

# Los Altos Hills

Cover photo provided by Nikki Andrews

## Nikki Andrews Stays on Board



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# Nikki Andrews Stays on Board

By Abbie Burgess | Photos provided by Nikki Andrews

Watching the competition at Exposure was an event highlight for Nikki.



Nikki's work is sold at Simply Smashing in Campbell.



Los Altos Hills resident Nikki Frelier Andrews is a practicing artist who “kind of fell into designing skateboards.” Inspiration struck in 2021 when her son’s birthday wish was for supplies to paint his skate decks—the flat board that you stand on when skateboarding. Nikki realized these blank boards were the perfect canvas. She asked herself, “Why am I not putting my own artwork on these?” Since that day, she started incorporating her art onto skate decks and created her own line: NFA Boards. “My son loves to tell people that he is the reason that I started my business. It makes me a proud mom that he’s proud of the endeavor.”

Nikki is no newbie to wheels herself. She grew up on skates of all kinds—skateboards, roller skates and ice skates—as well as surfing and snowboarding. She even became a professional roller derby girl, Tricky

Nikki 6, with Peninsula Roller Girls in Redwood City. She now shows her support for the organization as a proud sponsor. “I grew up in this culture and now that my children are into skating and other alternative sports, it feels natural to start building a brand for new up-and-coming skaters,” she explains. “I personally feel that the skateboarding market is still not fully representing how eclectic its community is.”

She hopes that her work will help fill some of that gap. The mission of NFA boards is to empower youth through skateboarding by building confidence, encouraging physical activity and breaking down stereotypes. It’s no surprise that Nikki, who has a long and prolific history of public outreach and community leadership, is using her work to give back. Proceeds from skateboard sales go to fund skate camps and after-school programs for under-resourced youth.

One of the highlights of 2022 for Nikki was showing her work at a booth at Exposure, a female skateboarding competition that also serves as a benefit for survivors of domestic violence. Over 170 skaters from around the world come to Encinitas for the opportunity to share their skateboarding skills on a global stage.

At the event, Nikki received encouraging feedback about her designs. "I was hugged and thanked by a woman who used to skate back in the '70s, for what I am trying to do for the industry. Especially since my proceeds go towards funding after-school programs and clinics for under-resourced youth."

Having the opportunity to network and meet more people in the industry was fun, but so was watching the competition. "I was so impressed by seeing all these young women ripping it! There were kids as young as five years old dropping into an insane vert ramp and killing it! The talent there made me so proud that competitions like this are able to promote some



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amazing female skater talent," she says. "What a great event to be a part of."

In Los Altos Hills, Nikki envisions building a skate park for the community and she welcomes support from anyone who is interested in seeing this idea come to fruition.

Another dream of hers is to partner with Skate Like a Girl and other local nonprofits on a program that would incorporate both art classes and skate clinics. "Individuals could learn more about art and new tricks or fine-tune their skating in a safe and empowering environment," she says. The project had to be postponed due to a lack of resources, including vetted female or non-binary skate teachers and mentors on the Peninsula. But she has hope for the future. The program is ready and waiting to launch when funding and teachers can be found.

Nikki's desire to make a difference through art and skating didn't stop in the local community. At her ranch in Montana, she was inspired to give

back to the community there. She happened upon an organization whose mission aligned with her work and she immediately knew it would be a great partnership. Big Sky Youth Empowerment in Bozeman provides opportunities for vulnerable teenagers in the Gallatin Valley to experience success and become contributing members of their community through group mentorship and experiential adventures," she explains. Sponsors such as Nikki support programs that help participants try skiing, snowboarding, hiking, rock climbing, whitewater rafting, paddleboarding, community service, learning life skills, and now, skateboarding!"

Nikki has also extended her impact in Montana by funding snowboarding scholarships for children who would not otherwise be able to afford to snowboard in Big Sky.

Nikki shares that her own children, Max and Mia, love taking skateboarding lessons from Veronica Saint Jane, who has "really helped them to take off and believe in themselves." As a child, Veronica's skateboarding journey was made possible by organizations similar to Big Sky Youth Empowerment. Now Veronica, whom Nikki met through the nonprofit organization Skate Like a Girl, gives to the skate community through many different organizations in the North Bay.

Skateworks in Los Altos was one of the first shops to carry Nikki's skateboards. They can also be found at Simply Smashing in Campbell, Circle-A Skateboards and Coffee in San Jose, Bill's Wheels in Santa Cruz and Duke's in Belgrade, Montana.

Nikki and her husband, Jon Andrews, are enjoying traveling again. They celebrated their anniversary on a private island off of Belize. In October, Nikki participated in a trip to Israel through Max and Mia's school. "I really fell in love with Israel, the beautiful country, people and food!"

When they are at home in Los Altos Hills, Nikki and Jon enjoy date nights and family outings to Los Altos Grill, ASA, and Chef Chu's. She adds, "And, I have to watch my trips to Alys Grace in downtown Los Altos. Their shop is addictive!"

The family is building a new home in Los Altos Hills, where they look forward to having more space to create art and new memories.

View Nikki's skateboards and her other work at [www.nicolefrelie.com](http://www.nicolefrelie.com).



Max and Mia Andrews at Menlo Skate Park.

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