



**Sunrise Mall Faces
Uncertain Future**

PAGE 2

**North Ridge Country Club
launches \$3.5 million
renovation plan**

PAGE 8



Citrus Heights Messenger

"Written by the people, for the people"

VOLUME 7 • ISSUE 08

Serving the City of Citrus Heights and Sacramento County

APRIL 21, 2017

**COURT OF HONOR AWARDS
EAGLE RANK TO SCOUTS**



PAGE 3

**SMALL THEATRE
BRINGS BIG ACTION
TO "THE HEIGHTS"**



PAGE 9

**MEMORABLE PEOPLE
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PAGE 9



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Block Party, Rock Party



Pablo Cruise is scheduled to be the headliner band for Citrus Heights' 20-year Celebration. Photos courtesy City of Citrus Heights

Story by Jacqueline Fox

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA - The City of Citrus Heights will cap a its multi-month celebration of 20 years of cityhood that kicked off in January with a community Block Party set for Saturday, June 3, and the festivities will include 1970s pop-rock band, Pablo Cruise as a musical headliner, as well as an Eagles cover band, classic car show, an army of food trucks, a beer garden, community group performances, a giant kids entertainment zone and more.

The city's party for itself and the community it serves is a free, family friendly event, and kicks off at 3 p.m. at City Hall with a flag salute and opening

ceremony featuring the Citrus Heights Marching Band, singing of the national anthem by the Mesa Verde High School Choir, colors presented by the Citrus Heights Police Honor Guard, and remarks from local and regional elected officials and dignitaries.

Then, on to the party: stretching from the city's doorstep east to Van Maren Park will be a long line of community nonprofit and civic groups, as well as representation from the city itself offering information to attendees, ways to connect and plenty of giveaways. Food trucks, a classic car show with more than 100 entries, and live entertainment will be located on most of the area leading to and inside



Van Maren Park on the main stage, as well as the community stage on Stock Ranch Road.

Attendance is expected to be between 3,000 and 4,000 and the party promises to serve as a memorable marker for Citrus Heights residents and city officials alike who will turn out to celebrate 20 years of independence from the county of Sacramento. "This is going to be a fantastic night, a terrific way to celebrate

two decades of evolution as a city," said Citrus Heights Mayor Jeff Slowey. "I can't think of a better way to commemorate our cityhood. I'm sure we'll see between 3,000 and 4,000 people come out and it's going to be a great day."

To mitigate concerns from residents near Van Maren Park about noise, parking and security, Mayor Slowey said no stone

Continued on page 3

Taste of Citrus Heights Fundraiser to Support Police PTSD Training

Story by Jacqueline Fox

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - More than 30 eateries, wineries and craft brewers from across the city, as well as some heavy-hitting talent are preparing to serve up an evening to remember at this year's Taste of Citrus Heights Fundraiser, with the bulk of the proceeds going to serve the city's police force.

The first Taste Of Citrus Heights event produced by the GFWC Women's Club, the event is set for Friday, April 28 at the Citrus Heights Community Center. Restaurants from all corners of the city will be dishing out samples savory and sweet, including Sammy's Restaurant and Bar, Taste of Tuscany, Crepes & Burgers and Ben's Huli Huli Chicken and Hawaiian Café. There also will be wine tastings and craft beers on tap from Direct Cellars, Hoppy Brewing Company, Wildside Hard Cider, and Knee Deep Brewing Company, among others. "I'm very excited about this event," said

Darla Buechner, GFWC Sutter district president. Buechner explained that, as president, she was given the opportunity to create a fundraiser of her choosing and a beneficiary. As the wife of a retired police officer and mother of two daughters now in law enforcement, the issue of post-traumatic stress disorder for officers, first-responders in particular, is one that hits close to home. She decided on a "taste of" event for the fun, but also knew it could generate the funds needed to support the costs of a professional P.T.S.D. training program for officers, which the Citrus Heights department was already planning.

"I know what it's like to have a family member impacted by what happens as a first responder and I wanted to do something to help other officers," said Buechner.

The first \$5,000 generated from the fundraiser, she said, will pay for a planned mandatory training program for Citrus Heights police officers and their family members on P.T.S.D. It will be facilitated by

renowned trainer Dr. Kevin M. Gilmartin, PhD, author of "Emotional Survival for Law Enforcement."

In addition to sponsorships and ticket sales, costs for the training will be offset by a \$1,000 grant the club received from the Citrus Heights Rotary Club, which will be used to pay for the barbecue meal the department will be cooking up on the day of the training.

In addition to the food and drink, there will be some stellar entertainment on tap, including a performance by local comedienne Kristen Frisk, and Angelique Bianca, resident DJ and musical director at the Hard Rock Hotel in Las Vegas. Bianca's brother, explained Buechner, is a Citrus Heights police sergeant.

"Obviously, it's a very important cause for her too," said Buechner.

Tickets for the event are \$35 per person and include all you can eat and drink. There also will be a silent auction and raffle prizes. ★

Veteran's Center to Celebrate Armed Forces Day with Spaghetti and Wine

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - The Citrus Heights Veterans Community Center will be honoring Armed Forces Day with a spectacular Spaghetti Feed and Wine Tasting fundraiser on Saturday, May 20, 2017 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

This is the first official event to be held at the old Sylvan school house, located at 6921 Sylvan Road, since it became a safe space for veterans in 2013. The newly renovated outdoor patio area will be transformed into an Italian café along with seating inside. Live music will be provided by Doug Ellington. A local veteran and Americana music composer and guitar player for over 45 years, Ellington will be bringing listeners his renditions of classic tunes from rock, folk, country, blues and more. Wine tasting will be provided by Sacramento wine broker Bill Tobey. There will also be a silent auction.

Food will be provided by the instructors/chefs from the Culinary program at American River College. They will offer traditional spaghetti and meatballs or a meatless spaghetti, and salad with homemade salad dressing. Freshly made bread and cookies complete the menu.

The Citrus Heights Veterans Community Center is open to all veterans, Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., with special lunches on Tuesday and Thursday. Veterans enjoy a safe place to come and enjoy refreshments, games and camaraderie, but mainly to get together with those share their military experiences and others who understand and support them.

Funds raised will be used for a variety of needs at the Center including continued renovations and upkeep on the 155-year-old building, and other basic necessities.

Tickets are \$15.00. Seating is limited so please order soon.

Contact Jean at 726-7876 or go to 'Veterans Community Center' on Facebook for more information. ★

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Sunrise Mall Faces Impact of Store Closures, Local and Cultural Shopping Shifts

Story and Photo
by Jacqueline Fox

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - With new management and development plans in play, as well as the closing of several smaller retailers and potential closure of Sears, Macy's and even JCPenney looming, all eyes are on the future of Sunrise Mall, which, like many enclosed malls nationwide, is struggling for survival due in part to growing competition from online retailers, but also demand for so-called "power centers" offering outdoor shopping, dining and entertainment "experiences."

Enclosed shopping malls, many built in the 1970s, have been shutting down for several years, earning the moniker of "Dead Malls" as their big-box anchor stores like Sears, Macy's and JCPenney have packed up and left due to shrinking foot traffic amidst rising online retail competition, most currently from companies such as Amazon. The three stores announced a collective closure of some 300 locations this year with more to follow. Additionally, Kmart announced it will close 108 stores.

Although Sears, Macy's and JCPenney remain open at Sunrise Mall, the mass closures, many industry followers predict, have essentially pre-written their company obituaries. To combat diminishing in-store sales, JCPenney restructured its focus in late 2016, moving in on Sears' territory with the announcement it would begin selling home appliances in time for the holiday shopping season. JCP's Sephora "shop-in-shops" and coupon-driven sales are believed to be fueling strong quarterly sales for the company, but it's not clear whether the push into appliances can have any long-term impact.

Big box retailers aside, a



"What I can say is that I'm very excited by what I've seen so far," said Carpenter. She pointed out that what does happen next for Sunrise Mall will impact, not only its retailers and their employees, but all BID stakeholders.

number of smaller stores in Sunrise Mall have also closed over the last few years, leaving prime locations, two adjacent to Sears and as many as three located in the mall's entry-way, vacant. Most recently, Pennsylvania-based teen retailer Rue 21 announced plans to shutter 400 of its stores due to declining foot traffic. The Sunrise Mall location is currently in liquidation mode and believed to be set for closure within the month.

"We don't how long we have to stay open exactly, probably about a month," said one sales associate at Rue 21 who did not want to disclose her name.

It's not only that shoppers have stopped spending their money in stores and now buy everything online. In fact, the decline of the enclosed mall has been ongoing for years nationwide, as

many are being replaced with so-called "power centers," offering upscale and fast-casual eateries, multi-cinema movie theaters, outdoor strolling space and even park-like play areas for families, typically anchored by retail darlings Target and Best Buy.

Take the Westfield Galleria at Roseville, for example, one of the largest and busiest malls in Northern California with 240 shops and restaurants, which include high-end stores like Tiffany & Co., Nordstrom, Juicy Couture and Lucky Brand Jeans, supported by the adjacent Fountains at Roseville, touted online as a "Lifestyle Center" offering shops and scores of restaurants.

"Things have definitely been on the downward trend here," says Mathew Kramer, who manages a small retail store in

Sunrise Mall but requested not to identify the store per company policy. Kramer has worked at Sunrise for nine years, but also remembers when the mall was built, back when it was the place to meet up with friends. Millennials, however, and those in the generation behind them have significantly different designs on how to spend their money and the experience they have doing it. Apparently, so do their parents.

"I grew up riding my bike to this mall, or walking to the bowling alley across the street for field trips," said Kramer. "It used to be the place I'd go with my friends, but now everyone wants to shop online or they go to Roseville to be outside. They want to have that whole entertainment experience."

New York-based Spinoso Real

Estate Group took over management of the mall in 2016 and is reported to be working on long-range development plans for Sunrise. The company's web site lists the development of retail power centers among its project resume.

Calls to Spinoso's corporate offices for comment on its plans for Sunrise, as well as requests for data on first quarter occupancy rates and foot traffic were not returned. But it doesn't take hard numbers to confirm the slowdown. On any given day the vast majority of parking spots not directly in front of the main entrance to the mall on Sunrise Boulevard sit vacant. In addition to the half a dozen or so closed shops inside, several retail kiosks dotting the mall's center corridor also are vacant.

Kathilynn Carpenter is

executive director of the Sunrise Marketplace Business Improvement District (BID), which is comprised of some 400 stores, restaurants and services located along the Sunrise Boulevard and Greenback Lane business corridor, including the mall. She agreed Sunrise is struggling amidst a changing demand for something beyond long, enclosed rows of shops and a shift toward online shopping. She is privy to some of the planning for Sunrise and did say "improvements" were involved, but Carpenter declined to elaborate on what those plans look like.

"It is true that many of the retailers are overstocked and now that issue is coming home to roost," said Carpenter. She added that the trend is focused on what she termed "experiential" shopping options, but declined to say if Spinoso was planning on one of its power centers for the mall.

"What I can say is that I'm very excited by what I've seen so far," said Carpenter, before downplaying any wholesale demise of the mall. She pointed out that what does happen next for Sunrise Mall will impact, not only its retailers and their employees, but all BID stakeholders.

"I can tell you that everyone who is a member of the BID has the best interest of the mall mind," Carpenter said.

Citrus Heights City Manager Chris Boyd has said publicly that the city is "retail heavy," adding that Spinoso's long-term plans for the mall are going to be a game-changer that may potentially involve a mixed-use development with housing and retail.

On Monday, Boyd declined to discuss Spinoso's plans. "I've got nothing new to add yet, but I know the new owners have some exciting ideas on the table," he said. ★

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Event sponsored by:

For more information contact:
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Mark Creffield

Executive Director

Three Chamber Members Awarded SMUD Contracts: At our Monthly Membership Luncheon in March,

SMUD representatives presented details on new money-saving programs for small and medium businesses, and encouraged Chamber members to register for SMUD's Supplier Education and Economic Development (SEED) Program. "Each year SMUD spends between \$100 million and \$300 million, and 20% or more is contracted with local small businesses," explained SEED Program Advocate Jeannie Robinson. "That's potentially \$40,000,000 to \$65,000,000 to local small businesses annually." Last month, three current Citrus Heights Chamber

members who are qualified SEED Vendors were awarded catering contracts that could be worth up to \$82,000 each. For information on how your business might qualify as a SEED vendor, contact SMUD's Jeannie Robinson at (916) 732-5049.

Mark your calendars and join us for our next Coffee and Networking Connection this Tuesday, April 25 th at Laffite Music Center located at 8089 Madison Avenue from 8:00am to 9:00am. Attending this event is a great way to network your business among Chamber members and prospective members. There is no cost to attend this morning networking event. If you are interested in more business exposure, please bring a door prize to this event. Hope to see you there!

This month's featured Chamber committee will spotlight on our Ambassadors. The Ambassadors meet from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. on the 1st Friday of the month in the conference room at the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce office location at 7920 Alta Sunrise

Drive, Suite 100.

The Ambassadors serve as goodwill representatives for the Citrus Heights Chamber and to the community at large. The Ambassador team serve as hosts and friends while helping to promote the Chamber's benefits and services. The Ambassadors promote the development of the Chamber by welcoming new and continuing members to various Chamber events, member functions, and ribbon cutting and grand opening ceremonies.

As always, thank you for taking the time to read our Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce monthly article. Please visit our website at www.chchamber.com, like our Facebook page, and follow us on Twitter. See you next month!

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**For More Information or to Join the Chamber,
Contact us at (916) 722-4545 or Visit our Website www.chchamber.com**

RT Financials Showing Positive Trend for Fiscal Year 2018

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Regional Transit District (Sac RT) has been relentlessly optimizing business practices over the past eight months to bring its financial house in order, and the positive results are very encouraging. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, Sac RT is trending below budget. This has allowed Sac RT to develop a budget for FY 2018 that is expected to be \$1.6 million less than the prior year.

Additionally, by working diligently over the past year with rating agencies, last week Sac RT received great news from Moody's, a bond credit rating service, that upgraded Sac RT's bond rating from "negative" watch to "stable" outlook, which will help Sac RT to issue future bonds at a much better interest rate for regional capital projects. The significant transformation that Sac RT has made in the last year, as well as strong political support and strong board governance, is building up RT's long-term financial stability, which will continue to move Sac RT in a new direction.

Under the direction of Henry Li, General Man-

Regional Transit

ager/CEO, Sac RT committed to strengthening its finances while making the system more clean, safe and convenient for riders. Sac RT has identified innovative revenue sources, strengthened its finances and reduced expenses to fund maintenance and capital investments. By aggressively containing costs and pursuing revenue enhancement opportunities, Sac RT has secured more than \$3 million in operating funding, which helped enhance customer services.

"At a time when many public agencies are increasing budgets, we have been able to reduce ours. We are figuring out innovative ways to do more with less," said Henry Li, General Manager/CEO. "Our number one priority

is the customer, and the ability to reduce the annual budget without cutting service or increasing fares is a huge victory from where Sac RT was a year ago."

Based on these positive trends, Sac RT projects to add to its fund balance for the first time in three years, and build up an emergency cash reserve of \$6 million (with a 2017 year-end goal of \$9 to \$10 million). This will go a long way towards reducing Sac RT's reliance on its line of credit to pay bills, a goal set by the Board of Directors.

By building strong employee and labor relations, Sac RT has been able to identify ways to reduce the annual increases associated with salaries and benefits that continue to offer value to employees, at a sustainable cost. There will only be a small increase in spending in this category for FY 2018, which is expected to be \$1.95 million, or 1.8 percent, a modest amount for an organization that provides over 1,000 jobs to the region.

Source: RT Media

California's Economic Output Outpaces Nation for Fourth Straight Year

By George Runner, BOE

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has grown consistently faster than the nation's as a whole for four straight years. In 2015, the California GDP rose 5.6 percent, while the U.S. GDP increased 3.7 percent (unadjusted for inflation). Also called "economic output," GDP measures the market value of goods, services, and structures that are produced within a particular period, and tends to be related to population, income, spending, employment, housing permits, and other measures of economic activity.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, the New York-Newark-Jersey City metropolitan area led the nation with an economic output of about \$1.603 trillion in 2015. California was represented by two of the top 10 areas: Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim (\$930.8 billion), and San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward (\$431.7 billion). The Los Angeles metropolitan area accounts for 37.9 percent of California's GDP, while the San Francisco Bay Area comprises 17.6 percent. The Sacramento-Roseville region accounts for 4.8 percent (\$118.8 billion). San Jose has been the fastest growing metropolitan

area within California – and the second fastest in the U.S. – with stronger economic growth than 380 of the nation's 382 metropolitan areas in 2015. With growth rates that ranged from 5.0 percent to 10.4 percent over the past five years, the San Jose area had the largest increase in that time frame – 37.6 percent – more than 60 percent higher than the California average gain of 23.1 percent, for a total GDP of more than \$235 billion. The state's second-largest increase was in the Visalia-Porterville area – 32.4 percent – followed by Merced (30.2 percent), Napa (29.6 percent) and Madera (28.1 percent). The Hanford-Corcoran area also finished above the state average (24.2 percent). Both the Chico and Sacramento-Roseville areas had strong showings in 2015, ranking fourth and fifth in the state respectively in GDP growth.

One way to compare economic wellbeing among regions is to calculate inflation-adjusted GDP per capita. Real economic output per capita in the San Jose area was close to twice that of the California average in 2015. Other areas with higher than average per capita real GDP include San Diego, and Napa.

George Runner represents the State Board of Equalization's First District and is a leading advocate for California taxpayers




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ACROSS

1. Trattoria staple
6. *The ____ River, Voyageurs National Park
9. Mowgli's friend Bagheera
13. Grouchy Muppet
14. Simon & Garfunkel, e.g.
15. Echo sounder
16. Doled out cards
17. Singer Yoko
18. Q in PDQ
19. *Home to Devil's Garden
21. *Every ____-grader gets a free pass
23. Family truck?
24. * ____ Royale National Park in Michigan
25. Geological Society of America
28. Reduced Instruction Set Computer
30. Make slightly wet
35. Ice crystals
37. Alice Waters' " ____ Panisse"
39. Apprehensive
40. Deborah Kerr to Yul Brynner's King Mongkut
41. Skeleton leg part
43. Military no-show
44. Nigerian money
46. Earth's satellite
47. First queen of Carthage
48. Broadband predecessor
50. Pot contribution
52. Sophomore's grade
53. Breathe after a race
55. Not in good health
57. *"Into the Wild" park
60. *Oldest national park east of Mississippi
63. Capital of Vietnam
64. British mom
66. Where to steel a kiss?
68. Passion
69. "Farewell" to Birdie
70. Church topper
71. Office furniture
72. Asian capital

DOWN

1. Pea container
2. On a cruise
3. Harry Potter's mark
4. Face powder mineral, pl.
5. Head of the Round Table
6. "Without further ____," pl.
7. "Going-to-the- ____" Road in Glacier National Park
8. Hooves, alt. spelling
9. For, in France
10. Gram or pound
11. Speed of an object divided by speed of sound
12. One of Indiana Jones' quests
15. Cry like a piglet
20. Give the boot
22. Like Methuselah
24. Watercraft with skis
25. *Canyon or Teton
26. Moses' mountain
27. Embryo sacs
29. Door-stopping wedge
31. *Lake in Nevada desert
32. Small European gull
33. Make a canyon, e.g.

34. Leg cover
36. "Me and ____ and the Dying Girl"
38. *The Virgin River cuts through it
42. Mad hatter's act
45. Live-in helper
49. Chum
51. Go by
54. Not in my backyard, in text
56. Parkinson's disease drug
57. Truth alternative
58. Odds and ____
59. Barnes & Noble reader
60. End of grace
61. Author Murdoch
62. Homesteader's measure
63. Owned
65. Sailor's affirmative
67. He had



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For Solutions See Page 4

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All My Friends Are Getting Old

Dr. James L. Snyder

Getting old seems to be a long and slow process. The longer it goes the older you get.

I didn't really think I was getting old until a few weeks ago I was visiting with some friends from high school. You know those old high school friends that you had fun with when you were young enough to have fun? And oh boy, what fun we had.

A sharp difference exists between being young and being old. You have to get old to really understand the difference because when you are young you do not have enough time to think. That's the problem with young people today. So many things to do and so much technology they do not have any time left over to think.

Those young whippersnappers. There is a huge difference between being young and being old.

When you are young, you enjoy having lots of fun.

When you are old, you enjoy remembering all the fun you had when you were young.

The best thing about being old and remembering those good old days is that you can exaggerate about how good they really were. Even when you are exaggerating with friends that shared the same fun, they go along with you.

Whether it is the absence of memory or just wanting to enjoy fun to its fullest extent, I do not really know.

As my friends and I were talking about the good old days, I happened to notice wrinkles on their faces. I did not say anything at the time, but they sure looked old to me. Also, I did not quite remember how grey their hair was when we were young.

When I was young and having all that fun, I never gave a

thought about how young I was or that I was getting older. My whole focus was on the fun element of life and I thought that would carry me through the rest of my life.

I remember my 20th birthday very well. I was celebrating getting out of those teenage years and becoming an adult. For some reason I thought you became an adult at 20. Little did I know that it takes many years to become an adult and some do not really make it. I simply assume that the older you get, the more fun you can have. Boy, was I ever surprised!

Celebrating the good old days is quite remarkable. Because in it all, I noticed my friends were getting older. One of my friends repeated a story three times and not to embarrass him, I laughed all three times.

After the meeting and driving home, I began to think about myself. Am I as old as they look?

I was afraid to look in the mirror when I got home because I did not know who would be staring back at me. Whoever invented mirrors ought to be shot and then sent to the moon. A mirror never tells you the correct story and never tells you how old you really are. It just makes a funny face at you.

My friends may be getting old, but I have put my foot down and I have refused to get old.

One friend was using a cane and I did not have the heart to ask him why he was using a cane. He hobbled around and I am not sure if he hurt himself or if he was just getting too old to walk on his own.

I must admit there are some days that I feel old, whatever that means. Some days I am a little slower than I was the day before. Overall, I am not as old as some of my friends look.

There is an old saying that says you are only as old as you feel, and I'm not sure what old feels like. I would like to ask my wife,

but you know the trouble I would be in then!

I did enjoy my visit with those friends, but it did start me thinking about things I have never thought about before. Someone said that the 70 is the new 20. I will keep that in mind when I hit that magical mark called 70.

When I got home, I shared some of my thoughts with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage who just listen very patiently. I went on and on about how old my friends looked.

When I settled back in my chair and sipped some coffee, she looked at me and said something that rather startled me. "I wonder," she said rather thoughtfully, "if your friends are saying the same thing about you!"

That was a thought stopper for sure. What if they were? What if I looked old to them?

Is it really that bad to get old? I thought about that for a moment and then realized if you stop getting older, you're dead.

"I have been young," David said rather thoughtfully, "and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread" (Psalm 37:25).

The one I like is, "They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing" (Psalm 92:14). This one fits me to a T.

Not only are my friends getting old, but I'm getting old and my goal is to get as old as I possibly can.

Dr. James L. Snyder is pastor of the Family of God Fellowship Ocala, FL where he lives with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Call him at 1-866-552-2543 or e-mail jamesnsnyder2@att.net. His web site is www.jamesnsnyderministries.com. ★



By Pastor Ray Dare

There have been times in my life where I've been confused, worried, anxious about the future. If you'll be honest about it, there have been times in your life when you felt these same things. Maybe today you're facing some of these same things.

God says in Isaiah 26:3, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusts in thee." God renews you spiritually when you accept Christ in your life, but your mind isn't renewed automatically. There's something that you have to do. Never underestimate the important role that your mind plays in your walk of faith.

I've found that every time I get worried, confused, overly concerned, or anxious about the future, I've taken my mind off the things of God and I've started looking at the circumstances all around me. I'm going

Pastor Ray's Encouraging Words

Peace of Mind is a Promise

against what God says when I start dwelling on "How am I going to overcome these challenges? How am I going to overcome these obstacles? How am I going to overcome all these things that are coming against me?" Do you know what happens when you meditate on those things? They'll get bigger and bigger. Then all of a sudden you're feeling doubt and unbelief and fear.

You have to keep our mind stayed on Christ. You may think, "But Ray, I'm busy. I've got a career and I'm working and I've got all this stuff going on." But friend, you're not going to experience God's perfect peace automatically. You have to get into God's Word and get His Word into you. It's so important to meditate on and memorize Scripture. It's so important to stay in church where you can hear the Word of God.

Sometimes I like to think about Scripture that talks about the goodness of God; how good God is. Like Galatians 3:13, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law." Do you know what the curse of the Law is? It's misery, mental torment,

depression. It's all the miserable things of this life. You take that Scripture one week and just meditate on it, think about it, ponder it. 'Thank you, Father, that I don't have to live a miserable life.' That's going to give you peace, because your mind is stayed on Him.

Philippians 4:6 says, "Don't worry about anything; pray about everything." Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. Listen, I going to challenge you. The next time you have the opportunity to worry, don't choose to worry. Every time that you have that negative thought just praise God that the answer's on the way. You know what you're doing? You're saying, "God, I know the situation may not look good, but I choose to believe You're still in control. I choose to believe. You can still see me through." And you're going to experience God's perfect peace.

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By Marlys Johnsen Norris, Christian Author

It is only human nature for people to look for someone or something to blame for the poor decisions they have made in their lifetime. Drugs, alcohol, sex, stealing, cheating, gambling to name just a few. And they do a good job expressing those ideas of accusing someone else to distract the truth of who actually is at fault, which honestly are them selves. Pointing the finger away from them is just what some people do rather than being accountable for their actions.

Yet, there is a deep hunger in every soul to be loved - everyone has an emptiness in their heart they fill with all kinds of things. That void was created

Someone to Blame!

by our Creator/God to be filled with His Spirit. And that need they have to be loved - will and can only be satisfied by God alone! It is God alone who wants to fill those empty places mankind tries to fill with all kinds of wrong things.

However if they look to God, He will help them find the divine path to real love and life He has designed for their life before they were born. If anyone continues to make poor choices they will ultimately destroy their life and never quite satisfies or fill those empty places God desires to fill with His love for them.

It may look like those people are "having a good time" but those good times will not last. If they keep traveling on that road of destruction eventually their body and mind will be affected and destroyed, not to

mention other family members in their lives as well.

So, will they turn from those wicked ways and look to their Creator/God who designed their lives to have meaning and purpose and an inner peace within? If they do, they will be granted a "new life" and a "new beginning" that will bring blessings and an inner hope within and completely change the course of their life.

If this is you my friends, God is waiting. Find and attend a church, read the Bible and pray. God is waiting to hear from you. He loves you so much!

Marlys Johnsen Norris
Christian Author of 6 books
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POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

1.) Look for a good integrated program. The “to cut or not to cut” decision is a big complex one. It’s best when made when all different spine practitioners (surgeons and non-operative specialists) are on the same team...your team...focused on whatever method will help YOU the most.

2.)Don’t let out of pocket dissuade you. If you enroll in an integrated care program, you will likely have to foot some or all of the cost. But compare this to a lifetime of pain that could have been treated by a team of experts or by surgery that can make it worse than before.

3.)If you can, avoid opioids. Using heavy narcotics is a slippery slope. Use your body’s own pain relievers called endorphins to manage and alleviate pain.

4.)Make full use of “natural” pain management methods. Don’t discount home remedies like ice and heat therapies for reducing pain. You can even try meditation and affirmations to improve your perception of pain.

5.)If you’re overweight, lose weight. Excess weight, especially around your middle, contributes to back pain.

6.)Fuel your body with spine-friendly foods. Good nutrition and hydration play vital role in your spine’s health. Eat a diet rich in anti-inflammatory foods like vegetables, colorful

fruits, wild salmon, olive oil, legumes. Nuts, and alliums such as onions and garlic.

7.)Embrace exercise. Movement allows nutrients to pass into the spine, and exercise actually lessens back pain.

8.)Practice good posture and good spine health habits. For example, it’s best to avoid sitting all day at a desk (try alternating to a standing desk or get up and more periodically). When you must sit, be sure to practice good posture.

9.)Check your tendency to catastrophize. Don’t wallow in negativity. Your point of view profoundly affects your perception of pain, and catastrophizing (the habit of thinking or talking about a situation as worse than it actually is) will delay your healing and make you miserable.

10.)Work really, really hard to adopt a positive mindset. Chronic pain can easily crowd out optimism, but you MUST remain hopeful. A positive outlook will make your recovery faster and far more pleasant. Use meditation and affirmations to improve your state of mind each day.

Dr. Raiszadeh goes into a lot more detail in **“Take Back Control”** and you can check out his websites at www.take-backcontrol.com and www.spinezone.com for lots more information. And this comes from a surgeon. Fascinating! ★

TAKE BACK CONTROL

Are you in pain...back pain? Are you considering surgery? Hold on! Dr. Kamshad Raiszadeh told me on POPPOFF Radio that, for most chronic back and neck pain patients, surgery is not the best solution. That’s why he wrote “Take Back Control” A Surgeon’s Guide to Healing Your Spine without medications or surgery. Here are some reasons to reconsider.

1.“Minimally invasive” surgery is a marketing gimmick.

2. There is no widely agreed-upon surgical treatment for lower back pain.

3. Bad MRI findings are NOT a valid reason to have surgery.

4. Very often, surgery won’t cure back pain anyway.

5. Most back pain will resolve itself when you take a “wait and see” approach.

6. Conservative self-help programs combined with lifestyle changes often work better than surgery.

So how about ten tips for healing your spine? Let’s get to it.



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Sacramento County DA Reports



Former CHP Employee Convicted for Murder of Woman

DATE: April 6, 2017

CASE: Cresencio Camasura (Case #15F01521)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Valerie Brown, Homicide Unit

Cresencio Camasura was convicted by a jury of murder in the second degree of Vida Sarang. The jury also found true the allegation that Camasura personally used a deadly weapon.

On March 10, 2015, Cresencio Camasura killed his wife’s cousin, 65-year-old Vida Sarang, by stabbing her more than 15 times with a butcher knife. Ms. Sarang was retired from her career at Sutter Health and had been staying with Camasura and his wife for several months. Camasura worked for the California Highway Patrol in data entry for more than 20 years. On the day of the murder, Camasura was just beginning a three-week vacation from his job. Shortly after 7:00 a.m., Camasura called his wife and told her he killed Ms. Sarang. He then called 911 to report his crime. Upon arrival, officers found Ms. Sarang deceased in the kitchen.

Camasura faces a maximum sentence of 16 years to life in prison. Sentencing is set for May 12, 2017, at 10:30 a.m. in front of the Honorable Eugene Balonon.

Defendant Sentenced for Felony Convictions, Stemming from Welfare Fraud

DATE: April 7, 2017

CASE: Randnette F. Billings (Case #12F03169)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney John Pezone, Public Assistance Fraud Unit

The Honorable Michael Kenny sentenced Randnette Billings to four years and four months in county jail prison. Billings will serve two years in custody and two years and four months on mandatory supervision by the Sacramento County Probation Department. On March 9, 2017, a jury convicted Billings of felony welfare fraud, felony perjury, felony offering a false document at a legal proceeding, felony grand theft and felony offering a false claim for payment.

Billings was on public assistance from 2006 through 2010. She concealed the fact that she was working as an In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) provider, which led to a loss of approximately \$54,000 dollars to the Department of Human Assistance (DHA). Billings committed perjury when she made the misrepresentation of her income. When DHA told her of the fraud, she requested a hearing in front of an Administrative Law Judge. At the hearing, Billings offered a forged letter from the Sacramento Public Authority, which led to a decision in her favor. Investigation of the letter revealed it was a forgery,

which led to a second hearing held by the county and a reversal in the initial decision.

Billings also committed grand theft of more than \$2,000 from IHSS. Billings submitted a false claim for payment for alleged services she provided when her client was confined to a hospital and skilled nursing facility.

Pair Sentenced for Torture, Murder in Midtown Apartment

DATE: April 7, 2017

CASE: Jeremy McMahon & Michelle Okumura (Case #13F06549)

PROSECUTOR: Deputy District Attorney Casey Newton, Homicide Unit

The Honorable Maryanne Gilliard sentenced Jeremy McMahon to life in prison without the possibility of parole and sentenced Michelle Okumura to 38 years to life, plus a second life term in prison. On February 21, 2017, a jury convicted McMahon of the first-degree murder of Eric Jackson with the special circumstance of murder with torture and the allegation that McMahon personally discharged a firearm causing death. McMahon was also convicted of torture, false imprisonment and being a felon in possession of a weapon. The Court found that McMahon had been convicted of a prior strike offense, making criminal threats in 2012. Okumura was convicted of first-degree murder, torture and false imprisonment.

On October 8, 2013, the Sacramento Police Department responded to a 911 call reporting shots fired at the Capitol Apartments in Midtown Sacramento. Upon arrival, officers found 22-year-old Eric Jackson on the floor of an apartment with his feet bound with string and fabric tied around his neck. Mr. Jackson had suffered fresh cuts, burn marks on multiple areas of his body and a bleeding wound on his chest. As medical personnel prepared to transport Mr. Jackson to the hospital, he was pronounced deceased. Jeremy McMahon and his girlfriend, Michelle Okumura, were both at the scene and told officers Mr. Jackson tried to break into her apartment. Okumura first also stated she shot Mr. Jackson. She later admitted it was McMahon who shot Mr. Jackson, who died from a single gunshot wound to his stomach. Cell phone evidence revealed Mr. Jackson was bound, held captive and tortured by the defendants for approximately two days. Mr. Jackson was a client of Okumura, who worked out of her apartment giving massages. Okumura and McMahon claimed Mr. Jackson disrespected Okumura and owed her money. ★



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North Ridge Country Club Launches \$3.5 Million Renovation Plan

Story by Jacqueline Fox

Fair Oaks, CA (MPG) - Long-awaited plans for renovating one of the region's oldest private country clubs is officially underway at North Ridge Country Club, involving a \$3.5 million overhaul that promises members and guests at the club alike a trail of new greens and bunkers on par with some of the finest courses in the world.

The club's membership overwhelmingly approved the renovation plan and began the bid process for contracting roughly a year ago, ultimately selecting Palo Alto-based Robert Trent Jones II Golf Course Architects (RTJ II) for the project, which is credited for development of more than 270 golf courses across 40 countries and six continents. "We got it down to three finalists for the design of our new course, and then we took it down to one, and RTJ II won out," said North Ridge General Manager, Rink Sanford.

During an April 6 groundbreaking for the project, Robert T. Bruce Charlton, president and chief design officer for RTJ II, said the course would be going from good to outstanding, likening the ultimate overhaul to a "My Fair Lady" transformation, Sanford said.

"I love the quote Robert gave at our ground-breaking," said Sanford. "He said 'I like to compare North Ridge Country Club to a classy older woman who is beautiful and graceful, but just in need of a new dress.' To me, his description just perfectly crystalizes what North Ridge is all about and how beautiful she really is."

RTJII founder Robert Trent Jones, who passed away in 1987, is known for cutting trail of legendary successes in the completion of some of the country's most notable golf courses, beginning with a winning contract to design the Peachtree Golf Club in Atlanta in collaboration with golf legend Bobby Jones, followed up by securing a commission to redesign the 11th and 16th holes at Augusta National Golf Club.

Coveted for its high-elevation and rolling terrain, North Ridge Country



Long-awaited plans for renovating one of the region's oldest private country clubs is officially underway at North Ridge Country Club. The new course is expected to officially open in early 2018. Photo courtesy North Ridge Country Club

Club was founded in 1952 by architects William Francis Bell and his son, Billy Jr., renown for crafting elite courses at Rivera Country Club, Bel-Air Country Club and Torrey Pines, among others.

The 18-hole parkland golf course at North Ridge Country Club is spread across approximately 165 rolling green acres on Madison Avenue in Fair Oaks. Although the club's event center and adjacent buildings were renovated in 1997, the 63-year old course itself, says Sanford, will be getting its first upgrade, a much needed makeover to keep the facility competitive with other private clubs in the region and beyond.

"This is a fine course and we have good conditions, but what we are really doing now is modernizing and making an investment in our course to stay competitive in the private club market," Sanford said.

North Ridge was designed incorporating an old push-up mound construction method, explained Sanford, which has, over time, created drainage issues for the course, spurred by deteriorating root structures, all of



left to right: Chris Peterson, NRCC Board Member, Mike Gorman, Architect for Robert Trent Jones II, Kerry Gordon, NRCC golf course renovation task force leader, Bruce Charlton, Architect for Robert Trent Jones II. Photo courtesy North Ridge Country Club

which have created challenges for players and rendered the course vulnerable to erosion.

"Our forefathers picked a phenomenal place to put in a course," said Sanford. "We are at the highest point in the area and we are blessed with a lot of rolling hills and terrain, but the old push-up method that was used to

design the course originally needs to be addressed."

Sampson said that the course's natural elevation changes will allow RTJII to redesign the club's greens and bunkers to take advantage of its hilly topography in ways "that were simply not possible many years ago," adding construction of the new greens and

bunkers will be achieved without disrupting mature trees that have called North Ridge home for decades.

"Today, players really want greens with solid drainage, and so what this will do for us is allow us to keep the mature trees and the rolling hills, but in and around the greens and bunkers we'll be adding better drainage to bring the course in line with some of the most competitive, high-caliber golf courses anywhere in the world," Sanford said.

Meanwhile, high-quality, temporary bentgrass sod greens are being created to offer members temporary greens to utilize during the construction process.

In addition to the cache of a world-class design firm capturing the bid for the renovations, the renovation project will also have a local touch. RTJII's Senior Project Architect, Mike Gorman was raised in Sacramento and is reported to have grown up playing the course. "This is like home to us," RTJII's Charlton said. "We travel all around the world, and having a project near our offices in Palo Alto, with Mike's family still living in Sacramento, makes this extra special."

The new course is expected to officially open in early 2018, Sanford said. While there are no increases on the horizon this year for membership fees, it is anticipated that fees will increase once the new course is fully operational. The current annual membership fee for North Ridge is \$6,500, however, due to the construction, which is expected to run through August, the club is offering a promotion of \$4,500, which runs through June.

"The long term hope is that once the new course is up and fully operational in early 2018, our membership price will go up, and that will be in keeping with what's going on with other clubs and membership fees at private courses across the country," Sanford said.

Membership at North Ridge, said Sanford, is currently at 463, near full capacity. To cover the costs of the project, members voted to each pay their share of the \$3.5 million, for a total of roughly \$8,000 or \$60 a month each. ★

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Story by Jacqueline Fox

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - Don't bother with requesting the best seat in the house when you see your first play at Theatre in the Heights. They are all fantastic. All 52 of them.

The city's first community theatre officially opened in January with an inaugural run of Neil Simon's *Fools*, which was followed up by a near-sold-out run of *The Kitchen Witches*, by Caroline Smith. On April 14, Theatre in the Heights opened the curtain on its fourth production with French playwright, Marc Camoletti's classic romp, *Boeing Boeing*, which was made into a feature film in 1965 starring Jerry Lewis and Tony Curtis.

Fueled almost entirely on volunteers' sweat equity, Theatre in the Heights was co-founded by Blake Flores and actress Vanessa Voetsch, who plays Gretchen in its current production. The pair worked together at the Arden Playhouse, now closed. Flores also co-founded The Big Idea Theatre in Sacramento, and managed the Sutter St. Theatre in Folsom.

"Our entire purpose is to offer affordable, quality live theatre to

our community, said Flores, who moonlights as a computer engineer for Intel Corp., while overseeing set and stage design and construction, as well as lighting and props, and also directing and acting in most productions. "We are under no illusion that we ever will turn a real profit, we just want to break even."

Getting to opening night, said Flores, took a year. Now that the doors are open, they actually rarely close. Rather than shutting down while preparing sets and costumes and running rehearsals, the theatre sandwiches runs of *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* between its primary productions, each offering what Flores calls a "fresh approach" to The Bard's works.

For now, the theatre offers pure comedy, however, down the road dramatic works may be woven into the production schedule. This summer, the theatre will launch the Adventure Series, offering family productions suitable for all ages.

"We've done a lot of research and we've found that most people prefer comedy, so for now, that's what we are doing." ★

Memorable People are Like Lampposts

Mary R. Purvis: a Spring Memory

By Russ Purvis



Mary R. Purvis was warm, intelligent, and quick to smile.

Memorable people are like the radiant beams from a lamp post on a cold dark night, or the first green shoots pushing up through the soil in early Spring. They are there to encourage us, and comfort us in those times and seasons when our life paths are challenging. Mary Purvis was a loved and cherished member of the Citrus Heights and Greater Sacramento Region for almost 50 years.

She was warm, intelligent, and quick to smile. Her life began in rural Oklahoma as the youngest daughter of a successful farm family. As a young adult she worked for American Airlines during WWII. She married young to a quiet handsome man and had 3 sons. She wasn't immune to the need for more stimulation than the average suburban life offered to young housewives in the early 1960's. She began an adventure in a new job, enjoyed being fashionable and bought her first car. Soon after a series of job transfers by her husband required a lot of travel for the family and multiple moves. Eventually they ended up in Citrus Heights.

Mary loved her children. Her boys all became Eagle Scouts and headed off to college. Two attended UCD. She spent as much time as she could to help them in their far-flung lives. With her grandchildren at great distances and her sons working all over the world, including Japan, Africa and South America she began to become more active

in the local community. Her involvement with local youth including the Citrus Heights Community Marching Band and a number of Beauty Pageants, including Miss California Universe spanned a decade or more. She was a founding member of the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce, greatly supported the incorporation of Citrus Heights as a City separate from the County and was recognized by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors as an outstanding volunteer in her Community.

She was of course more than this to many people. She loved countless children. Mentored and inspired thousands of young women. And, truly believed in and practiced generosity to those in need. Mary passed away suddenly in March of 2014. She is greatly missed by her great grandchildren, grandchildren and Family. All pictures, videos, or personal memories are welcome to be shared on the Mary R. Purvis Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Mary-R-Purvis-247418802258824/> ★

Playmakers Fundraiser Event to Support Local Youth

Story by Jacqueline Fox

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - What could be better than enjoying a trip dinner in the company of some 300 friends? How about knowing the money you paid for it was going to support some awesome kids and one highly regarded after-school program?

On Saturday, April 29, Playmakers, a year-round afterschool academics and leadership program for under-served youth, currently celebrating its first year operating out of Skycrest elementary school, will host its annual Tri-Tip Dinner Fundraiser at Divine Savior Church in Orangevale.

The event, beginning with

cocktails at 6 p.m., followed by dinner at 7 p.m., is expected to draw some 300-plus supporters, according to Playmakers Founder and Executive Director, Greg "Coach Roz" Roeszler. The purpose of the event is to raise funds for the program, but also to recognize Playmaker participants' accomplishments and their coach mentors, and honor the organizations community supporters.

"This is truly a community effort," said Roeszler, pointing out that the event will honor Citrus Heights Optimists International, which helped to fund the Playmakers expansion in March to Skycrest Elementary, as well as the Citrus Heights Rotary Club, Bayside Church of Citrus Heights

and the San Juan High School football team.

"This evening recognizes the community effort committed to coaching character into our leaders of tomorrow," said Roeszler. "And, our fundraising goal for the evening is to double civic contributions through a big day of giving."

Jody Sears, head football coach at Sacramento State University will serve as the keynote speaker. Ted Popson, former San Francisco 49er, Craig Penrose, former Denver Bronco, Harrison Phillips from Stanford University are on the list of event presenters and speakers. Playmakers, launched in 2009 at Cordova Meadows Elementary, now operates out of six elementary schools across Sacramento

County, including Skycrest, and the communities of Fair Oaks and Folsom, as well as a seventh school in Woodland.

Participants in Playmakers are given a range of opportunities to expand their learning skills and abilities, including reading lab tutorial visits, participation in team sports, field trips to Stanford University to meet players and watch games, as well as football games at Sacramento State and San Juan High School. But Playmakers must also strive to improve their academic skills, which includes a primary focus on reading, as well as leadership, mentorship of other students, field and team sports prowess and overall good values. ★

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Publisher, Paul V. Scholl

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Citrus Heights Messenger

Serving Citrus Heights and Sacramento County Since 2006

It is the intent of the *Citrus Heights Messenger* to strive for an objective point of view in the reporting of news and events. It is understood that the opinions expressed on these pages are those of the authors and cartoonists and are not necessarily the opinions of the publisher or our contributors.

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Subscriptions should be mailed to *Citrus Heights Messenger*, 7405 Greenback Lane, #129, Citrus Heights, CA 95610. Subscription rate is \$28 per year in Citrus Heights. *Citrus Heights Messenger* is published twice monthly. Call (916) 773-1111 for more information. (ISSN # 1948-1918).

MPG

We are proud members of these newspaper associations.

American Legion Donates Towards CHPD Life-Saving Program



Citrus Heights American Legion 637 Commander Paul Reyes, Vice Commander Sylvia Thweatt, CHPD Commander Gina Anderson and CHPD Chief Ron Lawrence (left to right). Photos courtesy Jack Mintz

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA - On March 23, 2017 members of the Citrus Heights American Legion Post 637 presented Police Chief Ron Lawrence and Commander Gina Anderson with a donation that will help bring a life-saving program to the Citrus Heights Police Department (CHPD).

One of the realities both law enforcement and the military share is the high rate of mental health disorders and suicides in both professions. The CHPD is working to bring Kevin M. Gilmartin, Ph.D., an internationally acclaimed expert on this issue to Citrus Heights to present a workshop to their police officers and families.

Vice Commander Sylvia

Thweatt presented the donation, saying their members stand behind the police department and wanted to contribute towards this endeavor. Commander Anderson thanked the Legion for their donation, acknowledging the spiritual bond shared by the police and military, both sworn to defend the Constitution and to protect the people.

The workshop will help officers understand and learn how to cope with the emotional "Hypervigilance Rollercoaster" they face daily, so they can maintain healthy relationships and retire with their mental health intact.

A fundraiser is being held to generate the funds to bring Gilmartin, author of "A Guide for Law Enforcement Officers

and Their Families" to Citrus Heights. The General Federation of Women's Clubs (GFWC) Citrus Heights Women's Club and GFWC Sutter District are bringing "A Taste of Citrus Heights" to the Citrus Heights Community Center on April 28, 2017 to raise these funds.

The event will bring many local restaurants together for the public to sample their menu items, along with wine and beer, music and comedy. Look for more details on the event in future issues of the Messenger.

For information on purchasing tickets for "Taste of Citrus Heights" or if you own a restaurant or food truck and would like to participate at no cost, call 505-9221, /go to www.tasteofcitrusheights.com. ★

Captain Shawn Condit Named Firefighter Employee of the Year

SACRAMENTO, COUNTY, CA (MPG)

- Captain Shawn Condit was recently recognized as the Sacramento Metro Fire District Employee of the Year at the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce luncheon. A presentation outlining his career and duties, along with his many achievements was given by Deputy Chief Eric Bridge.

In addition to his hard work at Metro Fire, Captain Condit serves as a Metro Director with the Sacramento Area Firefighters Local 522 union. This is an elected position by his peers. Shawn has held a position within the Union for over 10 years. He is an acknowledged leader within the union, and over the last 10 years he has moved up the ranks, starting out as a shift representative and eventually moving into the elected position he currently holds. He continues



Mark Creffield, Executive Director of the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce, Captain Shawn Condit and Deputy Chief Eric Bridge (left to right).

to do an outstanding job of representing the union members of the organization. Fire Chief Todd Harms was honored to name Captain Shawn Condit as Metro Fire's 2016 Suppression Employee of the Year. ★

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