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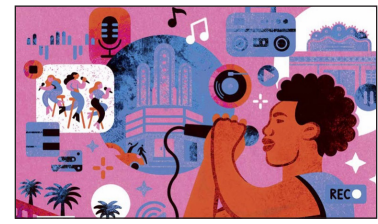
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The newspaper of Silicon Valley

# The Mercury News

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## NATIONAL PARK

# \$32M UPGRADES WOW AT YOSEMITE



PHOTOS BY DAI SUGANO — STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Visitors Evan Baum of Menlo Park, left, his wife, Meera Oak, center, and Baum's sister-in-law, Jackie Baum from New York, pose for a selfie Tuesday at the bottom of Bridalveil Fall, where a \$19.3 million upgrade project was recently completed.

## Visitors discover new amenities at Bridalveil Fall and visitor center

**By Paul Rogers**  
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Before they see Half Dome, Yosemite Falls, giant sequoias or other jaw-dropping attractions, the first stop for millions of visitors as they enter Yosemite National Park is Bridalveil Fall. Yet for generations, the amenities at the base of the thundering, 620-foot waterfall on the western edge of Yosemite Valley have been a raging disappointment: Foul-smelling pit toilets dating back to the 1960s, crumbling asphalt pathways, a crammed dirt parking lot and narrow, slippery trails. But now all of that is a bygone memory. Crews have finished a \$19.3 million renovation, constructing a larger parking lot,



Visitor Lars Weber from Germany looks at Bridalveil Fall from one of the renovated trails at Yosemite National Park on Tuesday. Bathrooms and parking also were updated.

modern flush toilets, interpretive signs, viewing platforms, wooden boardwalks, and wider hiking trails with more accessible features designed in the classic granite and timber national park style of the 1930s.

The project is one of two major upgrades that visitors will discover this summer at Yosemite, along with a new \$12.5 million visitor center built in the heart of the valley near the Village Store. Both the falls and the

new Welcome Center were funded by federal dollars, and matched with \$12.2 million in private donations from the Yosemite Conservancy, a San Francisco-based nonprofit group that for years has helped improve the park's features. "Yosemite is a world-class destination," said Frank Dean, president of the conservancy, and a former Yosemite ranger. "But it gets a lot of visitation, so things can tend to get worn down. You want to make a good first impression and do it well. The park just needs some TLC sometimes." At Bridalveil Fall, construction crews expanded the parking lot by 24 spaces to hold 80 cars. The infamous compost toilets with four stalls were torn down

YOSEMITE » PAGE 5

## EMPLOYMENT

# Big Tesla job cuts planned in Bay Area

2,700-plus layoffs, many at electric car plant in Fremont, are expected to start June 14

**By George Avalos**  
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**FREMONT** » Tesla is slashing more than 2,700 Bay Area jobs, including major layoffs at the company's electric vehicle factory in Fremont. The staffing reductions at the Austin-based electric car maker — which has its engineering headquarters in Palo Alto — represent the largest single round of job cuts by a tech company since the tech sector began its current series of Bay Area layoffs in 2022. The cuts come as Tesla is mired in a slump that is affecting electric vehicle makers worldwide. They also hit as CEO Elon Musk, one of the richest men in the world, faces increasing scrutiny for his controversial and provocative views on U.S. election integrity, White supremacy and more. "The electric vehicle adoption rate globally is under pressure," Musk said during a recent earnings call with Wall Street analysts regarding Tesla's first-quarter financial results. "A lot of other auto manufacturers are pulling back on electric vehicles and pursuing plug-in hybrids instead." Tesla will chop a total of 2,753 jobs in the Bay Area, according to official WARN notices the company sent to the state Employment Development Department. An estimated 1,452 of the layoffs are slated to occur at an address that corresponds to the site of the Fremont vehicle factory, one of the WARN letters shows. Layoffs are also planned at multiple other locations in Fremont and Palo Alto, the filings with the state indicate. None of the layoffs affected unionized workers, according to the WARN notices. The job cuts were all described by Tesla as permanent. The company didn't respond to a request for comment about the situation. Here is where Tesla is cutting jobs in the Bay Area: 

- Fremont, 2,267 layoffs. These include staffing reductions at Tesla facilities on Fremont Boulevard, Kato Road, Warm Springs Road and Page Avenue.
- Palo Alto, 486 job cuts. These include layoffs at Tesla sites on Page Mill Road, Hanover Street, El Camino Real and at the Stanford Shopping Center.

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## DOCTORS

# Newsom: Circumvent Arizona abortion ban

**By Sophie Austin**  
Associated Press  
Report for America

**SACRAMENTO** » Arizona doctors could give their patients abortions in California under a proposal announced Wednesday by Gov. Gavin Newsom to circumvent a ban on nearly all abortions in that state. It would apply only to doctors licensed in good standing in Arizona and their patients, and last only through the end of November. Arizona's 1864 law banning nearly all abortions except if the mother's life is in jeopardy takes effect June 8. Newsom said protecting access to abortions is "just about basic decency" and "respect for women and girls." "This Arizona law is the

first border-state law that will directly impact the state of California," the Democratic governor said. "Rather than just acknowledging that fate and future, we're trying to get ahead of this law." Newsom joined the California Legislative Women's Caucus and advocates to announce the proposal. Lawmakers called the Arizona law "draconian" and said California had an obligation to get involved. The bill would need to pass by a two-thirds vote in each house of the Legislature before reaching Newsom's desk. After he signs it, it would go into effect immediately. The Arizona House on Wednesday, after two failed attempts, passed a repeal of

ABORTION » PAGE 5

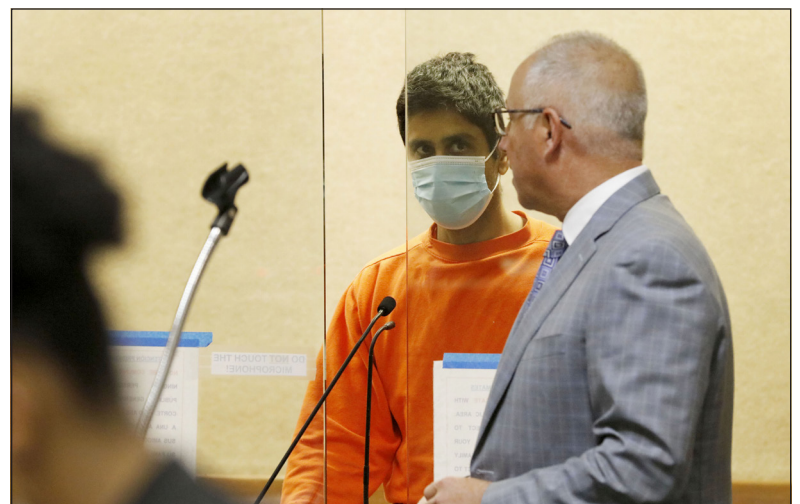
## TESLA CRASH AT DEVIL'S SLIDE

# Hearing examines driver's mental state

Father whose car plunged off cliff with family might enter psychiatric program

**By Jakob Rodgers**  
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**REDWOOD CITY** » A Pasadena radiologist was hearing footsteps and suffering from delusions about the nation's fentanyl crisis, the war in Ukraine and the possibility of his children being kidnapped around the time his family's Tesla — which he was driving — plunged off Highway 1 last year near Devil's Slide, a psychologist testified Wednesday. Dharmesh Patel's psychosis, and his potential recovery, took center stage at a hearing Wednesday to determine whether the doctor will be admitted into a mental health diversion program rather than face trial on charges of attempting to murder his wife and two children in the January 2023 crash. If a judge grants Patel's request, the charges against him could be dismissed over the next couple of



DAVID G. MCINTYRE — NEW YORK POST

Dharmesh Patel, here with defense attorney Joshua Bentley in February 2023, would be a good candidate for a mental health diversion program, an expert testified Wednesday in a hearing in Redwood City. years, after he completes a court-ordered treatment program. On Wednesday, a clinical and forensic psychologist said Patel was a good candidate for the diversion program because he was a low risk for harming anyone else after showing strong progress over the past year. "I see him as someone who is very motivated and amenable to

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