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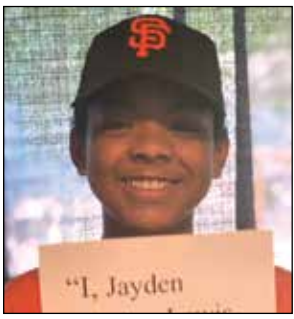
Gold River Messenger

VOLUME 10 • ISSUE 3 *Serving Gold River and Sacramento County*

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Live, Learn, Work, Play



At the Rancho Cordova Luncheon, from left, are Randi Kay Stephens, Rancho community enhancement and investment management analyst; Mayor Donald Terry; Diann Rogers, Rancho Chamber President and CEO; and Cyrus Abhar, Rancho city manager at the Rancho Cordova Luncheon. Photo: Margaret Snider

By Margaret Snider

RANCHO CORDOVA/GOLD RIVER, CA (MPG) - After the postponement of the Rancho Cordova Luncheon because of COVID considerations in January, Mayor Donald Terry took the podium at City Hall on February 18. "I'd like to start out by thanking the Community Council and the Chamber for inviting me to be the first speaker of the year," Terry said. "As you know that was January, we're still here in February." Terry proceeded to take attendees on a review of how we "Live, work, learn, and play" in Rancho Cordova.

Terry praised Rancho as great place to work. "Over 3,500 businesses employ over 65,000 people making Rancho Cordova one of the largest employment centers in the region," Terry said. Infrastructure has been a big focus in the past and continues into this year. Some of the improvements will be to White Rock Road from Sunrise Boulevard east to the Rancho Cordova Parkway, upgrades to the Cordova Vineyard and Cordova Lane neighborhoods, Mills Ranch neighborhood and Mather Field Road from Folsom Boulevard to Rockingham.

To keep track of infrastructure projects, go to cityofranhocordova.org, Departments and select Public Works. Metro Fire is building another station in Rancho Cordova near the Anatolia Marketplace, scheduled to open this spring.

Terry highlighted two new programs by the Rancho Cordova Police Department. To ensure your home is protected while you are away, you can call to have a vacation home check while you are gone. Also, in a program launched by RCPD and Eskaton, called Rancho Cordova CARES, RCPD volunteers can provide daily phone calls to adults over the age of 65 to form relationships and avoid a sense of isolation in seniors. CARES stands for "Connect and Ring Every Senior." Applications to participate can be found at RanchoCordovaPD.com/RanchoCordovaCARES.

The Rancho Cordova Youth Center is under construction and will open this summer, Terry said, operated and programmed by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Sacramento and Rancho Cordova PAL. "This is something that is coming to fruition that started long before I was on the Council,"

Terry said. "The Center of Praise donated their old church to us just off of Folsom Boulevard, so we have an almost 10,000 sq. ft. facility that we're just doing the upgrades to."

Donald Terry was elected to the city council in 2012 and this is his second term as mayor. He served as vice mayor in 2016 and 2020. Prior to being a city council member, Terry was a member of the Sacramento City Unified School District Board from 2008 to 2012. He grew up in Santa Cruz and Scotts Valley and attended Soquel High School where he participated in football, cross country and wrestling, as captain of the wrestling team his sophomore through senior years. He qualified for the wrestling state championships twice, placing second at the Central Coast Section Tournament in his junior and senior years. He continued wrestling at West Valley College for one year. Terry was vice-president of the Student Senate of Cabrillo College, and the regional president of the California Student Association of Community Colleges.

Terry earned a B.A. degree in political science with a minor in community
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New County Animal Care Director



Annette Bedsworth, Director of Animal Care and Regulation. Photo provided by Sac County

By Kim Nava, Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County has a new Director of Animal Care and Regulation.

The Board of Supervisors, at its Jan. 25 meeting, concurred with the County Executive's appointment of Annette Bedsworth as Director, effective Feb. 14. Bedsworth will replace Michael Doane, who had been the department's Acting Director since June 2020.

"Ms. Bedsworth has a distinguished record of significant achievements during her tenure as Executive Director for Animal Services in Stanislaus County. Sacramento County will benefit greatly from her leadership and expertise, and we look forward to welcoming her to the organization," said Mike Penrose, Interim Deputy County Executive, Community Services. "I would also like to thank Michael Doane for his willingness to provide leadership to the department as we searched for a permanent director."

Bedsworth has more than 30 years of public service, including more than 20 years in management and director level positions. Since 2008, she has served as the Executive Director for Animal Services for Stanislaus County. In that position, she led the agency to achieve significant improvements, including increasing the life-saving rate from 9 percent to more than 90 percent for both cats and dogs.

Her noteworthy program implementations include the Community Cat Program, which reduced euthanasia by 40 percent in its first year, and the Dog License Amnesty program, which generated 8,000 new licenses in the first 30 days of the program.

Bedsworth has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Family and Consumer Sciences from California State University, Fresno and is a Southern University Utah Animal Services Executive Leadership graduate. ★

MACC Hosts NCECA Exhibit in Fertile Ground

Story by Margaret Snider

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The MACC is one of the hosts for the 56th National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts (NCECA) show, Fertile Ground. Their 2022 annual convention will be held in Sacramento. The show contains three exhibits showcasing 36 nationwide artists. There are a total of 56 host locations and 86 exhibits around the greater Sacramento area.

The MACC is on the collector's tour. "They rent . . . a motor coach, and they bring collectors from all over the United States, museum experts, acquisitions people from



Artist Ashwini Bhat with one of her artworks, "Devil's Postpile, Assembling California 1," part of Beneath the Surface: Origin Stories exhibit. Bhat is originally from India and has been in the United States for four years. Photo by Cheryl Gleason

universities and different things," said Cheryl Gleason, MACC Event Coordinator/Curator. "We're going to provide lunch for them out on the

patio and they get an hour to look at the art as well. We really lucked out, and we're making a huge splash for Rancho Cordova with this show."

The three exhibits included in the show are "Beneath the Surface: Origin Stories," "Womxn of Alfred," which features artwork from Alfred University in New York, and The Archie Bray, a residency program in Helena, Montana. The show is curated by Nancy Servis, an NCECA board member who for 10 years ran the Pence Gallery in Davis.

Earlier, Gleason had received a call from a representative asking if she knew about NCECA. "What's NCECA?"
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Shelter Dog Goes from Rescued to Rescuer

By Allison Harris,
Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County's Bradshaw Animal Shelter intakes thousands of pets in the community each year. Most of these pets are reunited with their owners or are able to find loving forever homes to be adopted into. However, some shelter pets have a difficult time finding a normal adoptive home which is where the shelter's foster and rescue program comes in. The foster and rescue program works with local foster and rescue providers in the community to help shelter pets that need a little extra assistance on the

way to their happy ending. Foster care providers provide temporary care outside of the shelter to animals such as those too young for adoption, needing to recover from an illness or injury, for behavior modification, or just because they need a break from the stresses of shelter life. Rescue group partners are also a huge help as they pull shelter animals who otherwise have a difficult time being adopted due to age, medical condition or the need for behavioral modification that cannot be resolved in a foster home. Shelter dog Dora, who arrived as a stray in 2016, was having a difficult time finding a forever home.



Shelter dog Dora now serves in the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation (NDSDF). Photo credit: National Disaster Search Dog Foundation

Fortunately, shelter staff was so impressed by her high-toy drive that they contacted the National Disaster Search Dog Foundation (NDSDF). The

NDSDF is an organization based in Santa Paula, California that strengthens disaster response across America by rescuing and recruiting dogs

and partnering them with firefighters and other first responders to find people buried alive in the wreckage of disasters. They have been a long-time rescue partner of the Sacramento County's Bradshaw Animal Shelter. "Groups such as NDSDF give dogs that have no chance of placement in a normal pet home an opportunity for a great outcome and a chance to truly thrive in the world," said Shasta Stratton-Quirk, who works on the shelter's foster and rescue team. "Because some dogs are not able to be adopted out through normal routes, it is the job of the foster and rescue team to find an outlet

where they can reach their true potential. Dora's natural abilities made it clear that the NDSDF made the right choice in bringing her on the team. Six years later, the rescue partner is happy to report Dora is working diligently with the San Diego Fire Department and California Task Force 8 alongside her handler, Joe Zakar, and has truly gone from rescued to rescuer. To learn more about the shelter's foster and rescue program or become a foster care provider or rescue partner, visit the fostering & rescue webpage at animalcare.saccounty.gov/HelptheAnimals/Pages/Fostering.aspx ★

Gifts from the Heart Brings Joy to Thousands

Sacramento County
News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - For more than 30 years, thousands of lives have been touched by Sacramento County's Gifts from the Heart program, an annual holiday gift-giving initiative that runs from October until mid-December and serves those within the Child Protective Services and Senior and Adult Services divisions of the Sacramento County Department of Child, Family and Adult Services.

In 2021, the program provided gifts to more than 2,500 youth, adults and seniors at an estimated cash value of \$152,040.

They got Nerf balls, art supplies, scented candles, Disney princess toys, basketballs, Bluetooth speakers and more! The youngest recipient, Karl, age 1, received finger puppets, wooden puzzles, and a Lego train. The oldest, Quang, age 91, received



In 2021, the program provided gifts to more than 2,500 youth, adults and seniors at an estimated cash value of \$152,040. And the look on gift recipients' faces? Priceless. Photo credit Sacramento County

queen bedsheets, postage stamps and a gift card to Wal-Mart.

Best of all, these foster youth, disabled adults and homebound seniors got a reminder over the winter holidays that they were not forgotten.

More than 80 individuals and corporate sponsors from

businesses, government agencies, service groups and families donate gifts that allow the program to continue.

A team of 57 volunteers managed the pick-up, distribution, and delivery of gifts from community and private sponsors. The volunteers, many of whom return year

after year, spend three weeks in the warehouse organizing toys and gifts. In 2021, volunteers logged in almost 10,000 hours.

Donations come in other forms, too. Jackson Properties donated warehouse space; and Sourdough & Co., Roma 2 Pizza, Pizza Guys and Subway provided

lunches to hungry volunteers. "This was our second year of taking precautions due to COVID-19, but we didn't let it stop us," said Tonja Edelman, Volunteer and Student Intern Services Coordinator. "We required volunteers to be fully vaccinated and we wore masks, and we got it done. We are so thankful for our volunteers and for the contributions from local community partners that make the program possible."

The total cash value of the program - volunteers, donations, gifts - is estimated to be \$476,612.

And the look on gift recipients' faces? Priceless.

Gifts from the Heart welcomes everyone who is interested in participating by sponsoring gifts, becoming a community partner and volunteering time during the season. All donations are tax deductible. To learn more email Tonja Edelman or call her at 916-875-2027. ★

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Cold Noodle
16.5 oz **1.99** /ea

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120 g **3.99** /ea

CJ Korean Spicy Noodle
900 g **2.99** /ea

Bibigo Ramen
200 g **1.99** /ea

Miso Sauce
5 x 11 gr **3.99** /ea

Pasta Sauce
with Sausage 16 oz **5.99** /ea

Tea Green Berry
200 g **4.99** /ea

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16 oz **2.49** /ea

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Live, Learn, Work, Play

Continued from page 1

relations from UC Davis. In his day job, he serves as director of real estate development for NeighborWorks HomeOwnership Center, Sacramento Region, where he oversees affordable housing development in an 11-county region in Northern California. Donald and his wife Angela have two sons, Keaton and Holden.

When he thinks of the phrase, “Live, work, learn, play” in regard to Rancho Cordova, Terry said, “We have built a great

community by working together to address problems and leverage our assets.” The help he could use from Rancho Cordova residents? “Get to know your neighbors and learn how we can all help each other to build relationships and a better community,” Terry said.

Also present at the luncheon was Don Nottoli, who is retiring after 28 years on the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, with a total of 44 years with the County in public service. ★

DA Schubert Announces 2022 Virtual Citizens Academy

From the Office of DA Anne Marie Schubert

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Learn about the criminal justice system! Discuss issues related to race relations, gang and hate crimes and sensitive current events! And, engage in open discussions with top administrators!

The Sacramento County District Attorney’s Office, the Sacramento Police Department, the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office, and the Sacramento County Probation Department are proud to announce the 22nd Annual Citizens Academy. This is the second year the program is being offered virtually.

The academy was created to improve communication, foster a better understanding and develop relationships between members of the criminal justice system and our citizens, including those from different ethnic, cultural and faith-based communities. Since the start of the academy in 2002, there have been 21 graduating classes with approximately 1,190 participants.

The program provides an overview of the criminal justice system (law enforcement roles, responsibilities and challenges) and engages citizens from all backgrounds in discussion, participation and mutual learning about issues within the criminal justice system. Topics include a panel discussion on sensitive current events and “outside the box” approaches to the justice system.

Representatives from the District Attorney’s Office, Probation Department, Public Defender’s Office, law enforcement, the judiciary, and community organizations will provide information, answer questions and address community concerns.

There is NO cost to participants. The 10-week course is held Tuesday evenings starting April 5, 2022 to June 14, 2022, from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. via Zoom.

The deadline for submitting applications is March 22, 2022

Application Forms: sacda.org – on the Homepage and under the “Community Relations” tab

Program Contact: Kristy Lao at 916.874.5251, LaoK@sacda.org. ★

Exhibit in Fertile Ground

Continued from page 1

Gleason said. She was asked to call Ray Gonzales, Sacramento 2022 Onsite Liaison, received paperwork and met the submission deadline, which was the next day, to be a host gallery. Gleason received two visits from NCECA people during which they inspected and learned about the MACC from top to bottom. “Then you wait to see if you’ve been selected,” Gleason said. “And we were selected. Not only were we selected, we got three of the top shows.”

Marc Sapoznik, president and CEO of Visit Rancho Cordova California, visited the exhibits during the opening week, accompanied by Anastasia Gaspay, both of Roseville. “Cheryl really has done a phenomenal job with the MACC here, putting different exhibitions in. I can’t say enough,” Sapoznik said. “These pieces are very evocative and creative and it’s always fun to come in here and see the different artworks.”

Mike and Allison Rosenberg of Rancho Cordova were also in attendance the first week. Mike is a general education teacher for a charter school in Roseville and Allison is a teacher’s aide. “Every time we see there’s something new, we like to pop in and check out another new exhibit,” Mike said. He likes, “more abstract, outsider art. The weirder the better for me.” Allison particularly likes sculptures and loves to see the work created by children.

Fertile Ground is at the MACC Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays from March 3 through March 19. Because of the hosting status, there are expanded days and hours the last week of 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Wednesday, March 16, and 1-9 p.m. on Thursday, March



Garrett Gatewood, Rancho Cordova City councilmember, donated \$600 to acquire this Lego artwork created by students of Stephanie Bird at Mills Middle School. He is joined here by Cheryl Gleason of the MACC. “It’s an amazing piece of art,” Gatewood said. “I love it and I’m a huge fan of Legos.” Photo by Margaret Snider

17, with an artist reception from 6-9 p.m. on the 17th. Other than that week, regular hours are 3-8 p.m., Thursdays and Fridays, and 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., Saturdays. Admission is free. The MACC is located at 10191 Mills Station Rd., Rancho Cordova. For more information, call Cheryl Gleason, 916-273-5712, or e-mail cheryl@cordovacouncil.org. ★

Revised Final Climate Action Plan Draft Released

By Ken Casparis, Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Planning and Environmental Review Division of the Department of Community Development has released a Revised Final Draft of the Sacramento County Climate Action Plan (CAP). The draft released today revises and replaces the draft released in September 2021.

The CAP is Sacramento County’s plan to reduce its contribution to climate change while addressing the impact climate change has already had on the area.

Public comments will be accepted through Wednesday, March 23, 2022. Comments can be sent by email to ClimateActionPlan@sacounty.gov.

A Board of Supervisors workshop on

the CAP will be held in March 2022.

“We have made changes based on valuable community feedback, and in response to the Board of Supervisors’ resolution declaring a climate emergency,” said Todd Smith, Principal Planner. “The changes are important, implementable and will help Sacramento County meet its ambitious climate neutrality goal.”

Notable work on the CAP includes:

- Incorporated Board of Supervisors’ goal of carbon neutrality by 2030.
- Identified steps the County will take within a year to set the 2030 carbon neutrality target.
- Continued coordination with SMUD to ensure that electrification goals can be implemented and are feasible.

To learn more about the CAP, visit the County’s Climate Action Plan webpage. ★

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Board of Supervisors Declares a Shelter Crisis



By Janna Haynes, Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted on February 15th, to declare a shelter crisis in Sacramento County as an important step towards implementing the Board's directions to open and operate sanctioned encampments (called "Safe Stay Communities").

While adoption of the proposed declaration will allow staff to move with expediency on site selection and development for proposed Safe Stay Communities and most sites will not require additional legal review by the Board, staff will bring all sites to the Board for input on site appropriateness before initiating construction.

In addition, staff will work with the Supervisor in whose district the site(s) are located in to develop a community engagement plan for each site.

In the FY 21/22 County Budget, the Board directed staff to pursue non-traditional options for providing sheltering, including use of sleeping cabins, creation of safe parking opportunities, and use of other shelter options. The benefits of such options include:

- They offer non-congregate sheltering, which is not only more private for the occupants but is easier to prevent the spread of disease, including COVID-19; They allow for sheltering of diverse populations as they present, including couples and those with pets; They are quicker and less expensive to build than traditionally built facilities; They are less permanent than traditionally built facilities, allowing a short-term solution in one community and relocation/re-use of the facilities at other sites as needed.

Staff is working on development of construction and operational plans for multiple potential sites for Safe Stay

Communities that could consist of temporary sleeping cabins, safe parking spaces or other emergency facilities. Each community will include on-site security, sanitation services and supportive services aimed at transitioning people out of unsheltered homelessness.

Additionally, the County is continuing to enhance the breadth and depth of outreach and services offered in encampments throughout the County, including the development of Encampment Services Teams that reach out directly to people living unsheltered. These Teams will also serve as outreach points to bring unsheltered into the safe stay communities and provide them with deeper connections to County behavioral health services, connection to benefits like CalFresh, CalWORKs, Medi-Cal, etc., linkages to longer-term shelters, and flexible funding to help support individuals' transition into permanent housing.

Ultimately, all sites should be considered as a stepping stone to stabilize and support individuals on a pathway to permanent housing.

While stable and affordable housing with appropriate services and support are ultimately what ends homelessness, safe stay communities afford the opportunity to provide immediate safe and hygienic locations for people experiencing homelessness to live and access services. They also provide a consistent location for service providers and outreach workers to engage on a more regular basis with occupants.

Additionally, by targeting those living unsheltered in the immediate vicinity of the communities, it is anticipated that the communities will create broader community benefits including a reduction in trash and debris, the mitigation of environmental and health hazards, and the ability to restore land previously occupied by unsanctioned encampments to its intended use.

Read more about the County's response to homelessness on our website. ★

Bera Supports Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky



I met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in February to reaffirm the United States strong commitment to the Ukrainian people in the wake of Russia's unprovoked invasion. Photo provided by Office of Congressman Ami Bera, MD.

From the Office of Congressman Ami Bera, M.D.

It has been a busy few weeks in Sacramento County and in Washington, DC. That's why I wanted to send you a quick update on how I'm serving you in Congress.

Russian Invasion of Ukraine

I join Americans across the country in expressing outrage and horror at Vladimir Putin's unprovoked and deadly invasion of Ukraine. This invasion is not only an attack on Ukraine's sovereignty and independence, but also an assault on global peace, international law, and the values and freedoms we cherish as Americans.

As the world's longest-standing democracy, the United States must stand up for freedom and democracy worldwide. The Ukrainian people have now lived in a democracy for 30 years and have shown that they will not accept authoritarian leaders who seek to destroy and reverse the important progress they have made.

I was proud to visit Kyiv, Ukraine with a bipartisan Congressional Delegation in

February. During my visit, it was clear to me that the people of Ukraine want a future of freedom, sovereignty, and the ability to choose their own path forward. I spoke on the House floor about my visit to Ukraine—I encourage you to listen.

As Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, I'm closely following the situation in Ukraine and am receiving regular briefings from U.S. officials.

I fully support the Biden Administration's decision to implement strong and severe sanctions on Russia, including on the country's oligarchs and financial institutions which have already isolated Putin from the world stage. We must also continue to support the Ukrainian people with humanitarian aid and military assistance.

Sacramento County is the proud home to one of the largest populations of Ukrainian Americans in the entire country. My office has been working around the clock to assist Americans trapped in Ukraine.

If you or someone you know needs help leaving Ukraine, or assistance with an immigration application, please email my team. We are here to assist. ★

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Grand Jury Calls for Independent Audit of Cares Act Spending

Superior Court of California
Press Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Grand Jury is calling into question the use and distribution of more than \$181 million received in federal CARES (Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security) Act funding by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. Following a nearly year-long secret investigation, the Grand Jury has learned that in the midst of a county-wide emergency, the Supervisors made questionable and opaque maneuvers that skirted the intent of the CARES Act, to the benefit of County coffers and with scant regard for the needs of its citizens.

Enacted in March 2020, the CARES Act covered extraordinary and necessary pandemic related expenditures incurred by state and local government agencies. A fundamental CARES Act requirement was that funding utilized by government agencies had to be allocated for pandemic specific activities, and could not be applied toward already budgeted items. The Grand Jury's investigation revealed that the County of Sacramento made no CARES Act funding plan to support countywide COVID-19 relief activities. Instead, the County Chief Executive directed, and the Board of Supervisors approved, allocation of \$104 million of its \$181 million in CARES Act funding directly to the Sheriff's Office. That same amount of Sheriff's Office funding was then transferred back into the County's

General Fund, a move the Grand Jury considers confusing at best and possibly illegal.

"The County Chief Executive has argued that the budget move was legal, however the Grand Jury has not been able to make that determination," says Grand Jury Foreperson Deanna Hanson. "We are calling for an independent audit, because Sacramento County residents deserve answers."

While the CARES Act permitted its funding to support public safety, the County's maneuver was inconsistent with the widely publicized intent that funds be directed to meet community challenges triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. Neither the County Executive nor the Board presented any statutory or regulatory language, or a legal opinion, to verify this assertion. "At a minimum, these elected representatives, had an obligation to notify its constituents of the fund allocation and transfer," Hanson explains.

In its report, the Grand Jury points out that in sharp contrast to the County, the Sacramento City Council allocated nearly all of its CARES Act funding directly to community agencies and businesses to help alleviate impacts of the pandemic. Formal responses to the report are required from both the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Sacramento County Sheriff Scott Jones. The full investigation is available for public review on the Grand Jury website: www.saccourt.ca.gov. ★

Social Security Matters

I'm Confused About Taking Medicare and Social Security



By Russell Gloor,
AMAC Certified Social
Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I just turned 64 and now get stuff about Medicare and Medigap and so on. I really don't know how to retire when it's time. What should I do? What am I looking for? Am I eligible for anything as of now? I'm so confused about all this that I don't even know if I can retire when it's time. Maybe I should just continue working so I don't have to try to figure this out. **Signed: Confused**

Dear Confused: Deciding when to retire from work is usually a difficult decision for everyone, so don't feel alone as you struggle with deciding what's best for you personally. I'll try to provide some insight into what you should be looking at now, at age 64:

The reason you're now getting all that unsolicited information about Medicare and "Medigap" is because you're approaching the magic age of 65, when you first become eligible for those senior healthcare services. But if you are still working and now

have "creditable" healthcare coverage from your employer, you don't need to enroll in any Medicare plan until your employer coverage ends (If your employer healthcare coverage is a group plan with at least 20 participants, that coverage is "creditable"). So, if you plan to continue working and have creditable healthcare coverage, you can simply ignore all those healthcare solicitations. You don't need to worry about enrolling in Medicare until your creditable employer coverage ends, at which point you will be able to enroll in a Medicare program without incurring a late enrollment penalty.

You also do not need to apply for Social Security now (or at age 65) - you can wait until you retire from working full time to apply for Social Security. In fact, you probably should wait until you fully retire from working to claim Social Security, because at age 64 (or 65) you will be subject to Social Security's "earnings test" if you claim SS benefits. The earnings test limits how much you can earn before Social Security takes away some of your benefits and, if your earnings are high enough, it could even disqualify you from getting SS benefits while you are still working. Social Security's earnings test applies until you reach your full retirement age, which is 66 years and 6 months.

If you claim Social Security before that and exceed the annual earnings limit (\$19,560 for 2022), SS will take away benefits equal to \$1 for every \$2 you are over the limit. So, if you're working full time and plan to continue that, waiting to apply for Social Security would be prudent. Delaying Social Security would also mean a higher benefit when you later claim because your benefit will grow for as long as you delay (up to age 70). And although you will become eligible for Medicare when you turn 65, if you're still working and have creditable healthcare coverage from your employer at that time, you can defer enrolling in Medicare until your employer coverage ends.

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Employment and Independent Contractor Positions at Messenger Publishing Group

We publish ten local newspapers in the Sacramento Region. Our main office is in Carmichael. We have been publishing for fifteen years and are seeking new qualified employees.

CURRENT WORK OPPORTUNITIES

Office Administration - We are seeking a part-time administrative support person for our newspaper group. This position works in the Carmichael office and works directly with the Office Manager. Work hours are flexible between 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Previous office management experience is required.

Production Layout/Graphic Design - This part-time position assists with the layout of the newspapers and works with the production staff to create our weekly newspapers. Must have good working knowledge of InDesign production programs. Must be able to work within our current system and be able to take direction to meet our deadlines. Previous layout experience is a must. This is an entry level position. Work hours are between 8:30 am and 5:00 pm.

Copy Editor - We are seeking a part-time City Editor for our newspaper group. This position works in the Carmichael office and works directly with Editor. Work hours are flexible between 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Previous editing experience is required.

City Reporter - We are seeking a part-time City Reporter for our newspaper group. This position may be assigned to work in the Carmichael office or another area office and works directly with the Editor. Work hours are flexible depending on assignments. Previous reporting experience is required.

Freelance Contributing Writer - We are seeking local writers for our ten local newspapers, including local sports coverage. These are independent freelance positions compensated

on a per article basis. These are work from home positions.

Advertising Services Support - We are seeking a part-time Advertising Services Support person for our newspaper group. This position works in the Carmichael office and works directly with the owner of the company and the advertising/graphics staff. Work hours are flexible between 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Previous office experience is required.

Delivery Driver - We are seeking a part-time Delivery Driver for our newspaper group. This position would transport newspapers from our Carmichael office to our offices in Marysville and Gridley. Work hours are from 8:30 to 4:00 every Thursday. Must be able to lift and move bundles of newspapers without assistance. Must have your own reliable cargo van. This is an independent contractor position and pays a flat rate for your service.

Newsstand Delivery Driver - We are seeking a part-time Newsstand Deliver Driver for our newspaper group. This position works from the Carmichael office and delivers to our locations in the West Sacramento/Sacramento Region. Work hours are from 8:30 to 5:00 Thursday and/or Friday. Must be able to lift and move bundles of newspapers without assistance. You must have a reliable vehicle. This is an independent contractor position.

Home Delivery Driver - We are seeking home delivery independent contractors for delivery in the Sacramento Region. Compensation is determined on a per piece basis. Delivery begins every Thursday morning and newspapers are picked up at our Carmichael office.

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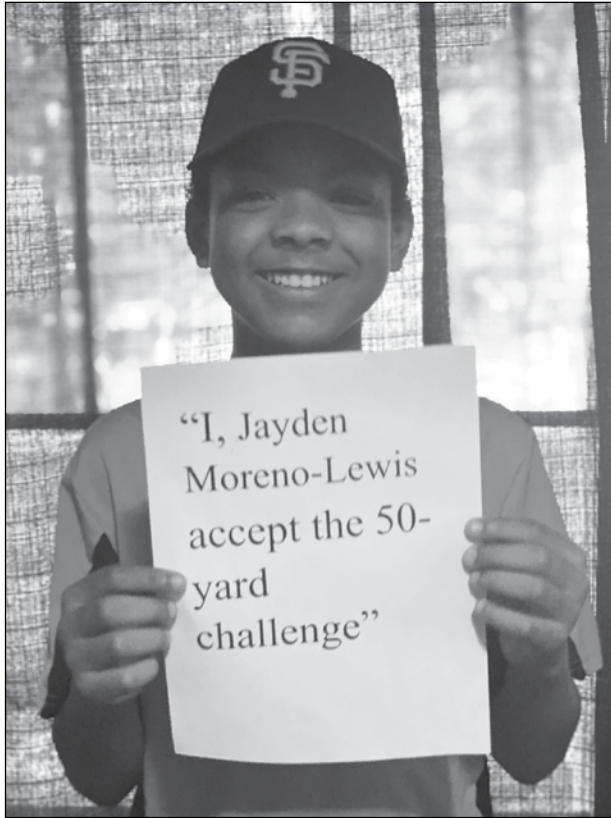
50-Yard Challenge Gone Worldwide

By Michele Townsend

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Rodney Smith Jr. is a 32-year-old man that lives in Alabama. Rodney doesn't have any children of his own, but he believes that it is important for children to learn that helping people and giving back to your community is an important part of becoming a good person as an adult. Rodney has a lawn service, based in Alabama, called Raising Men Lawn Care Service.

Raising Men Lawn Care Service is a free service for people that do not have the ability or the funds to take care of their yard. Therefore, this free service is for the elderly, the disabled, veterans and single parents. So in 2016, Rodney decided to put the challenge out there into the world and he created the 50-Yard Challenge. He was looking for a way to channel the energy that kids have, in a positive way.

The 50-Yard Challenge is for girls and boys to mow 50 yards, for free, for someone that can use the help. This also includes raking leaves and shoveling snow. While the kids



Sacramento area 12-year-old Jayden Moreno-Lewis accepted the 50-Yard Challenge. Photo provided by Aleecia Gutierrez



Julian Gutierrez, a 12-year-old, posted his acceptance of the 50-Yard Challenge. Photo provided by Aleecia Gutierrez

that accept the challenge follow a positive path, they learn their importance to society. The challenge has not only taken off across the country, but has gone worldwide.

It begins by a child logging onto weareraisingmen.com and sending a picture of themselves holding a sign that says, "I

accept the 50-Yard challenge". They will then receive a white Raising Men t-shirt, along with sunglasses and ear protection in the mail. The child is to take a picture of each yard that they care for, for free. They are to submit those pictures.

For every 10 yards, the kids get another color of

t-shirt. When 50 yards have been completed, Rodney travels to where you are to deliver to you your final t-shirt, hat and a brand new lawn mower, weed eater and or leaf blower. Rodney has traveled to every state in our country and has now gone to 8 other countries to deliver the equipment to children that have

completed the challenge. He makes all deliveries himself.

"Even though we are called Raising Men, we are Raising Women too", Rodney says, "Three years ago I realized that there were not as many girls signing up for the challenge and that those that did were wearing Raising

Men t-shirts. That did not sit well with me, so we created Raising Women Lawn Care Service". Now young ladies receive Raising Women t-shirts.

Raising Men is a 501(c)3 and relies completely on the generosity of supporters for the equipment, the shirts, hats and travel expenses. You can donate and learn all about the group on weareraisingmen.com. You can also purchase adult sized shirts and hats in support of your kids and the program. In addition, you can see video testimony from the kids and view news stories that have been done.

This program really is putting the care back into lawn care, and your kids can meet some interesting people. One mother said, "Sometimes people insisted on paying, so we just didn't count those lawns". It is left to the kids and their parents to determine who could use their help. Summer is coming up on us fast. If your kids have energy to burn, and don't know where to burn it off, consider this challenge. It's a great way for your kids to learn about their community. ★

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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • THE OSCARS

CLUES

ACROSS

- "In the Hall of the Mountain King" composer Edvard _____
- Marlboro debris
- *Academy Award ceremony audience sound
- Boch
- Sigma _____ fraternity
- Ten million, in India
- Embryo sacs
- Literary "even"
- Tax evader's fear
- *Most nominated streamer in this year's Oscars
- *Most-nominated Black actor in Oscar history
- Opposite of yang
- Lard cousin
- *Milk _____ movie snack
- Poetic source of Norse mythology
- 2020 demographic event
- Arrival times, acronym
- Baseball points
- Camelot to King Arthur
- Actress Campbell
- *Where Oscar-winner "Stumdog Millionaire" was set
- Not in favor
- *What Halle Berry did when she won an Oscar in 2002
- Jet black
- Lively
- Paid killers (2 words)
- Upon
- Rally repeater
- Sweet-talk
- Not outs
- *Total Oscar nominations for "The Power of the Dog"
- *One of this year's Oscar hosts
- Exotic juice flavor
- *Jamie Foxx won an Oscar in 2005 for this flick
- Bizet's "Carmen," e.g.
- Off kilter
- *1942's "Holiday _____" Oscar winner
- Admit (2 words)
- Afterward
- And so on acronym
- Took the Kool-Aid

DOWN

- J. Edgar Hoover's man
- Ice on a window
- Antonym of "is"
- Enlighten
- Puck stopper
- Kilimanjaro top, e.g.
- Pronoun
- Hinduism follower
- *"Parallel Mothers" nominee Penelope
- Prospector's mother
- Seed coat
- Lassie, e.g.
- Type of horse gait
- Lemur from Madagascar
- European Economic Community
- Playground attraction
- *"Belfast" nominee, "Shakespeare in Love" winner
- First cradles
- Lifeboat support
- *Denis Villeneuve's sci-fi nominee
- Type of tide
- Not so crazy
- Extremist
- *"King Richard" nominee, once a fresh prince
- Give an impression
- Land of Israel
- Shenanigan
- Remove claws
- Presidential election mo.
- Waiting on the phone (2 words)
- Eagle's nest
- Like the Incredibles
- Backside
- Boat track
- Not odd
- Update, as in a FitBit
- Formerly Facebook
- *Julia Robert's 2001 Oscar-winning role
- Colonel or captain
- Gangster's gun
- _____ eater or _____ hill

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Looking for Great Travel Companions?

By David Dickstein,
Gold River Resident

As an award-winning, globetrotting, credentialed and trusted veteran travel writer, this super-humble scribe is often asked for sage advice. And as a valuable public service, I happily oblige.

The question I get most, after “Between the Rancho Cordova Marriott and the Burj Al Arab in Dubai, which has the better room service mozzarella sticks?” is this one that has to do with things rather than places: “What travel products do you recommend?”

This has been asked by strangers on a number of flights, cruises and other modes of transportation over the decades. Since COVID-19, this query has been more around PPE, which either stands for personal protective equipment or “Philosophy, Politics and Economics,” a degree course at Oxford University. It could also stand for pruritic papular eruption, a common cutaneous manifestation causing significant morbidity in HIV positive patients. Fascinating as the latter two sound, let’s stick with the more common first definition for the sake of this column.

So, what are travel products that get my Good Traveling Seal of Approval? Here’s a handful, and as St. Christopher, patron saint of safe travel, and Dr. Fauci, patron saint of disposable masks, are my witnesses, these recommendations are legit. Other than receiving samples for review, I get zip from the companies. Heck, I don’t even get paid for this column. Sounds like someone here needs to take that PPE course at Oxford. Anyway, here goes:

• Nomatic Travel Pack – It’s a suitcase! It’s a backpack! It’s a briefcase! It’s the ... Best. Travel. Bag. Ever. So smart is this instantly indispensable piece of luggage, I’ve named it Einstein. This is must-have gear for getaways of one to three days, or longer for those like



me who need something better than an attaché case or satchel to carry everything from multiple electronic devices and all their cables to paperwork, guides, refreshments, eyewear, keys, pens, you name it. The case is black and sleek, durable, expandable, versatile, water resistant and has so many zippers and pockets, even this Type-A guy with OCD-like tendencies has temporarily “lost” things I’ve put inside. Can’t blame Einstein; that’s all on this guy who loves to organize almost as much as travel. \$300. www.nomatic.com

• Rotor RiotPWR Controller – An alternative to spending big bucks on a Nintendo Switch or other travel-friendly

gaming device is this nifty product that turns any iPhone or Android smartphone into a portable console. Installation of the removable phone mount is a literal snap, and really like both the comfortable grip and pass-through charging that powers both connected devices simultaneously. \$50. www.riotpwr.com

• TripTrays – Made in Sacramento, these placemat-sized table covers are a germ-detering godsend for this frequent flier who doesn’t trust that planes really are cleaned between flights and overnight as promised by players of an industry not known for integrity. Once the plane reaches cruising altitude, I pull my 100 percent cotton and machine washable

TripTray from the pouch and cover my seat’s tray table instead of wiping it down with a moist disposable towelette. They come in nine cool designs including the bee-themed “Sacramento-SMF” with two more on the way at press time. One other thing: The non-skid backside makes this project great for laptop use during turbulence. \$25. www.triptrays.com

• Fend Wellness Sanitizing Hand Wipe Mitts – Claiming itself as the first wearable hand mitt wipes that provide a protective liner between you and the surfaces you touch, this product is a germ-phobe’s dream, coronavirus or no coronavirus. These days, however, even people without such fears should be cautious about picking up germs and bacteria when on the road. True, wearing these wipe mitts in public does look silly, but so did face masks before they became in vogue. I’ve found that hotels are the best use for these. Traveling with Lysol isn’t always possible, so putting on a wipe mitt to sanitize the doorknobs, phones, remotes, switches and other surfaces that would usually get a sanitizing spritz in the first minutes of each stay are now literally done by hand. \$12 for a 10-pack. www.fendwellness.com

• PlaneAire – Love this line of American-made, awesome-smelling hand sanitizers, deodorizing surface cleaners, air mists and wipes. The orange-pine-apple sanitizing spray that makes your hands smell like a Life Savers candy was so popular on my recent flight from Cairo that my spray bottle was empty before the layover in Dubai. Won’t be so nice to strangers with the next order. Other germ-killing scents include sandalwood, cardamom-lavender and lemongrass-rosemary. Various prices. www.planeaire.com

David Dickstein is a Gold River resident, award-winning writer and principal at the PR firm Prose & Comms Inc. He can be reached at daviddickstein1@gmail.com. ★

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