Rediscovering Hidden Villa

Unplug from Silicon Valley to a slower-paced world, where your food is sourced locally and the sounds are nature-based. Hear the whisper of oak trees, the gurgle of Adobe Creek and the chatter of chickens. Even mobile phone reception is shielded in Hidden Villa’s valley. Hidden Villa is a rich resource for education and inspiration in our community. Visitors can choose from a range of activities from hiking in the wilderness, milking a cow, learning about native plants or buying eggs. [CONTINUED ON PAGE 2]
Research has shown the powerful and positive impact on children’s social, psychological, academic, and physical health from nature-based activities. From June through August, day camps and overnight camps are available for children ages 5 - 18. During the school year, field trips are in high demand from local schools, preschools, and home school groups. Children learn that milk comes from a cow, wool from sheep, and bacon from pigs. Homeschool classes are also available. For many visitors this is a rare glimpse of a working farm. Throughout the year, farm and nature based activities for all ages are offered including cheese making, sheep shearing, craft projects, and farm tours.

Founded in 1937, the West Coast’s first hostel is located at Hidden Villa. Rental options are available for groups or education & community programs.

Education & Community Programs

Education is the seed of societal advancement. The Duvenecks, after founding the Peninsula School, sought to create educational opportunities at Hidden Villa. In 1945, they started the first residential interracial summer camp for teens. And in 1970, they launched the Environmental Education Program. Today, over 32,000 children and adults participate annually in environmental and social justice programs at Hidden Villa.

“You have to learn about Nature in person. You have to taste it, feel it, see it and hear it. I felt like sitting there all afternoon listening to the trees and leaves.”

Fifth-grade student visitor

Frank and Josephine Duveneck fulfilled their vision to transform their home into a community resource. Their home at Hidden Villa became a sanctuary and support center for people in need including World War II refugees, Japanese-American victims of internment camps, Native people, the first farm worker union organizers, and other disadvantaged or discriminated groups. Their humanitarian legacy lives on through Hidden Villa’s mission to inspire a just and sustainable future.

“Becoming aware of the relationship of all living things to other living things is the key to knowing ourselves. It is the basis for understanding the intricate web of life.”

Josephine Duveneck, Founder

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After a productive career as a chemical engineer, Kit Gordon now donates her time with a variety of organizations to improve local watershed health.

**Sustainable Agriculture: Produce, Eggs and Meat**

The guiding principle of sustainable agriculture is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Beyond organic classification, sustainable agriculture encompasses a wider view of land management for the production of food. Three pillars of sustainable agriculture are environmental health, economic profitability, and social and economic equity. Water conservation, soil preservation, and pollution moderation are important elements as well as farm worker wellbeing.

Hidden Villa’s farming methods harness the earth’s innate ability to regenerate and restore. Inventive and creative techniques are employed to maximize the harvest without harming the environment. To combat pest insects, armies of beneficial insects are drawn to the fields by hedgerow plantings of wild flowers and shrubs. Mobile chicken pens fertilize the fields and pigs root the soil to aerate and loosen. Crops are grown in a mosaic pattern to support each other rather than a monoculture swath. Hidden Villa produce can be purchased at the Los Altos Farmer’s market or through a six-month Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program. A lump sum CSA investment at the beginning of the season yields a weekly dividend of freshly harvested produce. Sustainable agriculture integrates animal husbandry and farming. Animals are organically and humanely raised. Eggs, chicken, turkey, pork, and lamb can be purchased through the online ordering system, GrazeCart (https://hiddenvilla.grazecart.com). Hidden Villa’s meats and produce are a local, low-carbon footprint food option for Los Altos Hills residents.

And since Hidden Villa is much more than a simple production farm, it uses agriculture program as the backdrop for education programs as well as a career development platform for the internship program. After one or two seasons at Hidden Villa, intern farmers replicate the ethics and bounty of sustainably grown agriculture in other communities. Most use their experience as a springboard to launch a career as a farmer. The intern farmers are part of a class of 14 residential interns whose internships focus on sustainable agriculture, outdoor education, youth development, community programs, visitor services, or nonprofit development. These interns graduate to become part of the next generation of thoughtful educators, innovative farmers, and creative nonprofit leaders, thereby expanding the impact of Hidden Villa beyond its borders.

**Strong Volunteer Community**

While Hidden Villa serves our community a dedicated team of volunteers serve at Hidden Villa. Over 12,000 volunteer hours fuel the programs annually. From education docents to animal husbandry, fundraising, and trail and property maintenance, Hidden Villa welcomes a variety of volunteers. A new program, Weekend Ambassadors, orients guests to Hidden Villa’s property and programs so they may best enjoy all it has to offer. Visitors to Hidden Villa can access miles of trails through 1600 pristine acres. The beauty of the land and the contagious spirit of their mission entice guests to linger, learn and contribute to this unique and impactful community gem.

“Driving home from school my boys would love to see what’s growing in the fields knowing it would soon be on our table. We also enjoyed volunteering in the fields on Wednesdays.”

Pam Carlton
CSA member, volunteer & town resident.
FROM THE CITY MANAGER

FROM THE PLANNING DIRECTOR

New Town Staff

In December 2017, Cody Einfalt (pictured below) joined the town staff as a Planning Technician. Cody is a native to the Silicon Valley, having grown up in Palo Alto. He is thrilled to be working for a jurisdiction he knows quite well. Cody recently graduated from the University of California, Davis where he received two degrees, a B.S. in Community and Regional Development and a B.A. in Communication. Currently Cody is completing a graduate program at San Jose State University and will soon hold a Masters of Public Administration. His past experience in municipal planning is with the cities of Mountain View and Woodland. Outside of work, Cody loves traveling and trying new foods. You can see Cody working at the front desk at Town Hall. Come in and say hello — he is eager to meet everyone in town.

Suzanne Avila, AICP is planning director

Residential Burglaries

In the calendar year 2017, there were 16 residential burglaries in town and no reported commercial burglaries. There are about 3,000 residential properties in town which equates to less than 1% of the properties in town being impacted by a property crime this past year. From 2003 to 2017, the town experienced an average of 28 burglaries on an annual basis. At the January 2018 town council meeting, Sheriff’s Captain Rich Urena attributed increased resident vigilance as a key factor in the reduction in burglaries last year. Urena stated that it is very helpful to the Sheriff’s Office when residents promptly call 911 and report any suspicious vehicles and persons in their neighborhoods. Urena also stated that in almost half of the cases last year, the burglar gained entry into the home through an unlocked window or door. He encourages residents to lock doors and windows and use alarm systems. In some of the burglaries, it appears that triggered alarms may have caused the burglar to flee empty-handed.

By all accounts, Los Altos Hills is one of the safest communities in California and the country. The take-away is to remain vigilant, take reasonable precautions but keep things in perspective.

The table below shows burglary statistics since 2007. The data indicates that burglaries peaked in 2013 and 2014.

Broadband Internet Service Update

Prior to 2017, most streets in town had access to broadband internet service. However, there were a handful of streets in town without broadband internet service. This was because of density limitations written in the town’s agreement with Comcast for streets with existing underground utilities. Comcast was not fully obligated to install service for those streets. Prospective customers were required to contribute a portion of the construction cost. The town’s adoption of a cable service cost-sharing policy in late 2016 appears to have helped resolve the problem with most of those streets either now served by broadband cable or scheduled for cable service construction this year. If you reside on a public or private street with public utility access and do not have cable broadband service in your street, please feel free to give me a call or email to learn more details about the town’s cable service cost-sharing program. The program does not cover costs associated with installing cable from the street to the house.

Carl Cahill

BURGLARIES IN LOS ALTOS HILLS
In 2016, in Los Altos Hills there were six police reports taken for mail thefts. In 2017, there were 19. So why are criminals interested in mail? Criminals are looking for checks they can “wash” or checks where they may be able to alter the recipient’s name and the amount to be paid. Criminals are also looking for personal information, either to open credit card accounts, sell to other criminals, or for other sorts of financial gain.

Criminals will use crowbars to pry off locks or open doors, or even use counterfeit master keys. All mailboxes are a target, even those with locks, but residents should still prefer the locking mailboxes over those that do not lock as it does deter most criminals.

The following are some helpful tips to prevent becoming a victim of mail theft:

• Do not send cash in the mail
• Pick up mail promptly after delivery
• Never leave your mail in the mailbox overnight
• Drop outgoing mail directly at the post office when possible
• Install security cameras that capture your mailbox
• If you’re expecting checks, credit cards, or other valuable parcels, ask a trusted friend or neighbor to pick up your mail if you can’t be home
• If ordering from Amazon, have order shipped to a nearby secured Amazon locker (one is located at the downtown Safeway store)
• If you don’t receive an expected check, credit card, or other valuable parcel, contact the issuing agency immediately

• When going on vacation, notify the Post Office so they can hold the mail until you return
• If you change your address, immediately notify the Post Office and anyone with whom you do business via mail
• When ordering checks, request that they be mailed to your local bank branch where you can pick up

Additionally, residents should be aware of who their neighbors are. Get to know the people who live on your street and the cars they drive. Communicate with your neighbors about what’s going on in the neighborhood, be it in person or on social media platforms, to warn of suspicious people or cars for example.

For additional peace of mind, residents may sign up for Informed Delivery through the Post Office. The Post Office created this free, optional service so that mail recipients may now digitally preview electronically scanned images of their letter-sized mail on the day of scheduled delivery and also manage package deliveries, among other features. Postal employees do not have access to the images, which are deleted after seven days. This is a great way to interact with and track your incoming mail and packages.

If you see someone or something suspicious, call 911 immediately and report it to the Sheriff’s Office. Helpful information to provide when reporting includes suspect and vehicle descriptions, especially license plate information, and specific location, date and time frame of the suspicious or criminal activity. Reporting this type of information works and has successfully led to arrests.
Dr. Albert Barnitz Byrne

Exploring some of the paths and hidden corners of our town, you may have encountered a memorial plaque set in a rock somewhere with an inscription — and wondered about the tale behind the marker. There are a number of these scattered around the hills. This is the first in a series of stories that lie behind a few of them.

Driving along Altamont Road there is a large rock with a plaque that many people pass every day, but few people see. An Oak Leaf with the inscription “The Nature Conservancy” dominates the design of the plaque, and underneath is inscribed “Albert Barnitz Byrne Preserve.” And thereby hangs a tale...

Albert Byrne was the son of pioneer residents of this area that would one day become Los Altos Hills. After graduating from West Point (where he tutored a young Eisenhower in math) he went on to mine for silver in Nevada and later became a surveyor in Oregon. Later, and already in his thirties, he went back to school, qualifying from Walter Reed Army Hospital as a doctor. Byrne practiced as a physician for many years.

When the Spanish Civil War broke out, being a strong idealist, Byrne traveled to Spain to volunteer with the Republican Army against the Fascists. On returning to the United States, and with his health affected by tuberculosis, he chose to settle in a hot dry climate and spent many years as a physician on the Hopi Reservation in Arizona before eventually retiring in Texas.

In May of 1967, he donated 55 acres of land (next to where the plaque is today) to set up a charitable foundation in his name with The Nature Conservancy. Thus was established what the plaque commemorates as “The Albert Barnitz Byrne Preserve.” But the story doesn’t end there.

In 1968, The Nature Conservancy agreed to sell the preserve to Los Altos Hills for an attractive price, but conditioned upon two main provisos: (1) that the town would agree to keep the land in its natural state as an open space preserve in perpetuity, and (2) that the town would acquire the necessary land to connect this 55 acres to form a contiguous corridor to the Duveneck’s Hidden Villa Ranch to the south on the other side of Moody Road.

The second of these conditions was a tall order. The town barely had the money for “the attractive price” to acquire the initial 55 acres — let alone to purchase another 20 or 30 acres that might be required to make the link. How this was accomplished is the subject of another tale — involving another resident of our town and who is remembered with her own plaque on a rock not too far away from this first plaque. Her story will be the subject of another article in this series about the plaques of Los Altos Hills.

Jitze and his wife Nancy have been residents for 45 years. He retired after a career in R&D with American and British computer manufacturers, starting back when mainframes still used vacuum tubes.
Established in 1939, the Los Altos Hills County Fire District’s (LAHCFD) mission is to protect the lives, property and environment within the district from fires, disasters and medical emergencies or incidents — through education, prevention and emergency response services.

In a disaster, local officials and relief workers cannot reach everyone immediately. Help may not arrive for hours or days. You and your family — including those with disabilities — need to be prepared ahead of time because you won’t have time to shop or search for the supplies you will need when a disaster strikes.

Most disasters are natural disasters, the result of some force of nature, such as storms or earthquakes. Some natural disasters can be predicted, such as severe winter storms, while others, such as earthquakes, happen with little or no warning. Some disasters are the cause of human actions, intentional or unintentional.

Regardless of the type of disaster, planning and preparation can help with your safety, security, and comfort. The LAHCFD, served by the Santa Clara County Fire Department (SCCFD), offers two excellent emergency preparedness programs: Personal Emergency Preparedness (PEP) and Community Emergency Response Team (CERT).

PEP Class
When disaster strikes, it may be several days before emergency services arrive in your neighborhood. The LAHCFD, in partnership with SCCFD, offers this free 3-hour training class to teach individuals and families how to prepare to be self-reliant the first 72 hours following a major disaster. This class includes information on types of disasters, home and workplace preparedness, fire safety, treating life-threatening conditions, and how to build a disaster supply kit.

The next PEP class will take place at Town Hall. Register via Eventbrite.com: Search for “PEP”. Choose the date and location you want to attend. For more information, contact County Fire Department’s Community Education Services at 408-378-4010.

CERT Academy
In the event of an area wide disaster, critical infrastructure and emergency services will be impacted. The 21-hour CERT academy trains residents to prepare for and respond to life-threatening events in their community. CERT members can help mobilize neighborhood resources, deliver immediate assistance to victims, organize emergency communications, and provide support to first responders.

CERT academies are offered in the communities served by SCCFD and rotate throughout the year. Some of the skills taught include organizing resources medical operations, basic search and rescue, how to use a fire extinguisher, and damage assessment.

The CERT academy can help you prepare you and your family for emergencies, while simultaneously being involved in your community, joining an active group of ready-to-help volunteers. CERT members prepare, organize, and work together as a team to provide essential services to their community during and after a disaster. LAHCFD currently has over 100 trained CERT members and meets regularly for training and education.

Serving your community as a trained CERT member is a worthwhile endeavor. The next CERT Academy will take place at Town Hall. Registration fee is $35. Register via Eventbrite.com: Search “CERT Los Altos Hills.” For more information, call 408-808-7800 or email CERT coordinator: barry.stallard@sccfd.org.
If you have noticed red berries around town this winter, you have probably recognized toyon (*Heteromeles arbutifolia*). This shrub grows prolifically in the town's open spaces and is also an excellent landscape plant. The early summer flowers are white, turning to brightly colored berries in the fall and winter that last into spring. The berries range in hue from orange to deep red. It is California's version of holly; it is also known as hollywood or Christmas berry. The Los Angeles Basin was full of it, and one legend (among others) is that Hollywood was named for this plant.

Toyon is an excellent landscape plant due to its versatility. It can be pruned as a specimen tree or as a hedge or screen in combination with other species such as coffeeberry, manzanita, or ceanothus. The colorful shrub is low-maintenance, deer-resistant, drought-tolerant, and a low fire hazard that tolerates regular pruning. The height range is 7 to 35 feet. It grows in full sun to light shade.

Toyon provides nectar in the spring and summer for honey bees and butterflies. In the winter, the berries provide food for many bird species, including cedar waxwing, quail, towhee, bluebird, mockingbird, and robin. The fruit is mildly toxic until completely ripe. The birds know when it is safe to eat, and feast on the berries in late winter when there are few other food sources. The raw berries contain cyanide compounds and are not recommended for human consumption. Even when fully ripe and safe to eat they are dry and unpalatable. They can also be cooked or fermented to neutralize the cyanide effects.

Along with the coast live oak, toyon is certainly one of the most important native plant assets in Los Altos Hills.

Taylor Vanderlip is an environmental consultant specializing in biological issues.
A
ward-winning musician and
author Jim Gill will put on a
special show for children and
their parents
at Los Altos
Library
on Friday,
March 16 at
10:30 am.
Gill strums
ergetic
rhythms on
his banjo
while the crowd claps, sings
and dances along to his fun,
inspired musical games.
Don’t miss seeing his “Silly
Dance Contest.” The event is
part of a larger effort by the
Santa Clara County Library
District to teach the five
pre-reading skills of talking,
singing, reading, writing and
playing. Learn more about our
Early Learning campaign at
www.sccl.org/Kids/Early-
Learning#top.

Left: Mr. SHAP, balloonist and magician,
performed for families at the Woodland Library’s
community celebration of their new Sunday
hours back in January of this year.

Los Altos Library Programs
Promote Reading

Last year was a busy one for Los Altos
Library and its Woodland branch.
1,327,779 items were borrowed by
patrons. 856 programs and events were
held, with 30,274 attendees. All of this
would not have been possible without the
hard work of library staff and the 6,725
hours of volunteer help. 2018 is off to a fast
start with new Sunday hours at Woodland
and major programming planned.

Silicon Valley Reads
Los Altos Library will serve as host for
a number of events tied to Silicon
Valley Reads (SVR), the annual community
all-ages program around reading. This
year’s theme is “No Matter What: Caring,
Coping, Compassion.” The following events
are free to the public at the Los Altos Library,
located at 13 South San Antonio Road:

Self-Compassion for Teens
Tuesday, March 6, 7:00 pm
Short workshop, led by Dr. Amy Saltzman
(author of Still Quiet Place), offers a way to
deal with stress and provides tips for being
kind to yourself and others.

Mindfulness: Learning to be Happy,
Healthy and Stress Free
Friday, March 9, 5:30 pm
Participants will engage in light yoga,
stretching, breathing exercises and guided
meditation.

Self-Care for Caregivers. Compassion
and Mindfulness
Monday, March 12, 7:00 pm
Teacher Emily Hine, CEO of Hinesight
Consulting, will offer practical mindfulness
strategies and compassion practices to
reduce caregiver stress and burnout.

Atlas CareMap Workshop
Monday, March 19, 7:00 pm
Atlas CareMap Workshop. Learn to
diagram your care ecosystem.

Mindfulness for Teens.
Friday, March 23, 5:30 pm
Session includes tension releasing exercises,
targeted breathing techniques to reduce stress,
body relaxation and short guided
meditation.

Solidifying Your Mindfulness Practice
through Bullet Journaling: A Workshop
for Teens
Tuesday, March 27, 4:00 pm
Creativity coach and author Kaneshia
Baynard will show participants how to
expand their mindfulness practices by using
a simple to understand writing practice.
For more information about SVR please
visit www.sccl.org/SVR.

CONCERT

CHILDERN’S
EARLY LEARNING
CAMPAIGN
Clinical research fuels the advancement of medicine. Clinical trials are medical research studies performed with the help of patients who volunteer to try new diagnostic techniques or new therapies, or to be observed as part of a group of people with a specific health issue to look for ways to prevent disease or improve the quality of life. It validates or disproves ideas and ensures their safe implementation as drugs, therapies, and diagnostic tools. Every medical treatment available today was first tested through a clinical trial.

With Silicon Valley being a hub for innovation and research, patients have access to the latest medical devices, technologies and developments and can help doctors and clinicians teach the rest of the world how to deliver better medicine. Clinical trials give access to experimental therapies to patients who do not respond to conventional treatments and enable investigators to stay on the leading edge of medical science in service to the patients they care so deeply about.

Millions of people volunteer to take part in clinical trials every year. Their participation helps the medical community learn what works best in treating diseases.

The principal investigator, or lead researcher, seeks to answer specific medical questions and ultimately to improve health and patient care. There are several methods or study types researchers use to gather information:

- **Interventional.** Participants receive experimental treatment — which can include a drug, device, surgical procedure or an existing therapy used in a new way — to determine whether it’s safe and effective.
- **Observational.** Participants receive diagnostic or therapeutic care and researchers note the health outcome.
- **Chart review.** Doctors use data from existing patient health charts to answer the research question.
- **Registry.** Researchers study a specific patient population by observing participants with a particular disease, condition or exposure to something that may be affecting their health.
- **Specimen collection and research repository.** Participants donate tissue for analysis, including solid tissues, cells, cell cultures or molecules derived from tissues — such as DNA, RNA and proteins — and body fluids. Participants may consent to use the samples for a particular study or for unspecified future research or testing.

**Drug Trial Phases**

For the study of new drugs, or of existing drugs used in new ways, clinical trials are divided into different phases, numbered from 0 to 4. The earliest phase may look at safety or side effects. A later phase may test whether a new treatment is better than existing treatments:

- **Phase 0.** An exploratory study that requires very limited human exposure to the drug, and has no therapeutic or diagnostic goals.
- **Phase 1.** Conducted with an emphasis on safety, the goal is to discover how the drug is processed, toxicity and any side effects.

Clinical trials give access to experimental therapies to patients who do not respond to conventional treatments and enable investigators to stay on the leading edge of medical science in service to the patients they care so deeply about.
- **Phase 2.** Gathers preliminary data on effectiveness — whether the drug works in participants with a certain condition, compared with participants receiving a different treatment or a placebo (a medicine that has no effect).

- **Phase 3.** Measures safety and effectiveness by examining different populations taking different dosages of the drug or in combination with other drugs.

- **Phase 4.** Occurs after the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) has approved a drug, but researchers want more information about its safety, efficacy or best use.

**Medical Device Trial Phases**

Clinical trials are also used to test medical devices — healthcare products that don’t achieve results through chemical action or by being metabolized. A device can range from something as simple as a tongue depressor or thermometer to a complex instrument, such as a specialized heart valve or robotic surgical device. Device trial phases include:

- **Pilot/Feasibility.** May be used to answer basic research questions or provide support for a future study. It’s an initial, exploratory stage to determine whether the potential benefit justifies any risk.

- **Pivotal.** Evaluates the safety and effectiveness of the device for the intended use, which may require one or more studies.

- **Post-market.** Assesses safety of the device after it’s been used commercially, such as investigating rare adverse events or long-term effectiveness.

Each study has a different set of criteria to help ensure that researchers can answer the health question they plan to investigate. Trial criteria may include age, sex, the type and stage of the disease, and previous treatment history. Trials can take place in hospitals, universities, doctors offices or community clinics.

The Taft Center for Clinical Research at El Camino Hospital offers community members access to clinical trials for heart care, lung care, cancer, and other conditions. To learn more about clinical research or questions about clinical trials conducted at El Camino Hospital visit www.elcaminohospital.org/clinicaltrials.
March
4
Sun., 10:00 am – Noon
Leadership Conference
Join the Los Altos Hills Youth Commission at their 7th annual Leadership Conference at Town Hall Council Chambers.

18
Sun., 2:00 – 5:00 pm
Odyssey Artist Reception
All are invited to attend the Judy Gittelsohn reception, which will feature live music, refreshments, and wine.

April
6
Fri., 6:00 – 8:00 pm
Spring Fling
Join the Los Altos/Los Altos Hills Senior Commission and Club 55 for a mix and mingle with music, heavy hors d’oeuvres, and beverages at the Garden House. For more information visit the community calendar.

May
5
Sat., 9:00 am
Pathways Run/Walk
Walk, run, and have a blast at this Home Run on Cinco de Mayo. 5K, 10K and one mile fun run. For more information and to register visit www.lahpathwaysrun.org.

June
3
Sun., 12:30 – 4:00 pm
Town Picnic
Join fellow town residents at Purissima Park for an afternoon of fun. More information will be sent in a flyer in May.

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