Through Jan. 2 – Winter Wonderland – From the giant gondola towering 10 stories to the classic carousel, families are traditionally attracted to the festive arcade of rides and attractions during the holiday season. $3.50 per ride or $15 for an all-day unlimited ride pass, Paseo de San Antonio between Market and Second Streets and Park Ave. between Market St. and Almaden Blvd., for operating hours and more info. (info@winterwonderlandsj.com)

Through Jan 11 – Hawaiian Airlines / Kristi Yamaguchi Downtown Ice  The holiday atmosphere of ice skating can be found at the Downtown Ice rink at Circle of Palms in the heart of downtown San Jose. Featuring the remarkable “Halo” light show that returns for its second year. $13-$17, for more info visit http://sjdowntown.com/downtownice/

Great news! Your digital files for SVCA Saratoga 2014 is ready and waiting. Click on this link to get your zip file: http://www.smugmug.com/downloads/190ded46106369427dae2587203 (172.58 MB)

Thanks and enjoy!
Join us for the biggest networking event of the year!

Celebrate the top players in Silicon Valley while enjoying the best local food, wine and art the South Bay has to offer.

Our annual gala celebrates all the amazing people and companies that have been featured in Business Journal lists throughout the year and who are now part of our 2015 Book of Lists.

January 28th
6:30 - 9:00 pm
San Jose Museum of Modern Art
110 S. Market Street
San Jose

Fantasy of Lights is a 1.5 mile drive-through holiday lights and display entertainment extravaganza for the whole family. Now in its 16th season, Fantasy of Lights continues to be the premier holiday lights spectacular in Northern California. The mostly animated larger-than-life displays, the special sounds of holiday music piped through your own car radio and the sights and sounds of an erupting Volcano in the dangerously fun Dinosaur Den, Santa Shooting Hoops, a pen of Playful Penguins, blazing Pirate Ship cannons, Tunnels of Lights, and winking, Twinkling Trees will have you “oohing and aahing” throughout the ride. See all this and so much more! (View here for Photos) (View here for Videos). Want to volunteer at Fantasy of Lights? View here for available dates, volunteer requirements and sign-up details.

ADMISSION
$15 - per Vehicle
$25 - per Vehicle 10-25 guests (no discounts)
$50 - Commercial & School Buses (no discounts)
Cash, Visa or MasterCard accepted, no Debit Cards

Fantasy of Lights Walk-Thru Night and MIX 106.5 NIGHT • Saturday, December 6th, 5:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Meet Pope and Marla from MIX 106.5 Morning Show and receive your free holiday CD while supplies last!
Bring a donation of canned goods or a cash/check contribution benefitting Second Harvest Food Bank. View here for more details about this year’s walk-thru night!
Discover Silicon Valley Arts & Entertainment
at
LiveSV™
A program of Silicon Valley Creates

Tis' the season to be jolly because Santa’s not the only thing coming to town! This December enchants us with various musical events along with a chance to get an inside look at the world of the MythBusters! Be sure to visit LiveSV.com to look for more exciting events!

MythBusters fans now get to join Adam and Jamie on stage as they perform live from the San Jose City National Civic. The MythBusters Behind the Myths Tour is a family-friendly event, appropriate for all ages!
Date: December 18, 2014
Location: San Jose City National Civic
Cost: $65-$85
For more information, call (408) 792-4111 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/44182113/MythBusters_Behind_the_Myths_Tour

Whether a fan of video games or music, everyone can enjoy Super Soul Bros. – Video Game Music. San Jose Jazz offers us a new twist on the video game music that we know and love.
Date: December 26, 2014
Location: San Pedro Square Market
Cost: Free!
For more information call (408) 288-7557 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/44183401/Super_Soul_Bros_Video_Game_Music

What better way to spend New Year’s Eve than to celebrate it with the alternative rock band Cake? Celebrate the band’s approaching 20th anniversary this end of the year!
Date: December 31, 2014
Location: San Jose City National Civic
Cost: $60-$75
For more information call (408) 792-4111 or visit http://www.livesv.com/event/detail/441877557/Cake

Submitted by, Nicole Bermudez & Eric Scanlan (Interns at SV Creates)

Santana Row celebrates the Jewish Festival of Lights with Kosher treats, entertainment and activities that include decorating dreidels, Jewish story time, arts & crafts and the lighting of the Menorah. The evening is co-hosted with the Jewish Federation of Silicon Valley and The PJ Library. The celebration will take place from 4:00-6:00pm in Park Valencia on December 17th!
“Does Automation Make Us Dumb?”

Nicolas Carr in his article with this heading in the Saturday/Sunday 11/22/14 WSJ issue alludes to this statement. His summary then makes the following observation: “Computers are taking over the kinds of knowledge work long considered the preserve of well educated, well trained professionals.”

Can we, the professionals, substantiate what Mr. Carr states? Various innovations in the hospitality industry appear to agree:

- Hotel Indigo, part of the Inter-Continental Hotels Group has launched a new guest service they call the “Neighborhood Guide”, an interactive touch screen that will be installed in hotel lobbies across the system. Much like a virtual concierge, the display allows guests to look up local attractions, restaurant recommendations and interact with guests from other properties around the world. Recommendations aren’t copied from guide books but curated from hotel staff – everyone from the bartender to the room attendant contributes. Virtual concierge services was pioneered, among others, by the Hyatt hotel brand which launched a dedicated Twitter concierge service in 2009, Marriott its virtual mobile check in last year, allowing guests to bypass the front desk and proceed directly to their room. (By our very own Anna Morris)

- UTRip.com acts as a virtual concierge to help you plan a day-to-day itinerary based on your travel style. There are two ways to use it: a) begin at the destination(s) page for a great overview of the city Trip Profile selector for suggestions, choosing “First Timer”, “Returning Traveler”, “Luxury Traveler” or “Backpacker”, the build your own.

- Business Travel Executive magazine in its Sept. 2014 issue mentions the industry’s first “Robotic Butler”. Aloft Hotels at its Cupertino, CA property, has introduced A.L.O. the first robotic butler to field a robot for both front and back of house duties. A.L.O. will make multiple guest deliveries, communicate effortlessly with guests and navigate throughout the property – including elevators – with ease. Professionally “dressed” in a custom shrink-wrapped vinyl collated uniform and nametag, A.L.O. accepts tweets as tips.

- Telecommunications have experienced equally significant upgrades from free calling, W-Fi access and applications like SKYPE allowing for face-to-face interaction. *

Referring again to Mr. Carr’s article, here is what he had to say on the subject of “dumbing”: “When systems designers begin a project, they first consider the capabilities of the computers, with an eye toward delegating as much as the work possible to the software. The human operator is assigned whatever if left over, with usually consists of relatively passive chores such as entering data, following templates and monitoring displays” and continues: “This philosophy traps people om a vicious cycle of de-skilling. By isolating them from hard work, it dulls their skills and increases the odds that they will make mistakes. When those mistakes happen, designers respond by seeking to further restrict people’s responsibilities – spurring a new round of de-skilling” and concludes: “In “human-centered automation”, the talents of people take precedence. Systems are designed to keep the human operator in what engineers call ‘The decision loop” – the continuing process of action, feedback and judgment making. . That keeps workers attentive and engaged and promotes the kind of challenging practice that strengthens skills.”

I once took exception to the fact that in order to get the Concierge Association’s “Golden Key” in recognition of five years it takes to get that recognition in the hospitality industry. As I see it, getting the “Golden Key” is recognition that excellent service, up-to-date knowledge and ancillary skills such as languages will always slow down the automation’s “dumbing process” much to the satisfaction of the most demanding guests, be the traveling on business or leisure.

Your comments are always welcome
Gus Holweger, Contributing Editor
gusholweger@comcast.net
Valley Access Magazine
Silicon Valley Concierge Association

27th Annual Lighted Boat Parade and Fireworks Saturday, December 13th 2014

Sausalito On The Waterfront

Event Time: 5:00PM - 11:00PM
Food Trucks/Bar: 5:00PM - 10:00PM
Boat Parade: 6:00PM - 7:30PM
Fireworks: 7:30PM - 7:45PM
Band: 7:45PM - 10:30PM
Dear Friend and Colleague,

The National Association for Catering and Events (NACE), is thrilled to offer a scholarship to the Mission College Hospitality Program and support the NACE National Foundation at their 2015 Winter Gala. The Winter Gala will take place at the Hilton San Jose, on Thursday, January 8th.

Our benefactors this year share in the NACE mission and we are excited to be supporting them through our silent auction at the Winter Gala. So at this time, we hope you will share our passion for the hospitality industry and the growth of our community by donating to our silent auction. Auction items can be yours or someone else’s business service or product, tickets to sports or theater; hotel overnights or airline gift cards to name a few ideas. It can even be a monetary donation that we can put directly towards the scholarship.

To make your donation to the Silicon Valley NACE Winter Gala’s Silent Auction, fill out the enclosed form and send in the Gift Note / Certificate / Card. If it is something that we need to pick up or if you have questions please contact Ross Berggren at ross@cateredtoo.com or Gigi Santa Ines at 2229gigi@gmail.com or (408)796-2197.

NACE is the oldest and largest catering association in the world, encompassing all aspects of the catering and events industry. It is dedicated to promoting career success for its members and the professionalism of the industry.

NACE offers educational programs, professional certification, chapter initiatives, community service projects, and award recognition to name just a few of the benefits. Thank you in advance for your generous support to Silicon Valley’s National Association for Catering and Events.

If you are interested in attending the Winter Gala, please contact Amy Blach at(408)886-3614 or amy.blach@blach.com.

Kind regards,
Amy Blach
Silicon Valley NACE
2015 Winter Gala Chairperson

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Santa Cruz Holiday Lights Train

November 28, 29
December 6, 7, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22, & 23

Departs from the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk

Vintage excursion cars, adorned with thousands of colorful lights, roll through the streets of Santa Cruz as passengers lend their voices to holiday carols, sip hot spiced cider and listen to musical entertainment while Santa visits the little ones, or the young at heart! Continue the merriment with your choice of arcade games, mini-golf or laser tag at Santa’s Kingdom at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk. Bring the whole family for festive fun. Happy Holidays!

More Info at roaringcamp.com

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Film and Photography

The organizers may film and photograph the event. These materials will be used online and offline to promote Silicon Valley Concierge Association and to advertise future events. By attending the event you agree to appear in such films and photographs.

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