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Silicon Valley Reads explores wellness, longevity with 2027 book picks

Community engagement program's theme is "Mind, Body and Beyond"



Silicon Valley Reads' 2027 selections for the theme "Mind, Body and Beyond" are "Body Electric: How to Rewire Your Tech-Tired Life for Health, Vitality, and Real Connection," a nonfiction book by

Manoush Zomorodi'; "In the Shadow of the Mountain: A Memoir of Courage" by Silvia Vasquez-Lavado; and "The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife," a novel by Anna Johnston. (Sal PIzarro/Bay Area News Group)



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Silicon Valley Reads will explore wellness and longevity next year with the theme, "Mind, Body and Beyond," and three book selections that tackle different aspects of that topic.

The book picks are "Body Electric: How to Rewire Your Tech-Tired Life for Health, Vitality, and Real Connection," a nonfiction book by Manoush Zomorodi about how our modern, screen-filled life has a physical impact on us; "The Borrowed Life of Frederick Fife," a novel by Anna Johnston about what happens when an 82-year-old man on the brink of homelessness is mistaken for a resident at an Australian nursing home; and "In the Shadow of the Mountain: A Memoir of Courage" by Silvia Vasquez-Lavado that recounts the author guiding a group of young people to Mount Everest Base Camp.

"The books range in ideas from digital wellness, the science of movement, longevity, and resilience after trauma," said Jennifer Weeks, Santa Clara County Librarian and a Silicon Valley Reads co-chair. "These topics will spark important conversations and serve as an anchor to meaningful programs across our libraries."

The Silicon Valley Reads season will open with a kickoff event featuring all three authors Jan. 28 at the Visual and Performing Arts Center at De Anza College in Cupertino, which I will again moderate. That will be followed by more than 200 free public programs in February and March at libraries and other venues throughout Santa Clara County.

The full schedule is expected to be available in January at www.siliconvalleyreads.org, where you can also find a list of companion books for younger readers on the same theme.

San Jose City Librarian Jill Bourne, who is also a Silicon Valley Reads co-chair, said the wellness theme is very appropriate for a library-based community engagement program.

“Public libraries have evolved into vital hubs of community wellness and human connection,” Bourne said. ” ‘Mind, Body, and Beyond’ offers an inspiring invitation to explore whole-person health. It aligns directly with our mission to provide resources, safe spaces, and educational opportunities that empower everyone in our valley to thrive at every stage of life.”

MEMORIES OF DOLORES: Lots of people have been sharing their memories of meeting or working with labor leader Dolores Huerta, who died Wednesday at age 96. That includes San Jose resident Robert Wright who was a young man in 1969 when Huerta came to San Jose to speak to Bay Area grape boycott organizers.

Wright's job was to answer the phones, sort the mail and sweep the floor. Although Huerta arrived early, he didn't expect to be introduced to her and went about his job, which included setting up 40 folding chairs before everyone arrived. After people took their seats, he stood in the back as Huerta began speaking — actually scolding the organizers there for not working hard enough and losing focus.

Wright remembers her pausing, perhaps realizing she needed to provide some encouragement, pointing at him and saying, "Look, all we have to do is work as hard as this young man, and we will win! That's all we have to do!"

He doesn't remember much that happened after that and the next morning went back to his work routine. "I felt pretty good knowing that when Dolores Huerta was upset at the whole world, that it didn't include me," he said.

NEXT CHAPTER IN PALO ALTO HISTORY: Heavy rain last winter resulted in unexpected damage to the Palo Alto Museum's planned historic home, the 1932 Roth Buiding, which had undergone a $13 million renovation before Mother Nature decided to do her bit. In September, Palo Alto Museum CEO Marguerite Hancock announced the grand opening opening would be postponed until April 2027 and instead the museum would open with a series of six pop-up events.

The first, Palo Alto Rocks, was held Oct. 10 at Heritage Park with music rooted in Palo Alto: The R&B sounds of Sheryl B and her Stellar 5 followed by Palo Alto classic rockers Past Curfew.

The page turns this weekend to "Chapter Two: Palo Alto Stories," with a first look at two inaugural exhibits: "I AM PALO ALTO," an interactive media installation with a digital docent, Pam; and "Doña Juana Briones," on the 19th century pioneering entrepreneur. The museum at 300 Homer Ave. will be open 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday, and admission is free. Get more information at www.paloaltomuseum.org.