Catch the Candyland Express to all of your downtown San Jose destinations this holiday season. VTA’s Historic Trolley will be decked out in festive holiday decor and will operate between the Civic Center station (Peppermint Drop Stop) and San Jose Diridon Transit Center (Cinnamon Drop Stop). Look for the festive platform near you and ride VTA’s Candyland Express to mark the beginning of your holiday season.

Join us for a holiday kick-off event on Saturday, December 17 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. featuring free giveaways including sweet treats and movie tickets to The Retro Dome, Downtown Ice tickets, and tickets to SJ Rep’s production of A Christmas Carol (quantities limited). Look for more details on VTA’s Facebook page and celebrate the season with VTA!

December & January 1st Hours*

- Fridays 6:30 p.m. - 9 p.m.
- Saturdays & Sundays 1 p.m. - 9 p.m.

INSIDER’S TRACK

Topics of interest in the hospitality industry! Skills inventory and career paths as seen against opportunities and issues in the hospitality industry.

A group of SVCA members met last week to continue the discussion about developing, as an adjunct to the hospitality programs offered by the local academic institutions, a training program with the ultimate goal to get certified by the SVCA. You will be informed about further developments.

Career paths for students majoring in Hospitality Management can take many ways. One of them, as the name of our organization implies, is a position of concierge, but many other functions fall under this umbrella such as meeting planning; tour guiding; restaurant management; etc.

SmartMoney magazine in its April 2012 issue mentions that Abercrombie and Kent is now offering airport security service. This “Concierge Service” starting at about $200, offers to shepherd vacationers through express check-in and security lines. The deluxe option of this service for $2,700 includes a private room at London Heathrow’s VIP terminal, where travelers can fulfill customs and security requirements without waiting in a single queue.

What does all this mean? Many positions start at the ground floor. In the hospitality management field that is a degree from an accredited institution at a starting salary that depends on the service providers (hotel, restaurant, meeting planning or tour guide companies), the location and the competitive environment. In the October 23, 2013 issue of the San Jose Mercury News, under the heading “Major Calculations” and the subheading “How much is this diploma worth?” Hospitality Management graduates (between the ages 22 and 26) can expect average earnings of $30,000/annum. Given that figure, it is no surprise that the unemployment rate for such graduates is a low 6% (with a high of 14% for Information Systems graduates).

The hospitality industry is complex. Technology advances have added to this complexity. Experience plus skills inventory expansions are needed and will undoubtedly enhance the earning power of concierges and other members of the hospitality industry. Case in point: The New York Times in its October 6, 2013 Travel Section, mentions the first “Twitter experience” hotel having opened in Mallorca, Spain. There, guests can ping requests to a “Twitter concierge” using hash tags like #filmymridge; flirt from poolside Bali beds by tweeting numbers printed atop the beds, like “How's it going #balibed10?” and sip cocktails while checking their smartphones for a live feed of virtual conversations bubbling up from every corner of the hotel. Social networks are entering the field (about 1.3 billion people worldwide are now using them).

The hospitality industry offers many career paths as can be seen and much depends on the job candidates’ interests, earnings expectations, skills, and, not to forget, interpersonal skills. The flipside of this profession is that the employers now are adding many extra charges for services that ought to be included in the base price of a room, tour offered, or meeting planned. The San Jose Mercury News in its Oct. 20 edition has an article by renowned Travel Expert Ed Perkins under the heading “Mandatory hotel fees distort what looks like a deal”. In so many words, Perkins mentions that many hotels; instead of including what they call ‘mandatory fees’ in their base price are ‘Nickel-ing and Dime-ing’ their guests. Wi-Fi, a daily newspaper, a bottle of water in the room, access to gym facilities, and such are on a laundry list of services these ‘mandatory fees’ supposedly cover. Websites he mentions are still basing rate comparisons on the phony pre-fee prices, so those comparisons do not reflect real prices.

Clearly, ethics are important in the hospitality industry, be it for services by a concierge, a hotel’s restaurant, for a proposed sightseeing tour, or for a planned corporate meeting. The reputation and integrity of managers and employees are an integral part of the establishment’s service quality. As the Silicon Valley Concierge Association further explores training and certification opportunities in the field, the issues mentioned above will play an important part. The academic institutions with a hospitality management department or program would do well to embrace them if they haven’t done so already.

Your suggestions and comments are welcome

Gus Holweger
Adjunct Member of SVCA’s Board and Contributing Editor of the Valley Access Magazine

A program of Silicon Valley Creates

It’s already Autumn and there are wonderful things to do and fun events to be a part of in Silicon Valley! Here are three below, and there are many more to discover at www.LiveSV.com!

“Happy Birthday” to San Jose! San Jose, or “El Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe,” was the first Pueblo of California, founded on November 29, 1777. Meet members of San Jose’s founding families, and take tours of the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House. Learn about life in early San Jose through hands-on activities and storytelling, along with live music and dancing. Have a slice of birthday cake to help celebrate, and enjoy food throughout the surrounding San Pedro Square Market. November 24th at the Peralta Adobe and Fallon House Historic Site in Downtown San Jose. For more information, call 408-287-2290 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/441747320.

Follow the lively adventures of young Jack and his magic beans at California Theatre Centre’s production of Jack and the Beanstalk! As Jack trades his beloved cow for the magic beans, he encounters the evil giant at the top of the beanstalk, but uses his wits to retrieve the townspeople’s gold and a very special goose! Playing October 5th-November 16th at the Sunnyvale Community Center Theatre in Sunnyvale. For more information, call 408-245-2978 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/441791547.

The Webb Ranch Group Rides program allows families and friends to come out and enjoy a horseback ride on the beautiful Portola Valley Ranch. The ride begins with group instruction in an enclosed arena to ensure that your ensuing trail ride is both safe and enjoyable. Then, venture out to the scenic trails on the Webb Ranch property. By appointment only at the Webb Ranch and Family Farm in Portola Valley. For more information, call (650) 854-7755 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/44179709.

Submitted by: Kereli Sengstack
kereli@svcreates.org//www.livesv.com/event/detail/44179709

VALLEY ACCESS ELECTRONIC MAGAZINE /2
VIP Treatment for Less at The Club at SJC

You're in for a treat in October and this is no trick. The Club at SJC, our common use airport VIP lounge, is offering an all-day pass for only $30 (a $5 discount). ALL passengers have access to the lounge, regardless of the carrier they're flying or class of ticket they purchased.

To redeem this offer, available through December 31, 2013, print this coupon and present it at The Club's reception desk for an all-day discounted pass. You'll receive instant access to all the amenities of our airport lounge, including:

- Complimentary snacks and beverages, including beer, wine and liquor
- Wickedly fast Wi-Fi
- Workstations with PCs and printers
- Newspapers, magazines, TVs and flight information displays
- Shower facility (towels, shampoo, soap and hair dryer are provided)

Conveniently located between Terminals A and B, The Club at SJC provides a unique mix of amenities and world-class customer service. For more information, contact The Club at (408) 441-4550

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**Discount Coupon**

This voucher entitles the holder and any guest to a $5 discount per person on the normal entry fee to The Club at SJC. Valid 2:00 pm - 10:00 pm only.

*Valid only The Club at SJC, 2:00 pm - 10:00 pm ONLY. Normal lounge entry fee of $35 per person. This certificate has no cash value and cannot be redeemed or otherwise exchanged, nor replaced if lost or stolen. The bearer of this certificate may enforce the certificate prior to the expiration date shown on the face of the pass to The Club at SJC. The use of this certificate cannot be combined with any other offer, promotion or program. The certificate must be presented at time of entry to receive the benefits associated with such. The use of The Club at SJC is subject to the Conditions of Use as posted on www.TheClubAtSJC.com.

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**Santarun**

December 15, 3:00pm
Registration is now open! http://santarunsv.com
Bryan Kramer  
President & CEO of PureMatter & Huffington Post’s top Social Media CEO’s  
Topic: How To Build Your Social Body Language

Nina Simon  
Executive Director of the Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History and author of the book, “The Participatory Museum”  
Topic: Audience Revolution

BREAK-OUT #1:  
Social Engagement Strategies: Attracting New Audiences and Funding in the Age of Social Media.  
Presented by Suzanne Oehler, Consultant, Speaker and Author of the Yapper Girl Blog

BREAK-OUT #2:  
Using Video to Tell Your Story  
presented by Peter Pheap, Director of Creative Teens, Silicon Valley Creates

BREAK-OUT #3:  
How to Engage Next Generation Volunteers  
presented by Young Han and Michael J. Fogelstrom, Professional Do-Gooders at GoVoluntr

BREAK-OUT #4:  
Using Google’s Tools To Promote Your Organization  
presented by Katie Sollenberger and Sarah Kelaita, Google Trainers

BREAK-OUT #5:  
Innovative Programming to Engage New Audiences (a case study)  
presented by Franco Imperial, San Jose Taiko

Break-Out #6:  
How Audiences are Engaging Through Mobile Devices - New Research  
Presented by Ron Evans, GroupOfMinds

...AND MORE

Date and Time  
Wednesday November 13, 2013  
9:00am - 4:30pm  
Location  
School of Arts & Culture at MHP  
1700 Alum Rock Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95116

Registration  
$20 registration fee (includes lunch)
Amaluna from Cirque du Soleil will be in Northern California starting this November! As a member of the SVCA, here is a 15% off select tickets for performances in the Bay area* in order to give your clients the best seats available at a lower price.

Opens Nov 13 - AT&T PARK
San Francisco > Buy tickets
Opens Jan 22 - Taylor Street Bridge
San Jose > Buy tickets

Thanks in advance for sharing this epic journey to a mysterious island and through a powerful acrobatic love story.

Purchase regular & VIP tickets here.

* Valid on PL1, 2 & 3 tickets only. Certain fees apply. May not be combined with any other offer or promotion. All sales are final, no refunds or exchanges. Not valid on previously purchased tickets. While quantities last. Offer ends March 2, 2014.
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DEADLINE TO SUMBIT ARTICLES FOR E-MAGAZINE, IS THE LAST FRIDAY OF THE MONTH NOTE: ARTICLES AND SPECIAL DATES APPEARING IN THE VAM ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE.

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