We are very thrilled to announce that our SVCA website has been upgraded with a refreshed look and more ways to connect with the SVCA network!

Please take a few minutes to look at our revamped website and check out what it now has to offer our SVCA members. You will find a link to our Facebook page as well as an updated membership, board, sponsors and events pages.

SVCA Links:
Website: http://www.siliconvalleyconcierge.com/
Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/svca.concierge

The bustling streets of London, immortalized for all time by the mighty pen of Charles Dickens, form the living backdrop of your excursion into Christmas Past. You are a living part of a Victorian Christmas card come to life! A Bay Area tradition since 1970, the Great Dickens Christmas Fair returns to the Cow Palace 11/26-12/18. For more information call 800-510-1558 or visit www.artsopolis.com/event/detail/441426799.

Where does Santa live? Just thirty minutes south of San Francisco on a 487 acre farm! Board the train or just sit and listen to the carolers as you sip hot apple cider, or cut a tree. There are puppet shows and visits from Santa himself! 11/25-12/23 at Santa’s Tree Farm in Half Moon Bay. For more information call 650-726-2246 or visit www.artsopolis.com/event/detail/441454663.

KIDS Corner, brought to you by:

A Program of Arts Council Silicon Valley
The holidays are a great time to spend with the family. We have so many wonderful events in the Silicon Valley – indoor, outdoor, choral, theatrical, artistic, and poetic – we have it all! Enjoy these events and more at www.artsopolis.com. Happy Holidays to All!

It’s the night before Christmas and everyone is sick in bed with the flu except brave Madeline, who feels just fine and must take care of the eleven other little girls and Miss Clavel in “the old house in Paris all covered with vines.” Don’t miss Madeline’s Christmas 12/9-12/17 at the Sunnyvale Community Center Theatre in Sunnyvale. For more information call 408-720-0873 or visit www.artsopolis.com/event/detail/441426075.
I just returned from weeks in the Mediterranean, where I was fortunate to travel for 12 days with Crystal Cruises, a 5 star Luxury Line that I worked with this year in San Francisco. It was nice to experience all that my guest raved about and see why they are so loyal to the cruise line.

Crystal’s service is outstanding and for me the lecturers were the highlight. Italian and dance classes were also enjoyable. On such a ship it is hard not to relax.

I debarked in Istanbul and spent another week traveling in Turkey. The ship was lovely; however I am more of an independent when it comes to travel. I love to soak up the culture by staying in the country and hanging with the locals. To me that is means residing in small independent lodgings that reflect the country.

Some of my most wonderful travel memories are of the places I stayed along the way. Haciendas in South America, historic inns in Mexico, pensiones in Italy, zimmers in Germany, ranches in Chile, a B & B in Costa Rica, a farm and orphanage in Thailand. My lodging criteria are location, size, breakfast and a computer. The breakfast and computer areas are always good for meeting other travelers and finding more special places to visit.

On this trip my criteria was location, roof garden (breakfast and bar) and a computer. I usually like old and charming but A is for Athens is new and urban. It was perfect. The view of the Acropolis took my breath away. The new boutique hotel is a hit with the youth of Athens. The roof garden was packed every day by 4pm. It was happy hour for me, but Athenians drink coffee at that hour. No wonder they do not dine till nearly midnight. What also made the hotel special was the staff. Service and friendly attitude was just what was needed especially since the city was crippled by strikes. (The airport closed the day prior to my arrival.)

Another lodging that enriched my trip was a cave hotel in Cappadocia, Turkey. My room was literally built in the side of a cave. The Kelebek Cave Hotel had the kind of vibe I love when traveling. Warm and cozy, amazing views, living and dining rooms filled with local crafts and books. Rooms that is conducive to meeting other travelers and sharing information. The staff was perfect concierges. They arranged tours, transportation and dining options, intent on offering you the best experience possible.

I will always remember sipping rich coffee while sitting outside on a cushion with the cats (Turkey and Greece have no mice) watching the hot air balloons glide over the incredible, other worldly landscape and hearing the call to prayer. It was a special experience, similar to so many enjoyed throughout Turkey, Greece and Israel.

Although most of my work is in larger hotels in San Francisco, I hope I instill in guest that special warmth and sense of place that I crave when I travel.

Maria Lange
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**BROADWAY SAN JOSE**

**December 27, 2011 – January 1, 2012 | Center for the Performing Arts**

The longest running, most popular, North American Touring Production in history! There’s no better way to introduce your family to the wonders of live theatre than with the magic, the mystery, the memory of CATS. What began as a musical about cats after Andrew Lloyd Webber picked up a book of poems in an airport bookshop has become one of the longest running shows in Broadway’s history.

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“Global Winter Wonderland” is a magical lantern festival based on the centuries old traditional Chinese lantern festival, which have attracted millions of people of over time. This holiday season travel the world in just one day at Global Winter Wonderland. This epic event is in the United States for the first time ever. Located on Great America Parkway in Santa Clara, this historic event will be an experience you’ll never forget.

Headlining our event are larger-than-life lantern replicas of the world’s most fascinating iconic landmarks: India’s Taj Mahal, Paris’s Eiffel Tower, Mexico’s Chichen Itza, and San Francisco’s Golden Gate Bridge are just a few of our favorites. Over forty giant illuminated structures, some nearly 50 feet high and 100 feet long, will be sure to take your breath away. Arriving from China, our elaborate lantern displays were built by engineers of several structures showcased in the 2008 Beijing Paralympic Games.

The magical adventure doesn’t stop there. You can shop, taste and experience the world by visiting the Global Marketplace, Food Court, and Village. Take your family and friends on an exciting winter stay-cation where the activities are endless. Arts and crafts, dance and music performances, carnival games, giant slides, jumpy houses, and a holiday train as well as a list of special events and entertainment that will make this destination a new holiday tradition!

The “Global Winter Wonderland” is produced by the International Culture Exchange Group, (ICEG), an international event organizer working to promote cultural exchange between East and West to bring the world closer together.

http://www.globalwonderland.org/2011/home/
Having the vision to meet the market’s needs

This is the season to celebrate, to celebrate that we are about to conclude a year that many of us would rather forget, but also to celebrate a year that has brought many challenges and opportunities for the hospitality industry. What is there to celebrate you ask? The challenges came with an economy that seemingly defied the cycles and recovery efforts that had allowed for some predictability in the past. Mergers and acquisitions and the resulting organizational changes in staffing were numerous. Occupancies were lower than had been expected – not just because leisure travelers tightened their belts, but also because many businesses started substituting videoconferencing for face to face meetings. The resulting travel expense budget cuts were noticeable. Concierge services were impacted by web-based information – be it for travel, lodging, meeting sites and services, restaurants, or entertainment. Guests were referred to the Internet or did not insist that they be provided with personalized advice and service. Social networking in the hospitality industry as well, had, many times taken the place of face to face communication. In Silicon Valley matters were not noticeably different from the national scene, except that the pattern initiated by Google, Apple and a few other high-tech companies was emulated by companies who could afford it. I am talking about on-site activities such as around the clock food service, sports, games, and other social activities. All of this was meant to forge a more closely knit employee community that does more than perform a job and commute back and forth to their place of employment. Flex hours have many times taken the place of the nine to five routine of yesteryear, pets have become cubicle co-tenants in some instances, and board games and social networking on Facebook™, Twitter™ and other “apps” has added new dimensions to the workplace. All these changes have in all likelihood added to the activity menu available to Corporate Concierges, Meeting Planners, and Tour Guides. Hotel Concierges would do well to brush up on their contacts to make sure that visitors become familiar with the working world in Silicon Valley and have access to it firsthand. Thus, the challenges are there which is symptomatic for any area of professional expertise, in this case the concierge world. But is also offers many opportunities that may not yet have been embraced by those who bestow the “Clef d’Or” on those who aspire to this prestigious recognition in the hospitality industry. Make no mistake: Despite all the technical innovations that make it easy to obtain information that used to be the bailiwick of concierges, there will always be those guests, clients and customers who will insist on the services of an experienced, knowledgeable, friendly concierge, tour guide, meeting planner or any other member in the hospitality industry. Hotels, corporations, large residential properties would do well to stay in tune with the requirements of their guests or visitors. Having concierge services that meet these needs will pay off – in good and not such good economic times.

SVCA thanks its supporters and sponsors

On November 9, members of SVCA were invited to view the new and expanded exhibits in the museum. The brochure given to the attendees had this to say about it: “The Computer History Museum is the world’s leading institution exploring the history of computing and its ongoing impact on society. It is home to the largest international collection of computing artifacts in the world, including computer hardware, software, documentation, ephemera, photographs and moving images.”

Our thanks go to the management of the museum for providing SVCA members with a closer look at this fabulous collection of memorabilia. You may want to plan to visit the museum to see for yourself. For a preview go to: www.computerhistory.org.

Vino Vino – A memorable wine bar at San Pedro Square, San Jose

On Nov. 15, members of SVCA were guests of this new establishment at the ever-so-quick evolving new San Pedro Square. Vino Vino is the place to taste a variety of California wines by the glass and if you have never frequented a wine bar we highly recommend that you do so. Vino Vino amplifies its offerings with a delicious assortment of appetizers that complement your wine samples. SVCA members want to thank Vino Vino for its hospitality and wish it well at the renovated and very promising San Pedro Square. For details go to: www.vinovinosanjose.com

Holiday Season is here – Here are some suggestions on what to do!

- **Christmas in the Adobes in Monterey**
  December 8 and 10, 2011 from 5pm to 9pm, the Monterey State Historical Park Association presents this tour of an array of Monterey Adobes. These wonderful buildings are open and provide a view of historical Monterey, once the capital of California. You need to buy tickets on-line by downloading a ticket order form at www.parks.ca.gov/mshp. The tour will add a special memory to your 2011 Holiday Season.

- **The Great Dickens Christmas Fair & Victorian Holiday Party**
  For four weekends from Nov. 25 – December 18 you may want to attend this fair at the Cow Palace Exhibition Halls. For print-at-home tickets, free BART shuttle & more visit www.dickensfair.com or call (800) 510-1558.

- **Downtown Ice in the Circle of Palms in Downtown San Jose**
  From Nov. 18 – Jan. 29, 2012 This San Jose Downtown Association Production is sponsored among many others by Kristi Yamaguchi’s Always Dream Foundation in partnership with the San Jose Redevelopment Agency and supported in part by a Cultural Affairs grant from the City of San Jose. For Hours & Information go to: www.sjdowntown.com – you don’t want to miss this opportunity to refresh your skating skills.

- **The Nutcracker performed by Ballet San Jose – Dennis Nahat Artistic Director**
  Performed with Symphony Silicon Valley in the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts. The Nutcracker, this wonderful, perennial Holiday Spectacular is in part supported by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San Jose. Add this to your Holiday celebration – you don’t want to miss it. For details go to: www.balletsj.org

- **A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens – at the Rep San Jose**
  - Nov. 23 – Dec. 24, 2011
  The Rep San Jose offers this traditional and well-known adaptation that is truly a feast for the senses full of traditional Victorian carols, lavish period costumes, and actors playing over a dozen instruments. It is adapted for the stage and directed by Rick Lombardo. For details go to: www.SJrep.com

- **Rodin & America – Influence and Adaptation 1876-1936 – Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University**
  This exhibition – admission is free – is made possible by the Robert Mondavi Family fund, The Henry Luce Foundation, the Terra Foundation for American Arts, the Hohbach Family fund, the Iris and B. Gerald Cantor Foundation, an Cantor Arts Center members. It will be open through Jan. 1, 2012. For details go to www@museum.stanford.edu

This is but a birds’ eye view of the many attractions and events during the holiday season. Enjoy the Holidays!

Let me know what you think!
Gus Holweger
gusholweger@comcast.net
The Candyland Express returns for the holidays
VTA’s Historic Trolley is a festive way to get to your favorite
downtown destination. During December, this free service runs
from 6:30-9 p.m. on Fridays, and 1:30-9 p.m. on Saturdays and
Sundays, and operates between the San Jose Diridon and Civic
Center stations only. The Historic Trolley will not operate on
December 23-25. www.vta.org/candylandexpress

Holiday Hat Trick!
Experience three downtown attractions for one low price with the
“Holiday Hat Trick.” This pass admits you to the San Jose Museum
of Art, The Tech Museum and Downtown Ice for just $23 (a savings
of $12). The pass is available at any of the three locations – all
within easy walking distance on Market Street. Available at all three
venues through Jan. 29. Makes a great holiday present.

A New Website is Waiting in the Wings!
Later this week, a brand-new website and online community called
LiveSV.com launches, formerly known as Artsopolis. The new site
offers YOU a new way to discover, experience and share what’s
great about the Silicon Valley arts, culture and entertainment
scene. It will have everything you have liked about Artsopolis plus
much, much more. Look for it starting Thursday.

Parking / Pedicabs
Parking Tip for Sharks Game – The City will be implementing a
prepay operation at the Market/San Pedro Square Garage
two hours before the game and continue until about 1/2 hour after the
game. The prepay rate will be $7 and during prepay no validations
will be accepted on entry; however, for customer convenience cash
and credit cards will be accepted. In addition, validations on exit
will continue to be accepted all day including during the prepay
period.

4-G Wi-Fi Service Now Available On Light Rail – VTA says it is the
first mass transit agency in the world to offer 4-G Wi-Fi, faster
connection service, on all light-rail trains. VTA Free onboard
internet service is an amenity that has been most requested to
make public transit more appealing to nonriders in Silicon Valley.
Plans are also under way to add Wi-Fi on VTA express buses later
this year or by early 2012. www.vta.org

Parking rates and changes in City of San Jose garages – Parking
rates in city-owned garages have increased to $3 an hour during the
day, and $5 at night and $5 on Saturday in some garages. But
get validated, and your parking is free for two hours during the day,
every evening after 6 pm and on the weekend. Parking is still free on
Sundays. And, the lot under I-280 at S. First St. offers free parking
after 6 p.m. every night. For more details and a list of businesses
offering validations visit www.sjdowntownparking.com

See the sites of downtown via Segway Tours! Tours last about two
hours, and include free training. Cost is $75. Tours kick off at the
The Tech Museum 10 am and 2 pm. For reservations call 294-8324.
For details visit www.siliconsegway.com/tours/

Pedicabs - Eco City Cycles – Look for Eco City Cycles door-to-door
pedicab service. The service is available Wednesday-Saturday
from 7 pm-2 am. Call ahead for reservations or pick-ups 771-7723.
Negotiate your price. www.ecocitycycles.com

Stage and Concerts

Wednesday, Friday-Sunday through Dec. 18 – The Stage presents
“Every Christmas Story Ever Told” – A fast-moving, irreverent
comedy that takes holiday cheer to the extreme. 7:30 pm Wed; 8 pm
Fri-Sat; 2 pm Sun. 490 S. First St. $20-$45. 283-7142 or
www.thestage.org

Wednesday-Monday – Comedy at the Improv – Wed: United Nations
Comedy (8 pm). Thurs: Reggie Steel (8 pm). Fri-Sun: Bobby Lee (8
pm and 10 pm Fri; 7 pm and 9 pm Sat; 7 pm Sun). Mon: Battle of the
Bay (8 pm). 62 S. Second St. 280-7475 or www.sanjoseimprov.com

Thursday-Sunday through Dec. 18 – City Light Theatre Company
presents “The Santaland Diaries” – An out-of-work slacker turned
temporary Macy’s elf shares his observations of parents, children,
derartment store Santas, and the whole holiday hoopla. 8 pm Thurs-
Sat; 2 pm Sun. City Lights Theater Co., 529 S. Second St.; 408-295-
4200; www.cltc.org

Friday-Sunday through Dec. 18 – The Tabard Theatre Company
presents “It’s a Wonderful Life” – The American holiday icon staged
as a live 1940s radio show. 8 pm Thurs-Sat; 3 pm Sat; 2 pm Sun.
Theatre on San Pedro Square, 29 N. San Pedro St. $10-$35.
www.tabardtheatre.org

Friday-Sunday through Dec. 11 – Children’s Musical Theater presents
Disney’s Broadway Hit “Tarzan” – The classic story of a young boy
raised in a jungle by a family of apes. 8 pm Fri; 2 pm and 8 pm Sat;
1 pm and 6 pm Sun. Montgomery Theater, 271 S. Market St.
www.cmtsj.org

Fridays-Saturdays – ComedySportz – See competitive improvisational
teams perform. 9 pm and 11 pm Fri; 7 pm and 9 pm Sat. Camera 3
Theater, 288 S. Second St. $12-$15. 985-5233 or www.national-
comedy.com

Friday-Sunday – The Nutcracker – San Jose Dance Theatre presents
its 45th annual production of the classic holiday production. Center
for the Performing Arts, 255 Almaden Blvd.; 286-9905 or www.sjdjt.org

Saturday-Sunday – Symphony Silicon Valley presents Nakamatsu
Plays Chopin – Award winning pianist Nakamatsu, who’s Chopin LA
Times called “brilliant, poetic, heroic, and spontaneous;” this is a
must-hear concert. Plus Milhaud’s ballet score filled with Brazilian
rhythms, Kodaly’s Gypsy-inspired dances, and Marquez’ Danzon No.
2, dubbed ‘the people’s national anthem of Mexico.’ California
Theatre, 345 S. First St.; 286-2600; www.symphonysiliconvalley.org

Sunday – Steinway Society the Bay Area presents a Community
Concert with Heidi Hau Tyan – 2 pm. Le Petit Trianon Theatre, 72 N.
Fifth St. Free, www.steinwaythebayarea.com

sjadowntowneronline@npogroups.org; on behalf of; Rick Jensen
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www.ctcinc.org

Friends of Guadalupe River Park & Gardens
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Gilroy Visitors Bureau
www.gilroyvisitor.org

International Russian Music Piano Competition
www.russianmusiccompetition.com

Rosicrucian Egyptian Museum & Planetarium
www.egyptianmuseum.org

San Jose Downtown Association
www.sjdowntown.com

The Tech Museum of Innovation
www.thetech.org

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DEADLINE TO SUMMIT ARTICLES FOR E-
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NOTE: ARTICLES AND SPECIAL DATES
APPEARING IN THE VAM
ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

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SVCA Member $50.00
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