba Buena Nursery growing natives. In 1989, with a grant from David Packard, my husband and I built a nursery for native plants at Hidden Villa. I ran that nursery for 16 years and only this year have turned it over to younger volunteers. We put on native plant sales two times a year. The money we make supports the California Native Plant Society programs and scholarships. For each sale, I paint a different plant for the sale poster hoping to get others interested in native plants growing all around here.

**What inspires your paintings?**

My inspiration for painting is what I love most, being outdoors in a beautiful place. As a native, I have seen a lot of destruction of the open space around the Bay Area and Central Valley, so I like to find places which remain natural. I have usually spent summers in the Sierras and paint up there. I also like to paint the open spaces along the coast and Bay. But, I have not painted in the outdoors for quite awhile since I got tired of carrying a lot of equipment to a site; instead, I work in my studio.

**What advice do you have for children who might be budding artists?**

I think kids today do not get enough free time and are so supervised that creation is nearly impossible. They need time to absorb the living things around them by observing nature, climbing trees, and digging holes. Learning about a bird or animal or plant by observation might give them more pleasure than a video game. A big part of painting is simply looking. Painting something creates

Long-time residents Jean Struthers and Meryl Urdang are two local artists whose work is directly inspired by the natural beauty of Los Altos Hills. They shared their passion for and connection to nature.

**Jean Struthers**

Jean Struthers is a painter who has lived in Los Altos Hills for four decades. Her striking watercolor and oil paintings feature colorful local landscapes.

**Tell us about your growth as an artist and interest in nature.**

As an artist, my love of landscape probably started as a child when my dad took me for wildflower walks. We always went camping in the mountains when I was very little and before we built a cabin. My dad used to tell me about hiking to the Hetch Hetchy Valley with his father before the dam was built. As a third generation Californian, I have seen many changes in the Bay Area. It is sad to see so much land disappearing under development. So, vistas of open fields and mountains and shore are very special for me. When I look for a place to paint, I really want it to look as empty of human disruption as possible.



**Tell us about your training/education as an artist. When did you first start painting?**

My first training in art was at home. My father was an art teacher and brought home lots of materials to work with. I took art classes as a kid and later in college — Pomona College and then UC Berkeley. I studied art when abstract expressionism was being taught at Berkeley. I really did not connect with expressionism. Artist David Park joined the faculty and began teaching figurative painting, which I loved;

*Oil paintings by Jean Struthers: Butner Vineyard (cover), Arastradero Preserve (above), and Hidden Villa Henhouse (below).*

consequently, my work changed. But after graduating I did not paint again for years because we moved often and raising our children took most of my time. It was many years before I started to paint again, and it was the open spaces that attracted me. I started painting landscapes in Foothills Park, in Los Altos Hills, on the coast and in the Sierras. I had two shows of my paintings in the old Town Hall and later in Gallery 9 in Los Altos and in the Los Altos Library. I have also been doing botanic art in watercolor. Now I paint mainly in the studio. The work is becoming more abstract while still relating to landscape. I prefer to paint in oil, which is most forgiving since it can be painted over if I make mistakes. The hardest thing for me is to get the color right and the sense of space. Light and color are what creates the sense of space and this is really best done out in real light.

**What attracted you to Los Altos Hills?**

We moved here from the East Bay in 1964 when Gunn High School opened. My husband, David, was hired to teach math there. Originally we lived on Orange Avenue in Los Altos. We moved to our current home in Los Altos Hills in 1975. Our home had been built originally as a guest house and was sold to us by its first owner, a friend's mother.



more of a lasting memory than snapping a photograph.

## Meryl Urdang

Meryl Urdang is a fine crafts artist who has lived in Los Altos Hills for eight years. Her work features the patterns found in nature: leaves, feathers, butterflies, and flowers.

### What attracted you to live in Los Altos Hills?

Eight years ago, after close to 20 years raising my daughter in Menlo Park and Palo Alto, I decided to move to a more rural setting. I was fortunate to find a



converted barn in Los Altos Hills with sweeping views of Westwind Community Barn's pastures, the Bay, and the East Bay Foothills. Living here is really a dream come true. The closer I am

to nature, the more I am at peace. This allows for creativity and spirit to flourish. While books are being written on the "nature-deficit disorder" and the importance of spending time in nature throughout one's life, people are also being

for my art. It is easy for me to find inspiration relaxing on my deck, watching and listening to the birds, observing deer and rabbits, and enjoying the distant views. My favorite place is Hidden Villa, where I hike through the farm and wilderness and visit with the animals. It is a magical and joyful place where I gather images and material for my work.

### Tell us about your training/education as an artist. When did you first start making jewelry?

While I dabbled in various craft projects as a child, I didn't continue this into adulthood. I finally started down the path of becoming an artist in 2002 after careers in education and as a healthcare consultant. Although I did not have a formal art education, I have attended quite a number of workshops on silk painting and jewelry making. A tremendous amount of online tutorials and peer support provides a continuous stream of learning opportunities.

### Tell us about your process for your work.

Most of my work begins outdoors observing nature, gathering specimens, and



Butterfly Swing Pendant

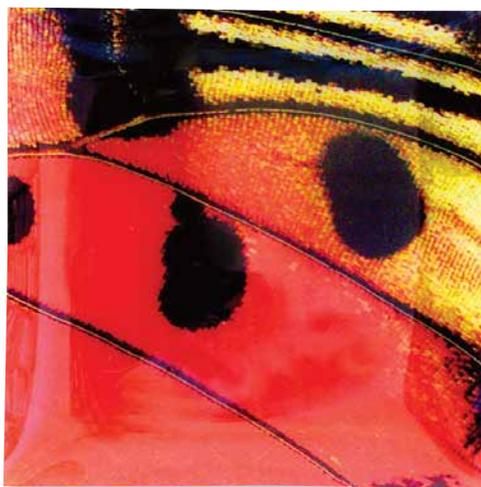
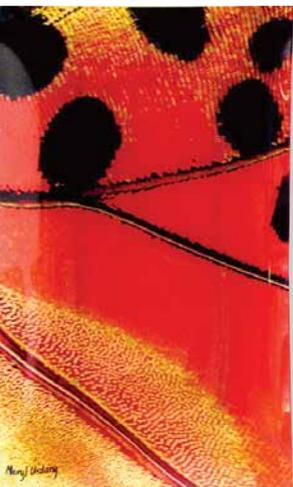
porate imagery and text into my jewelry designs. This is done by carving, creating stamps from images that are impressed into the clay, and making molds of textures. While I also use traditional metalsmithing techniques, I prefer the greater flexibility of metal clay.

### The Butterfly Swing Pendant is one of your most popular jewelry pieces. What was your inspiration for that?

My collections of butterfly Silk-under-Glass pieces and jewelry were initially inspired by a visit to the Monarch Butterfly Habitat Sanctuary in Pacific Grove. Learning about their unique life cycle and seeing the unbelievable mass of butterflies hanging in clusters from the trees led to me studying the colorful patterns and textures of butterflies found all over the world.

I like to include meaningful text and symbols that reflect different cultures and belief systems. The Butterfly Swing Pendant, a treasure box, is based on a butterfly I photographed at Hidden Villa. The mechanical swing cover represents the butterfly's flight and moves

slightly side-to-side as the wearer walks. The minute scales on the butterfly create a subtle texture. I was able to incorporate this detail into the larger patterns created by the monarch butterfly's colors. The pendant features a quotation that speaks to the need to move beyond our past so that we can soar into the future.



Above: Butterfly Triptych #1, a Silk-Under-Glass piece. The glass plates capture the beautiful pattern of the butterfly *Charaxes zingha*. On the cover (highlight box, from top to bottom) — Feather Mandala, inspired by the vibrant, detailed patterns in the plumage of birds. New Beginnings, a necklace based on the egg, a symbol of rebirth and renewal. It was inspired by observing the life stages of Hidden Villa's animals. Treasure Box, inspired by traditional Japanese cases for holding small objects. Maple Leaf Earrings, inspired by and created from maple leaves. Baubles, inspired by ancient beads that are more than 100,000 years old.

encouraged to unplug from electronic devices. We are so lucky to live in an area where we can do both.

### What inspires your work?

I am inspired by the full spectrum of the natural world: land, ocean, and sky; plant and animal life. Feeling a close connection to nature has clearly found a way into my art.

Living in Los Altos Hills provides not only a peaceful setting, but also inspiration

taking photographs. I create as I go and spend little time sketching. I work mainly with metal clay, an alternative to sheet metal, that is available in both precious and base metals. I work with fine and sterling silver and bronze. Making jewelry from metal clay relies on rolling, cutting, constructing, carving, stamping, and sculpting. After the clay dries it is put in a kiln where it is fired at around 1600 degrees and magically turns into metal. Working with metal clay allows me to easily incor-



**TO LEARN MORE:**

To learn more about Jean Struther's work, contact the artist at [jeanstruthers@att.net](mailto:jeanstruthers@att.net).

To learn more about Meryl Urdang's work, visit: [www.merylurdang.com](http://www.merylurdang.com)

## FROM THE CITY MANAGER

**A**ccess to cable broadband service has never been more important — it is critical to staying connected to the local community, the nation, and the world. Cable delivers access to the internet for email and information, as well as delivering entertainment content and telephone service (via VoIP). The town's staff is committed to helping all 3,000 residential properties to have access to reliable cable broadband service.

The town has a 20-year non-exclusive Franchise Agreement with Comcast Corporation to operate a cable system within the town and provide cable



*Carl Cahill*

services to its residents. The Agreement was approved in November of 2004. In addition, the State Digital Infrastructure and Video Competition Act of 2006 (DIVCA) allows any other cable service provider to install their network in town simply by filing an application with the State Public Utilities Commission.

Under the current Franchise Agreement with the town, Comcast has an obligation to make cable service available to every residential dwelling unit where the minimum density is

at least 30 dwelling units per strand mile in areas served by overhead utility lines and 60 units per strand mile in areas served by underground utilities. This obligation is in effect for both public streets and privately-maintained streets with public utility easements. Areas that do not meet the aforementioned minimum density requirements may still get cable service; however, customers are required to pay a portion of the cost to install cable to their homes. Based on preliminary installation estimates prepared by Comcast, obtaining service in areas not meeting minimum density requirements is within the realm of affordability if all or most residents on the street agree to obtain service.

According to Comcast's information presented to the town, most streets

in town currently have access to cable broadband service. However, there are a few streets that do not have service. The town is currently working with Comcast and residents on unserved streets to facilitate the installation of cable service. On April 16, a meeting was held at Town Hall with representatives from the town, residents of Almaden Court, Deer Springs Way, Byrne Park, Julietta Lanes, and Comcast officials. Comcast presented cost estimates for cable installation to these streets between \$1,833 and \$3,334 per home, contingent on all homeowners signing up for installation. This cost would be borne by the homeowner. Comcast also shares in the installation cost with prospective customers paying only the difference between the actual unit density and the minimum density required by the Franchise Agreement.

If you live on a street in town not currently served with cable broadband service, please contact City Manager Carl Cahill to set up a meeting with your neighborhood and Comcast to discuss an installation project and any associated costs.

## FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

## No-Cost Mediation Services

**L**os Altos Dispute Resolution Services (LADRS) helps resolve community conflicts through conciliation and mediation without the involvement of law enforcement, town staff, or the courts. Using LADRS saves time, expense, and reduces stress related to escalation of conflicts in court. The program is funded by the Town of Los Altos Hills and the City of Los Altos and is a free and confidential service available to residents.

LADRS-experienced volunteer mediators help resolve issues between neighbors, organizations in the community, homeowners associations, and tenants and landlords. The mediators live in the community and are professionally trained to conduct the dispute resolution process. A mediator helps people discuss issues in a calm, organized way with the goal of the participants reaching an agreed-upon resolution of their own making.

The program has been operating for over 20 years and was previously known as the Los Altos Mediation Program (LAMP). For more information on mediation services, pick up a brochure at Town Hall, visit the LADRS web-site: <http://losaltoscf.org/losaltos-dispute>, or call 650-949-5267.



## Purissima Creek Restoration Project

On March 17, a ribbon-cutting ceremony was held at O'Keefe Preserve to celebrate the completion of the first phase of the Purissima Creek restoration project. The project is to restore riparian habitat through a partnership between the Town of Los Altos Hills, Bullis Charter School, Los Altos Hills Open Space and Water Conservation Committees, Green Town Los Altos, and Ecological Concerns, Inc. Funding was provided by the town and a grant from the Santa Clara County Water District. In January, eighth-grade students from Bullis Charter School worked with ecologists from Ecological Concerns to transplant more than 1,200 native plants. Restoration work also included removal of invasive species and trash, and installation of erosion control and temporary irrigation.

*Suzanne Avila, AICP, Planning Director*

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office West Valley Division has noticed a spike in the number of income tax-related identity theft cases in the county. Income tax-related identity theft occurs when a criminal uses your personal identification information to file a fraudulent income tax return with the IRS. To file these reports, the criminals use your name, address, and social security number, usually obtained through illegal means. The IRS is in the process of implementing a PIN system to validate tax returns, but in the meantime, you can do the following to help protect yourself:



### Protect your identity

#### Be aware of phishing emails and phone calls.

Make sure you know who is getting your personal or financial information. Don't give out personal information over the phone, through the mail, or over the internet unless you've initiated the contact or know who you are dealing with.

#### When disposing of computers, mobile devices, and mail, remove all personal information.

For computers, a wiping program overwrites the entire hard drive. For mail, you should always shred your financial documents, credit card statements, and anything that could have your personal identifying information.

**Don't overshare on social networking sites.** Don't post too much information about yourself, your family, or your habits. That information helps criminals guess passwords or security questions.

#### Set up secure Wi-Fi in your home.

Don't maintain or use an unsecured Wi-Fi access point. If it is open to you, then it is open to unwanted guests. Don't automatically assume every open Wi-Fi is safe from fraud. An open Wi-Fi could actually be downloading your information, including accounts and passwords.

**Periodically review your credit report for fraudulent activity.** Per federal law, you are entitled to one free yearly credit report. The three credit reporting agencies have teamed up to provide this free service at [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com).

### If you are a victim of identity theft

If you find that you have received income/paid taxes by an employer you don't know or more than one tax return was filed using your social security number, immediately take the following steps:

1. Contact the Sheriff's Office through the county communications non-emergency line at 408-299-2311.
2. Contact the Internal Revenue Service Identity Protection Specialized Unit at 1-800-908-4490 to report the fraud. When reporting to the IRS, they will require you to send them a copy of the Sheriff's Office report or an IRS ID Theft Affidavit Form 14039 and proof of your identity, such as a copy of your social security card, driver's license, or passport. Remember to keep your files up to date. It is recommended that you include records of the dates you make calls or sent letters related to the fraud as well as copies of correspondence.
3. Put a fraud alert or fraud lock on your credit report if you believe your personal information has been compromised.
4. Consult the Federal Trade Commission website at [www.consumer.ftc.gov/feature-0029-tax-identity-theft-awareness-week](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/feature-0029-tax-identity-theft-awareness-week).
5. Carefully monitor your credit report. Victims of identity theft are entitled to additional free reports. Additional information is available at [www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports](http://www.consumer.ftc.gov/articles/0155-free-credit-reports).

For questions or additional information, contact the Sheriff's Office West Valley Division at 408-868-6621.

# PUBLIC WORKS PROJECTS

### 2014 Pavement Rehabilitation Project (Phase 2)

The annual street resurfacing program is designed to maintain safe and functional town streets. Improvements will be performed on Briones Court, Laurel Lane, Moody Springs Court, and Robleda Court. The project consists of removal of existing pavement section and repave with four-inch thick asphalt concrete, new pavement markings, utility covers adjustment, and associated work. The selected streets were determined by the recommendation from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Pavement Management Program and field inspections. Cost of the project is approximately \$200,000.

### El Monte Road Preservation Project

El Monte Road from Stonebrook Drive to O'Keefe Lane and Summerhill Avenue is heavily used by vehicles, pedestrians, and bicyclists. The pavement is in need of repair. The town was able to secure \$186,000 in grant funds to help pay for the work. The project consists of reconstruction of existing concrete curb ramps; two-inch removal of the entire pavement section; six-inch asphalt concrete removal and replacement to repairs localized base failures; traffic detector loop replacement; two-inch hot mix asphalt paving; pavement markings and striping replacement; adjustment of utility cover to finish grade; and all associated work. Total cost of the project is approximately \$550,000.

### 2015 Sanitary Sewer Repair and Rehabilitation Project

The annual sanitary sewer repair and rehabilitation program is to maintain the town's sanitary sewer system to allow safe transport of wastewater to the Palo Alto Regional Water Quality Control Treatment Plant through the collection systems of the cities of Palo Alto and Los Altos. The selected sewer main repair list is a combination of the segments that were delayed from the last annual sewer repair project, and results from video inspection data and repair recommendations from the town's previous and current operation and maintenance contractors. Approximately 30 line segments are proposed to be repaired by open cut and trenchless construction methods. Total cost of the project is approximately \$600,000.

*For a complete list of all public works projects visit [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov).*



# New Tech Toolbar Opens at Los Altos Library

These days, technology continues to evolve so that many online resources can be accessed on devices other than a personal computer. In an effort to help residents who may already own, or wish to own, portable electronic devices but don't necessarily understand how to use them to their full potential, Santa Clara County Library District's (SCCLD) Los Altos Library has opened a Tech Toolbar to help demystify and provide guidance in navigating and utilizing these gadgets.

What began as a pilot program in 2013 at the Cupertino Library, evolved into a second Tech Toolbar at the Campbell Library in January 2015. Los Altos Library is the third SCCLD location to provide this personalized service with knowledgeable library staff ready to help residents learn about the newest in electronic technology. The Tech Toolbar features four devices: an iPad Air, a Samsung Galaxy tablet, a Kindle Fire, and a Nexus tablet. Los Altos residents are encouraged to explore and play with these devices and learn how to easily download

thousands of free digital resources offered by SCCLD. "At SCCLD, our libraries offer a vast amount of content for electronic devices. The Tech Toolbar provides an opportunity for individuals to try various devices and have library staff assist with their device and content questions. This personalized service opens a new world of library resources for library users; one filled with a wealth of downloadable content that can be accessed 24/7 at the touch of a button," observed Nancy Howe, County Librarian.

The Tech Toolbar will be staffed by library employees on Tuesdays (4-6 pm), Wednesdays (11 am - 1 pm), Thursdays (10 am - 12 pm), Saturdays (3-5 pm), and Sundays (1-3 pm).

Individuals needing additional assistance with accessing digital resources on their devices can schedule one-on-one appointments with a librarian or Tech Toolbar coach at the Los Altos Library by calling 650-948-7683.

For additional information and detailed instructions for downloading online resources, go to: [www.sccl.org/Browse/eBooks](http://www.sccl.org/Browse/eBooks).

**With thousands of digital resources, including 46,000 eBooks, available on the SCCLD web site, cardholders have a wealth of informational and entertainment resources at their fingertips.**

"Libraries have to evolve to adapt to changing technology. With thousands of digital resources, including 46,000 eBooks, available on the SCCLD web site, cardholders have a wealth of informational and entertainment resources at their fingertips. We invite everyone to visit us here at the Los Altos Library Tech Toolbar and rediscover what is available at our libraries," stated Los Altos Community Librarian, Judith Gregg.

Providing something for everyone, Los Altos Library also invites young children to take part in learning and discovering new technology. Currently, four early literacy iPads are available for children and their caregivers to enjoy together during library visits. Each iPad features early literacy apps designed especially for children ages 2-6. These apps include important early literacy building skills such as singing, talking, reading, and writing, and provide parents and caregivers with critical early literacy tools that will ensure many engaging and fun-filled visits to the Los Altos Library.

## FREE Digital Resources Available at SCCLD libraries

- Audiobooks
- Career resources (find job opportunities, interview tips, resume writing)
- College prep work and resources
- Digital magazines
- Downloadable MP3s
- eBooks - 46,000 available
- Homework help for school-age children
- Learn new tech skills through free online coursework.
- Live resume help
- More than 500 online non-credit continuing education courses available
- Music (download five free songs each week)
- Online language lessons
- Online learning for adults (includes tutoring, test preparation, writing assistance)
- Podcasts
- Scholarly articles and digital textbooks



What is the value of art? It helps us to see the world a little differently; it has the power to evoke a response in thought or emotion. Art, whether experienced in an art gallery, a park, or even on a street corner, is engaging and interactive. Art in public spaces, in particular, allow the individual viewer different points of view as he or she walks around a sculpture. It is this intangible but significant value that is at the heart of the discussions by the members of the Art in Public Places Committee (APPC) of Los Altos Hills.

During the past year, APPC committee members have been placing art as well as formulating concepts for the following areas: Town Hall campus, Edith Park, the dog park, Westwind Barn, and a sculpture park (several areas are being considered). Some of the images for the pieces and concepts are included here. For the newly-unveiled dog park on Purissima Road, the concept of brightly-colored doggie play structures are designed



to stimulate the dog's vision. Dog-owners find these kinds of spaces with thoughtfully-curated objects more enjoyable to visit too. To best outfit the park, the APPC will work with the donor(s), create a call for art, and cull the best results.

One art donor expressed what motivated him to donate to the town. "In my opinion, as an artist, art is the best and easiest form of expressing one's feelings. I have lived in Los Altos Hills for most of my adult life, so it's my home, which I love. Providing a donation was another way to connect and be linked to this special place."

The APPC has been imagining another site, the Los Altos Hills Town Hall campus, defined by art which speaks to its residents and visitors alike. There is an opportunity to honor the past, celebrate the present, and dream of the future in the exciting possibility of a newly-proposed "Orchard Sculpture Park." Several town committees are exploring what this might encompass. The area along Fremont Road, just north of Town Hall, might be designed to have a park-like setting with a pavilion, paths for strolling, seating, and sculptures placed throughout, along with some of the town's historic artifacts, such as the old farm equipment which was used to farm this land. The goal is to strike a balance between the past and the present. The unique, unspoiled setting in the heart of the technology capitol of the world is very much a duality which makes the town a very special place. To this end, and to mark the entrance to the Town Hall parking lot, the APPC has selected "The Dichotomy," a potentially iconic piece by internationally-acclaimed, award-winning artist Gordon Huether. While the symbolic, beloved horse is traditional, it is elevated and surrounded by diachroic panels of glass which change colors depending on viewing angle and time-of-day, a nod to our continually changing technology landscape.

We have an ongoing and open call for donors to assist with the acquisition of "The Dichotomy" and other pieces. In addition, a sculpture could be donated to honor a loved one. Residents are invited to visit Town Hall to browse books that feature artwork that are good candidates for public art pieces. To learn more, contact the chair of the APPC, Karen Druker at 650-815-9477 or visit the town's website at [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov).

*Sherry Scott, Karen Druker, and Maryam Dickey are members of the Art in Public Places Committee.*

# Art *in* Public Places





# Independent Living

**T**he good news: we are all living longer; the bad news: we are all living longer! While many of us are enjoying the advantages of better health resulting in living longer, we are also faced with new and different challenges than generations before us. One of these challenges is how to make the most of our time while maintaining our quality of life and independence. As we age, many of us want to remain independent in our homes for as long as possible. We want to age in place. Maintaining good health is the key to aging in place. It entails knowing your health risks, taking preventative measures, eating healthily, being physically active, caring for your mental health, and staying socially connected.

**Routine checkups and health screenings** can detect changes in your body that may signal a developing problem. Some basic health assessments for seniors include strength assessment, self-care abilities, and vision and hearing assessments.

**Eat a healthy diet** consisting of mainly fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. Maintain a healthy weight by balancing the calories that you take in from food with the calories you burn off by your activities. If you drink alcohol, drink in moderation and pay close attention to alcohol-medication interactions.

To help you eat right, several local organizations provide nutrition education and low-cost meals for seniors.

- Community Services Agency of Mountain View, Los Altos, and Los Altos Hills offers hot lunches each weekday for seniors who are 60 years or older at the Mountain View Senior Center. In addition to the daily nutritious meal, nutrition and health education is provided to increase awareness

and knowledge of healthy options. *Call the Senior Nutrition Program at 650-964-6586 for more information.*

- El Camino Hospital offers a complimentary 30-minute consultation with a dietician to review your current diet and evaluate your nutritional status. *To schedule a consultation call, the El Camino Hospital Health Library & Resource Center at 650-940-7210.*
- The Santa Clara County Meals on Wheels program delivers frozen entrees, breakfast items, and grocery items once a week to seniors. Nutrition can be delivered right to your door if you are age 60 or older, unable to shop or cook meals for yourself, and have no one available to help with meals on a regular basis. *Call 408-350-3246 for more information about Meals on Wheels.*

**Physical activity** helps older adults maintain independence by preventing diseases and disabilities. Poor muscle strength, lack of balance, and inflexibility are linked to a sedentary lifestyle and can greatly increase the risk of falling. Movement does not need to be strenuous and you can start small and work up to 30 minutes or more of moderate physical activity per day. You can exercise and make new friends by joining activities organized by the following organizations.

- Bay Area Older Adults offers outdoor, social, and cultural activities for adults age 50 or older. Outdoor activities include nature walks, educational hikes, and social picnics. *For information about upcoming activities, contact Bay Area Older Adults at 408-774-0593 or visit [www.bayareaolderadults.org](http://www.bayareaolderadults.org).*
- The Los Altos and Mountain View Senior Centers offers group exercises aimed at different levels of physical activity, like walking groups, dance classes, and more. *Contact the Los Altos Senior Program at 650-947-2797. Contact the Mountain View Senior Center at 650-903-6330.*

**Caring for your mental health** is an important factor in aging. Depression in seniors often goes untreated because people think depression is a normal part of aging. On the contrary, depression is not typically associated with the aging process. Seniors are often reluctant to speak to their physician about mental health issues, with concerns about stigma or privacy. But the good news is that depression is treatable. Left untreated, depression can lead to a loss of quality of life or even suicide.

- The Friendship Line at Institute on Aging is the nation's only 24-hour toll-free hotline for older and disabled adults. Trained staff and volunteers make and receive calls to and from individuals

## Additional Local Resources to Support Aging in Place

- **Community Services Agency** provides senior case management services. A case manager will work to integrate social and medical care to help seniors remain in their own home and will evaluate needs and community resources available. For information about senior case management, call the Senior Services Program at 650-968-0836.
- **El Camino Hospital** offers eldercare consultations to help plan for future housing or care needs. Consultants provide information, resources, and referrals for living options, homecare services, and more locally and out of state. To learn more about this service, call 650-940-7210 or email [caregiver.assistance@elcaminohospital.org](mailto:caregiver.assistance@elcaminohospital.org).
- **Stanford Health Care** provides a fall prevention program for older adults, Farewell to Falls. Program offers home visits and focuses on medication review, home safety assessment and modification, and home exercise program. For further information on the Farewell to Falls program, call 650-724-9369.

who are either in crisis or just in need of a friend. *Call the Friendship Line at 800-971-0016.*

- The Older Adults Transitions (OATS) program at El Camino Hospital specializes in helping seniors overcome depression and anxiety. The program provides individualized treatment, which can include therapy and medication management. *To learn more about the OATS program, call 650-940-7138 or visit [www.elcaminohospital.org/OATS](http://www.elcaminohospital.org/OATS).*

**Staying socially connected** can have a positive impact on your health and prevent isolation, which is a risk factor for depression. Many seniors are at risk of isolation because they live alone in their own homes and have limited interaction with family, friends, and neighbors. Connecting with

other older adults at local senior centers is a great way to meet new people and help prevent loneliness.

Using technology to connect or stay connected with your family and make new friends is also beneficial and can help homebound seniors feel more connected.

- The Los Altos and Mountain View Senior Centers provide technology assistance to seniors looking to gain basic computer skills.
- The Senior Center Without Walls program offers activities, friendly conversation, and an assortment of classes and support groups to homebound elders and others who find it difficult to go to a community senior center. Participants call from the comfort of home through telephone conference calls. *For more information about the Senior Center Without Walls program, call 877-797-7299.*

Lack of transportation can keep seniors from getting to medical appointments, obtaining prescriptions, accessing banks, shopping for groceries, visiting friends, and remaining independent.

- The RoadRunners Transportation Program accommodates patrons with rides to any destination within a 10-mile radius of El Camino Hospital. *For fees and details about RoadRunners Transportation, call 650-940-7016 or visit [www.elcaminohospital.org/RoadRunners](http://www.elcaminohospital.org/RoadRunners).*
- Paratransit provides transportation for individuals with disabilities who have difficulty using fixed-route transportation systems. *To learn more about OUTREACH paratransit service, call 408-436-2865 or visit [www.outreach1.org](http://www.outreach1.org).*

Making mindful choices about how we live will help us maintain our physical, mental, and social health and independence. There are many community resources available to help us age in place. It is important to seek out assistance when needed in an effort to maintain a quality of life we are accustomed to.





## Shopping for **INTERNET** in Los Altos Hills

In the early 20th century, every town wanted the railroad line to come through their city. It brought jobs, products, services, and travelers helping cities to thrive economically. Soon, railroad lines gave way to roads and freeways to transport goods and services. Starting in the 1990s and peaking in the early 21st century, commerce was driven not by vehicles but by digital bits traveling at the speed of light through cables that connect every house, business, and structure to one another and the world. Today, broadband high-speed internet is critical to businesses, schools, healthcare, and government — and residences.

Since Los Altos Hills is a rural community with a low population density, it faces a unique situation: most major Internet Service Providers (ISPs) do not want to invest in high-speed Internet infrastructure to reach all 3,000 homes, especially those in the most remote parts of town, located far away from junction boxes. Internet service ranges from good and affordable options — \$50/month, offering 100 megabits per second (MPS) service — to very paltry options. Residents living in non-service areas must use very slow and expensive satellite services — \$70/month, offering 5 MPS service, with many frustrating data-transmitting delays.

Consequently, in Los Altos Hills Internet service rates and speeds vary dramatically by location. Even within a neighborhood, there might be a wide range of Internet services being offered at different rates. The best approach for finding the best Internet

service in your area is by simply contacting your neighbors about their specific service plan and related fees. Both Comcast and AT&T are installing more cable and fiber optic cables, opening up new options that may not have been available only a few months ago, so it pays to check annually, or at the contract renewal period.

Given that service plan offerings change,

cial in the long run to retain an existing customer than to sign up a new customer, so you typically have room to negotiate.

Some residents who live in remote areas and do not have the option to connect directly to the Internet have improvised, using “Buddy Wi-Fi.” With this cost-effective solution, a resident purchases and installs a long-distance Wi-Fi antenna (costing about \$100) to connect to a neighbor’s existing high-speed broadband Internet service. Simple directional, line-of-sight Wi-Fi antennas can transmit for a few miles without requiring licenses. Naturally, a good neighbor is required.

The table presented in the highlight box below presents various options that exist

### ISP OPTIONS FOR TOWN RESIDENTS

Local ISPs	Internet Cost/Month	Speeds (MPS)	Notes
Comcast	\$50 - \$100	50-100+	Not available everywhere
AT&T UVERSE	\$45	5-20	Not available everywhere
Other DSL vendors	\$20-\$50	2-10	Location dependent
Microwave to hill tops	\$50-\$200	2-10	Location dependent
Satellite Service	\$50-\$130	5-15	Latency & weather issues - limits
Buddy Wi-Fi	Free	5-100	Helpful neighbor required

in general it is best not to sign up for a contract that lasts more than two years. Also, at least once a year, learn about new services and plans in and around your neighborhood to ascertain if you can obtain a better deal. At the very least, you might be able to negotiate a lower price for your current plan for the remaining years. ISPs realize that it is more financially benefi-

for obtaining Internet services. Note that costs and speeds are approximate values as reported by Los Altos Hills residents.

*Scott Vanderlip, a resident of Los Altos Hills, is president of an Internet applications company and involved in several community projects to bring broadband Internet to areas underserved by ISPs. To learn more, contact Scott at [Scott@inet-sciences.com](mailto:Scott@inet-sciences.com).*

# Fourth of July PARADE



**D**ue to the town's geography, it can be difficult to see your neighbors. What better way to celebrate our freedoms, our families, and embrace community than by walking the streets together, joyful to be American? It is so energizing to see the effort and pride children put into participating. It is also enjoyable to get everyone, spectators and participants alike, out of their homes and waving at one another as they celebrate Independence Day, the federal holiday that celebrates the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

Join the seventh annual Fourth of July Parade. Kids of all ages come dressed for the parade and decorate their bikes, rollerblades, pedal cars (people-powered vehicles only; no cars or horses). We will gather at Town Hall beginning at 9:30 am. The red, white, and blue march will start at 10:00 am and we will parade down Fremont Road and conclude at Gardner Bullis School. There you will meet your friends and neighbors for coffee made to order, refreshing beverages, and a juicy watermelon treat! For more information, contact Sarah Gualtieri 650-947-2518 or [sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov](mailto:sgualtieri@losaltoshills.ca.gov).

## CARING FOR YOUR HOME

In Los Altos Hills, as in most cities in the Bay Area, there is little difference between spring and summer months except for the outside temperatures and increased irrigation needs in the garden. As spring leads to summer, there are a number of things to tend to inside and outside the house.

This is the fourth year of a severe drought in the state of California. Water usage both inside and outside should be reevaluated. Inside the home, examine bathrooms and check for leaks from faucets or toilets. Although they may seem minor, a leaky faucet can waste gallons of water over the period of a week. Some leaks are difficult to detect, especially in toilets. Dye tablets that are non-corrosive and nonstaining can be placed in a toilet to identify leaks. Since you are looking at faucets, summer is a good time to remove the faucet screens and aerators to remove any blockages. In most cases, a gentle brushing with a toothbrush should dislodge all particles so that water flows efficiently.

Summer is also a good time to look at all air filters to ensure that they are not clogged with dust or pet hair. While some air filters can be cleaned, others need to be replaced. Fortunately, air filters are

fairly inexpensive and make a big impact on performance, providing for efficient air conditioning (saving you money in electricity) during hot summer months.

Let's step out into the yard. Due to the severe drought, it is important to assess what needs to be watered and what no longer requires regular watering. During the summer, it is easier to detect lingering wet spots that could indicate underground leaks or broken pipes or excessive irrigation. These should be fixed immediately. A two- to four-inch layer of mulch keeps soil moist and benefits soil health. There are many resources locally, on the Internet, and professional irrigation services that can help a resident assess, repair, or install efficient water systems while keeping gardens looking beautiful and healthy. Free water-wise house calls are available from your water utility to identify leaks and opportunity for water savings. This is also a good time to remove weeds and high-water-usage plants you no longer want and replace inefficient spray irrigation with drip irrigation. Keep shrubs and trees trimmed neatly, since the less foliage a plant or tree has, the less water it requires. Monitor your water usage on the monthly water bill to assess if all the work in the yard is leading to a reduction in water usage. All customers of Purissima Hills Water District have access to a free water analysis tool, Dropcountr. Contact your water retailer for more information to best manage your property through the drought.



*Long-time resident Henry Nesmith is a home repair and restoration expert and owner of Los Altos Hardware, Inc.*





**TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS**  
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**Town Newsletter Statement of Purpose**

This is the official town newsletter to communicate current issues, services, and activities in Los Altos Hills to the residents of the town — to facilitate, encourage, and improve interaction between the residents and the town government. The newsletter is published quarterly. **Deadline for the next issue is July 1, 2015.**

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[www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)

**Our Town**

Our Town is published with assistance from the City Clerk, Deborah Padovan, and Town Volunteer Committees.

Editor: Alexander Atkins

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**Los Altos Hills City Council**

Courtenay Corrigan, Mayor  
John Harpootlian, Mayor Pro Tem  
Rich Larsen  
John Radford  
Gary Waldeck

**City Manager**

Carl Cahill

**CALENDAR**



**June**

**7**

**Sunday, 1:00 - 4:30 pm  
Town Picnic**

Open to all Los Altos Hills residents. Reservations are required. Join your neighbors for an afternoon at Purissima Park. For more information call 650-947-2518.

**July**

**4**

**Sat, 9:30 - 11:00 am  
Fourth of July Parade**  
Meet at Town Hall at 9:30 am. This is the

perfect time to dust off that vintage red wagon, bike or skateboard and decorate them with patriotic bunting, flags, and balloons. Wear your red, white, and blue and march to Gardner Bullis School where participants will be served watermelon, coffee, and ice-cold lemonade. For safety reasons, cars and horses are not allowed.



**18**

**Sat, 10:00 - Noon  
Watercolor Society  
Event at Town Hall**

In conjunction with the Santa Clara Valley Watercolor Society's current exhibit at Town Hall (running through August 28), the Watercolor Society is sponsoring an art event open to the public. The event will feature three nationally-known painters: Mike Bailey, Myrna Wacknov, and Christopher Schink. The day of art will feature a morning demonstration at 10:00 am. At noon, lunch will be provided to participants (included in the registration fee). After lunch, the three artists will discuss their diverse styles. To register, visit [www.scvws.org](http://www.scvws.org) or contact Karen Druker 650-941-8073.



**Sept**

**12**

**3:00 - 8:00 pm  
Hoedown**

Free, fun-filled day of old-fashioned games, food trucks, crafts, and a horse show held at Westwind Community Barn. Bring cash or check for snacks, dinner, and wine. For more information contact 650-947-2518.

Calendar events are also posted on town's website: [www.losaltoshills.ca.gov](http://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov)