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Land Park News

VOL 32 • ISSUE 19 *Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years* OCTOBER 13, 2023

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Society for the Blind Announces Blindness Awareness Month

*By Kristin
Thébaud, Thébaud
Communications*

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Nonprofit Society for the Blind in Sacramento is encouraging local residents to honor Blindness Awareness Month throughout October by participating in activities and supporting people with vision loss so they can gain the skills they need to stay independent and thrive.

“Our clients tell us all the time that they thought their life was over when they began losing vision, but they discovered it was the beginning of a new chapter,” said Shari Roeseler, executive director, Society for the Blind. “During Blindness Awareness Month, we want to make sure everyone knows that people can live their best lives with vision loss or blindness when they have the right tools. If you are losing your vision, or you know someone who is, we have a wide array of classes and support that will help you build the skills you need, whether you are a child, working-age adult or senior.” For nearly 70 years, Society for the Blind has created



Society for the Blind clients learn how to carve pumpkins without vision during Blindness Awareness Month in October. Photo courtesy of Thébaud Communications

innovative ways to empower individuals living with low vision or blindness to discover, develop and achieve their full potential. Based in Sacramento, Society for the Blind has grown from a dedicated group of volunteers to a nationally recognized agency and the only comprehensive rehabilitative teaching center that provides services for a 27-county region of northern California and the state of Nevada. The nonprofit provides low-vision eye care, life and job

skills training, mentorship, and access to tools to maintain independence for more than 5,000 youth, working-age adults and seniors experiencing vision loss each year.

In addition to its onsite Low Vision Clinic and assistive technology store, Society for the Blind offers four core classes – orientation and mobility, independent living skills, computers and technology, and braille – to ensure people with vision loss can stay active, employed and

living life to the fullest. The nonprofit also provides a program for seniors that includes retreats, support groups and activities such as yoga and cooking classes. For youth, Society for the Blind offers a job readiness program, after-school center and podcast team. The nonprofit also offers support groups for caregivers and parents of children with vision loss, as well as events open to the public.

To learn more or make a donation, visit www.SocietyfortheBlind.org. ★

Secured Property Tax Bills Mailed This Month

**Sacramento County
News Release**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County will mail about 481,774 secured property tax bills which are payable beginning November 1, 2023. These tax bills are mailed only once a year; however, property owners may pay their bills in two installment payments:

The first installment payment is due on November 1, 2023. Payments will be accepted without penalty until 5 p.m. on December 11, 2023; The second installment payment is due on February 1, 2024. Payments will be accepted without penalty until 5 p.m. on April 10, 2024; Both installments may be paid when the first installment is due. A reminder notice will not be mailed for the second installment.

Taxpayers may sign up for online e-mail notifications for annual secured property tax bills and reminders before delinquent dates. Choose “e-Subscribe for property tax payment notifications” to receive these notifications.

Payments can be made online via credit card or electronic check. Taxpayers may print tax bill installment payment stubs to mail in with their payments. Taxpayers may also pay by credit card or electronic check over the telephone at (844) 430-2823. There is a convenience fee for credit and debit cards. Electronic checks are free.

Payment can be made in person at the Sacramento County Tax Collector’s Office at 700 H Street, Room 1710, between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. In-person payments can be paid via cash, check, credit card, debit card or money order. A convenience fee will apply for credit card and debit card transactions.

Payments can be sent via mail to P.O. Box 508, Sacramento, CA 95812-0508. The Tax Collector accepts and processes payments based on the postmark date. Payments may not be credited to the tax bill for several business

Continued on Page 4

Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial Torch

Motorcycle Ride Pays Tribute to Three Local Gold Star Families

**Photos and Story
By Stephen B. Clazie,
Sacramento
Elks Lodge**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The departure ceremony is not impressive according to Warren Williamson, who is the leader of the Fallen Soldiers Tribute. “It is,” according to Williamson, “simply our organization ceremoniously taking back the Fallen Soldiers Memorial Flame from our host, Elks 6, so we can continue to honor America’s fallen service members and our journey home.”

The Flame is impressive by itself. Then to see this Flame traveling down the road followed by a line of motorcyclist is very impressive. As the National Anthem is played at 8:30 A.M. in front of Elks Lodge No. 6 you think about



A memorial is displayed at the Elks Lodge during the tribute.

this Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial Torch Motorcycle Ride is going to be traveling 308 miles to Medford, Oregon, today.

On the way they

are going to stop in Williams and then Weed, California, to do Honor Ceremonies for two Fallen Soldiers.

On the side of the motorhome that serves

as their headquarters is a plaque listing the 46 honorees on this “14TH ANNUAL TRIBUTE TO FALLEN SOLDIERS

Continued on Page 2

**Parktoberfest 2023
was a huge success!
Thank you to all that
came out to support
our neighborhood!
See page 10 for details!**

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DRE# 01870143

Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial Torch

Motorcycle Ride Pays Tribute to Three Local Gold Star Families



Warren Williamson, the leader of the Fallen Soldiers Tribute at the Elks Lodge Sacramento.



Tribute to the Fallen Motorcycle Ride, led by the motorhome with the plaque '14TH ANNUAL TRIBUTE TO FALLEN SOLDIERS MEMORIAL TORCH MOTORCYCLE RIDE, SEPTEMBER 9 - 30, 2023' as well as the list of 46 honorees.

Continued from Page 1
MEMORIAL TORCH MOTORCYCLE RIDE, SEPTEMBER 9 - 30, 2023.”

This dedicated group of patriotic Americans, who choose to ride their motorcycles throughout this great country and wrap their arms around families who’ve paid the ultimate sacrifice, will be in Medford to do an Honor Ceremony at 7:30 that night.

Beside all of that, they are going to be riding in the rain following that Flame. It will be remain bright the whole way! Just thinking about that dedication to make a Tribute to America’s fallen service member is impressive.

Elks 6’s James Shearer coordinated the Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial Torch Motorcycle Ride visit, and the Lodge held a dinner on Wednesday, September 28th, for the group. While staying at the Sacramento Elks Lodge #6 the Motorcycle Ride Tribute had visits with three Gold Star Families in the Sacramento Area.

The service at Elks 6 was for Army Staff Sergeant Christopher Ivan Roberts. He served with Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment as a “Centurion.” In the United States Army a “Centurion” is roughly equivalent to a captain.

They also performed an Honor Ceremony in Cameron Park and Granite Bay. “Those are what’s impressive,” as far as Williamson is concerned.

This is the 14th Annual Tribute Ride. and it was coming to an end. The very first ride was in June of 2009, and Williamson said, “More than 320 motorcycles arrived at Salem, Oregon to participate in our inaugural ride.” It was a single day event in which we scheduled just four Fallen Soldier Home Visits.

After the 2016 tribute ride, Williamson said, “We created our cross country Tribute to Fallen Soldiers Memorial

Torch Motorcycle Ride, which now begins every summer in Eugene, Oregon and ends at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington D.C.” This annual cross country journey allows them to travel a new ride route each and every summer to meet and touch the thousands and thousands of Gold Star families living in every corner of the country. “It was our ambition,” Williamson said, “to honor each and every one of these fallen service members to graciously acknowledge their service and sacrifice and to remind each Gold Star family their fallen service member wasn’t forgotten.” ★



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SALE PENDING
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This community, where luxury living meets natural beauty, and the Sacramento River is your backyard. This exceptional property offers a modern and architecturally intriguing design, featuring 5 bedrooms, a bonus room, As you step inside, you'll be immediately captivated by the open great room concept, which seamlessly blends the indoors with the outdoors. Walls of glass flood the living spaces with natural light and provide breathtaking views of the lush surroundings. The heart of this home is a chef's delight, complete with a large walk-in pantry for all your culinary needs. Downstairs primary suite awaits, offering ample room for a sitting area where you The primary bathroom boasts dual sink vanities, A 3-car garage with abundant storage space makes organization a breeze. Outside, you'll discover a yard that's perfect for entertaining and recreation, with enough space to accommodate your dream pool.

7796 Oak Bay Circle, Sacramento CA \$1,095,000



Welcome to your Dream Home in the Sought-After Colonial Village Area!



This immaculate 4-bedroom, 2-bathroom gem is move-in ready and boasts a stunning array of features that will leave you breathless. As you step inside, you'll be greeted by the warmth of newer features such as: windows that flood the living spaces with natural light. The heart of this home, the kitchen, is a culinary masterpiece with its quartz countertops, beautiful cabinets, and state-of-the-art stainless steel appliances. The laminate flooring flows seamlessly throughout. Stay comfortable year-round with ceiling fans in each room and revel in the peace of mind that comes with upgraded electrical and plumbing throughout. No detail has been overlooked. Both bathrooms have been given a complete makeover within the last few years, ensuring a luxurious and modern feel. Now, let's talk about the backyard - it's a sprawling oasis, perfect for entertaining, gardening, and simply unwinding after a long day. Bonus: there is ample space to put an adu in the backyard and still have room to entertain!

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Matsui Announces \$3.18M for Heritage Oaks Park Improvement Project

Office of Congresswoman Doris Matsui

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Wednesday, September 20, 2023, Congresswoman Doris Matsui (CA-07) and the City of West Sacramento announced over \$3.18 million in federal funding for the City’s Heritage Oaks Park Improvement Project.

“The close partnership between the federal government and the City of West Sacramento is crucial to ensure we inject federal dollars directly into our community,” said Congresswoman Matsui. “Parks bring people together – they invigorate our community and enrich residents’ lives. That’s why I am proud to advocate for our cities at the federal level and ensure they get the resources they need to deliver this kind of transformative project.”

“The City’s Heritage Oaks

Park plan presents a unique opportunity to craft a park space that celebrates a rare native grove of heritage oaks while providing our residents with access to nature and wildlife as well as other recreational and educational opportunities,” said West Sacramento Mayor Martha Guerrero. “This funding will help bring that vision to reality, and we can’t thank Congresswoman Matsui enough for her leadership in delivering vital resources to the West Sacramento community.”

The City’s Heritage Oaks Park Improvement Project will bring an outdoor amphitheater, public plaza park entrance, prefabricated restroom building, interactive water feature, playground area, shade feature, fencing, walking paths with fitness stations, elevated boardwalk, BMX skills course, skate plaza, and a demonstration/community garden. This project will also include a parking

lot expansion with paving, landscaping, and the installation of benches, drinking fountain, trash receptacles, bike racks and picnic tables. These improvements will provide a variety of new outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all ages and physical abilities that will support local recreation needs and serve as a regional destination.

The funding comes from the U.S. National Park Service’s Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) State and Local Assistance Program. The program provides matching grants for local and state park projects outside national park boundaries. Ranging from active recreation facilities to natural areas, funds can be used to renovate existing sites, develop new facilities, acquire land for state and local parks and promote statewide recreation planning. The total grant amount is \$3,182,700. ★

Grants Available for Art Organizations in Sac County



The Arts and Cultural Nonprofit Recovery Program aims to support arts and cultural nonprofits in the region. Image courtesy of Pexels

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County’s Office of Economic Development has partnered with the City of Sacramento’s Office of Arts and Culture to offer grants to nonprofit organizations located in Sacramento County that are focused on the arts, collections and exhibits, to help them recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The “Arts and Cultural Nonprofit Recovery Program,” launched in 2022, aims to support arts and cultural nonprofits in the region.

“We know that cultural organizations are still feeling the effects of the pandemic,” said the City’s Arts Grant Manager, Melissa Cirone. “This is an opportunity for organizations that haven’t yet received a nonprofit recovery grant to secure vital operating support.”

To date, the program has supported 91 organizations Countywide with \$3.75 million. The grant program is funded through City and County federal American Rescue Plan dollars.

Eligible organizations include nonprofit theaters, performing arts groups, community arts organizations, historical sites, zoos and botanical gardens, visual art galleries, and film or cultural festivals. Organizations must have 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status through the IRS and provide evidence of incorporation prior to March 1, 2020.

“Sacramento County’s local arts and nonprofit cultural institutions are an indispensable part of what makes our community so vibrant and special,” said the County’s Director of Economic Development Crystal Bethke. “We are glad that this funding is available to support the recovery and sustainability of this critical sector and encourage

all eligible organizations to apply.”

Applicants must produce, promote or engage in live performances, events, or exhibits intended for public viewing and those that preserve and exhibit objects of historical, cultural or educational interest.

Grants can be used for operating expenses such as salaries and benefits for employees, fees for artists and contractors, mortgage/rent, utilities, insurance and marketing.

Award amounts will be based on the total size of the grant pool and the organization’s submitted annual operating revenue for fiscal year 2021-22 or calendar year 2022. The total grant amount will be awarded over two years.

Grant applications must be submitted by Oct. 30 at 11:59 p.m. Only new applicants can apply. Find more information and eligibility criteria on the City’s website. ★



The rendering courtesy of the City of West Sacramento.



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PENDING

LAND PARK

Large corner lot in Land Park. Enjoy this remodeled "move-in" condition 2 bed / 2 bath home on a lovely tree lined street. Beautifully refinished hardwood floors in the spacious living room with bay window, plantation shutters, fireplace with insert and recessed lighting with mirrors. Enjoy cooking in the delightfully remodeled kitchen with quartz counters, under counter recessed lighting, stainless steel dishwasher & sink, gas range / even oven three door pantry. Both bedrooms have ceiling fans and wood floors. Hall bathroom has restored cut free tub with shower and vanity with marble counter. Second bath is in the back bedroom and features a large tiled shower. Plantation shutters throughout, many dual paneled windows, inside laundry room with cabinets, folding area and access to back porch. Two driveways, single car garage. Close to many of Land Park's favorite spots. Don't miss this one! 8041 17th Street \$298,000



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New Guidance Available for COVID Vaccines

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - In response to the evolving nature of the COVID-19 virus, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has issued new guidance for vaccines. Bivalent COVID-19 vaccines have been phased out, making way for an updated vaccine that offers enhanced protection against the prevalent Omicron variants.

Who Should Get the Updated COVID-19 Vaccine?

The CDC strongly recommends that every individual aged 6 months and older receive the updated COVID-19 vaccine. This inclusive approach ensures that a broad spectrum of the population is shielded from the ever-evolving virus.

The updated COVID-19 vaccine will soon be accessible to the public and available to most people at no cost. For those without insurance, a network of pharmacies, select health care centers, and clinics operated by Sacramento County Public Health will offer

the vaccine. This approach ensures that no one is left behind, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Individuals with private health insurance, Medicaid, or Medicare coverage are encouraged to visit a pharmacy or their doctor's office to receive their updated COVID-19 vaccine. This streamlined process allows those with insurance to efficiently access the vaccine through existing healthcare channels.

To stay updated on the latest information regarding the availability and distribution of the updated COVID-19 vaccine, visit the Public Health website. We will provide valuable resources, including links to the MyTurn platform and information on nearby clinics.

The updated COVID-19 vaccine is a continued resource in safeguarding public health against the Omicron variants. By ensuring accessibility to all, regardless of insurance or immigration status, we aim to create a safer, healthier community for everyone. Stay informed, stay protected, and let us move forward together in the fight against COVID-19.

★

Secured Property Tax Bills Mailed This Month

Continued from Page 1

days depending upon the volume of payments received, whether payments were submitted with the correct payment stubs, and/or whether envelopes were postmarked by the delinquent date.

Property tax law (Prop 8) requires that parcels be assessed at their factored Prop 13 value, or their fair market value (as of January 1, 2023, property tax lien date), whichever is less.

A rising real estate market can cause higher-than-expected increases in a parcel's annual tax bill if that parcel was in Prop 8 status last year. However, the assessed value of any parcel cannot increase beyond that parcel's factored Prop 13 level. The 2% inflation cap applies only to Prop 13 assessments. It does not apply to Prop 8 assessments, which by law must track the property's market value until it reaches the Prop 13 factored value.

Find assessed values on the Assessor's website under "Assessed Value Lookup," including this year's value and the factored Prop 13 value for comparison. If a taxpayer

has evidence that their assessed value as of January 1, 2023, was less than that shown on this year's (2023-2024) tax bill, they should:

Visit the Assessor's Website; Call the Assessor's Office at (916) 875-0700; or Email the Assessor's Office at Assessor@SacCounty.gov

Taxpayers may obtain current-year tax bill information, copies of property tax bills, direct levy information, delinquent prior-year tax information, and amounts due through the Sacramento County Online Property Tax Bill Information System, searching by APN or address. Find a QR Code on your tax bill payment stub for use with smartphones to connect to our website.

Sacramento County also has a 24-hour/7-day-a-week Automated Property Tax Information Line that provides information on tax subjects and access to detailed billing and payment information. Tax specialists are available from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Friday. Reach the system and tax specialists by calling (916) 874-6622.

If you own property

and do not receive a tax bill by October 15, 2023, you may obtain tax bill copies, property tax information and payment stubs (coupons) on the Tax Collector's website.

Revenue & Tax Code 2610.5 "Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the property owner of the liability to pay taxes in a timely manner or give the Tax Collector reason to cancel penalties imposed for late payment."

Even if your tax bill is being paid by a lending institution (mortgage company), state law requires that a copy of the tax bill be sent to the property owner; all property owners should receive either the original tax bill or an "Owner's Information Copy." It is the responsibility of the property owner to keep their mailing address current with the Assessor's Office. To update your mailing address, please contact the Assessor's Office in writing at 3636 American River Drive, Suite 200, Sacramento, CA 95864 or via email at Assessor@sacounty.gov. Please make sure you include a parcel number and phone number with all correspondence.

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ABOUT TOWN

Spooky Season at the Crocker Museum

Scream your way into October with spook-tacular events and programs for everyone to enjoy at the Crocker Art Museum.

Upcoming Events:

- IT’S (AI)LIVE!: **Frankenstein – October 19 -6:30 PM**
Frankenstein (1931), James Whale
Run Time: 1h 11m
This iconic horror film follows the obsessed scientist Dr. Henry Frankenstein as he attempts to create life by assembling a creature from body parts of the deceased.
- Halloween History Tour – **October 21 • 11 AM**
From ghost stories to seances, step back in time to learn how the Crocker family would have celebrated Halloween. Join an experienced Museum docent and celebrate the spooky season, Victorian-style, on this special themed edition of the monthly Crocker History Tour.
- Wee Halloween – **October 25 • 10 AM**
Calling little ghosts and goblins and the adults who accompany them! Join us for this fun-filled, family-friendly Halloween experience featuring trick-or-treating and other festive activities throughout the Museum like a Día de Muertos show from Nadir Vasquez, spooky storytelling by Voice of the Woods, marvelous magic by Pixie Blossom of Pixie Tribe, and a Ghostly show by Sacramento Ghostbusters. Haunt the galleries with a special tour from 10 to 11 AM and then join the thrilling dance party with the Hoots in the ballroom until 12:30 PM.

To find out more, check out crockerart.org.

Elks Membership Special in October

Visit the Elks Membership Booth at GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market any Saturday in October and learn about our indoor swimming pool and athletic facilities. The application fee to join the Elks is \$1 until the end of October. Normally it is \$30. You save \$29.

Elk’s Lodge October Calendar of Events

Elks Parking Lot Sale and GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market.

Saturday, October 14, from 8 A.M. ~ 1P.M.
This year we are combining our very popular Parking Lot Sale with the GreenHaven Pocket

Farmers Market, 6446 Riverside Blvd.

Vendors for the Market will be along Riverside Blvd. and the Tree Line.

First Annual Sacramento Spice Fest at the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market

Saturday, October 21, from 8 A.M. ~ 1P.M.
Creature Sauce Co. along with Prescribed Burn Sauces, Insomnia Hot Sauce, and Beale Sauce Company, are pleased to announce that they will be the vendors for the pepper-eating competition. Podcaster Mikey Muscatello is hosting this event. This is going to be a great day so come on out to the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market, 6446 Riverside Blvd.

Elks 6’s Annual Arts & Craft Festival and Greenhaven Pocket Farmers Market.

Arts & Crafts on Saturday, October 28, from 9 A.M. ~ 3 P.M.

Quality crafts by local artist from 9 A.M. ~ 3 P.M. Vendors both indoors and outdoors along with our GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market Vendors. For more information please go to our Elks 6 site and click on the Crafts Fair flyer, <https://www.elks6.com/events.html>

The Greenhaven Pocket Farmers Market will open at 8 A.M.

Free Raffle at GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market every Saturday until November 11th

C o m e b y Membership Booth anf fill out a raffle ticket for a chance to win a free farmers market tote bag filled with fresh farmer products and other goodies. The winning ticket will be drawn at 1 P.M. at the close of each market day until Saturday, November 11th. The winner need not be present to win.

Can you stay too long at the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market?

Vic Cima, manager of the GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market, said, “Juan Flores thought he had to shop from 8 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at the GHP Farmers Market. His dog got so tired that he had to take a dog nap! Juan will be back every Saturday. We hope his dog also comes.”

The GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market will have a Halloween Costume contest

The GreenHaven Pocket Farmers Market will have a Halloween Costume contest on Saturday, October 28, at 10:30 A.M. Prizes will be given for the best child veggie or fruit costume. A total

of three winners will be chosen. Each of the three winners will receive three tickets for a free Elks Sunday breakfast.

Canal Holiday Lights Community Pocket News Event

Hi friends and neighbors!

Costco has had Christmas decor for a month, so winter must be coming soon! With it comes the return of our Pocket Canal Holiday Lights!

I hope you’ve enjoyed this great tradition as much as I have. I love

the beautiful show as the lights reflect off the water, but most of all, I enjoy how much it gets our community out, enjoying it together, being with friends, being with family.

We need your help to keep it going and continue to grow this great community tradition.

Can you make a donation to support the effort this year? Any amount helps!

Donations are tax deductible, please donate here:

<https://giftstoshare-inc.ejoinme.org/donate> (select “District 7 Canal Holiday Lights”)

If your business is interested in sponsoring, please let me know!

And save the dates, December 2nd, hanging holiday lights & December 3rd, lighting ceremony with Santa.

Thanks so much for your support!

Your partner in building stronger communities,
Devin Lavelle
devinlavelle@gmail.com

Sacramento Area Museums Showcase Region’s Farm-to-Fork Roots All Year Long

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (August 28, 2023) – The Greater Sacramento region is rich with popular museums and destinations that offer diverse and enriching experiences for individuals, families, residents, and visitors alike. Given the critically important role agriculture continues to play in the region, many local museums offer special exhibits, experiences and activations that highlight ever-enduring Farm-to-Fork connections. A sampling of some of the Farm-to-Fork offerings at local museums includes the following:

California Agriculture Museum – Woodland is home to an entire museum focused on agriculture, filled with a unique collection of harvesters, wheel and crawler-type tractors, combines, trucks, art,

artifacts, rotating interactive exhibits and much more. In all, the museum tells the history of Farm-to-Fork, dating back to the Gold Rush era and how the industry evolved from horse drawn to steam driven to fuel powered machines to harvest and transport California’s bounty.

California State Railroad Museum & Foundation – A Fruit Growers Express refrigerated rail car is on permanent display inside the Museum’s Roundhouse. Museum visitors can explore this historic rail car and exhibit, “Farm to Fork: A Public History,” and learn about how refrigerated rail cars enabled California farmers, growers, and producers send farm-to-fork freshness all over the country. Visitors can step inside the historic Fruit Growers Express rail car to see how the ice-cooled rail cars transported produce and built an agricultural system that exports more wealth than the California Gold Rush. Plus, the popular week-end excursion train, Sacramento Southern Railroad – currently on pause due to an important rail repair project – runs on the historic Walnut Grove Branch Line. This rail line transported pears, asparagus, celery, seeds, and other products from the Delta communities to markets nationwide.

Sacramento Children’s Museum – Young visitors hungry to learn about fresh food have a variety of options at the Children’s Museum, including at the miniature Leo’s Market and Leo’s Food Court (a miniature market of food carts), about bees and honey with the in-house beehive, and an interactive train table highlighting Sacramento’s agricultural landscape in miniature, complete with mini livestock. Plus, the Children’s Museum will be at the Farm-to-Fork Festival (September 22-23) sharing vegetable stamp printing with visitors.

SMUD Museum of Science & Curiosity – MOSAC’s interactive exhibits bring the story of water to life, demonstrating how our region is working together to conserve this natural resource for now and future generations. The “Water Challenge” exhibit lets museum visitors actively shape a watershed’s flow, create a tune for saving water at home, and choose between local or non-local foods to buy based on how everyday decisions impact conservation efforts — all while learning about

the environmental footprint along the way.

Utility Exploration Center – The City of Roseville’s Utility Exploration Center (UEC) is a testament to the region’s commitment to sustainable living and resource conservation. Nestled in the heart of a region renowned for its Farm-to-Fork movement, the UEC acts as an educational hub, encouraging residents and visitors alike to delve into the intricacies of energy and water conservation, waste reduction, and sustainable practices. By fostering an understanding of how we use and preserve resources, the UEC underscores the importance of our agricultural roots.

For more information about upcoming activities offered by Sacramento area museums, “like” them on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/SacMuseums, follow them on Instagram and Twitter @SacMuseums or visit the user-friendly website at www.SacMuseums.org.

Friends of Sutter’s Fort Announces Exciting Line-Up of Special Events and Activations Happening this Fall

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Friends of Sutter’s Fort, in partnership with Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park, is proud to present a series of family-friendly events and activations this fall highlighted by holiday themed movies, an all-ages concert, and adventurous self-guided evening tours by flashlight or lantern light.

A schedule of fall activities presented by Friends of Sutter’s Fort includes the following:

Films with Friends on Saturday Evenings, October 21 and December 2

Continuing a series of popular “Films with Friends” outdoor movie screenings, two holiday themed movies will be shown on the exterior wall of Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park at 26th & L Streets. Movies include Disney’s “Coco” on October 21 and “Elf” on December 2. Moviegoers are encouraged to bring blankets and chairs, and friendly dogs (on leash) are welcome; no alcohol is allowed. Movie goers can also choose to support Friends of Sutter’s Fort by purchasing a Films with Friends Fun Pack for \$50 with all proceeds benefiting efforts to bring more community events and activations to Sutter’s Fort. Friends Fun Packs are available to order in advance at www.suttersfort.org and on-site at the event (if and while supplies last). For

more information about Films with Friends, please visit www.suttersfort.org/event/films-with-friends.

Sunset & Strings Jamboree on Thursday Evening, October 26 at 6:30 p.m.

Featuring the Rock Bottom Boys – performing for the first time within Sacramento city limits – the community can experience and enjoy and all-ages musical event with energizing three-part harmonies, homespun vocal styling, boot stomping music, and well-seasoned showmanship. This live musical event is a fundraiser to support future field trips and educational opportunities at Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park. For tickets to Sunset & Strings Jamboree, please visit <https://suttersfort.ticketspice.com/sunset-strings-jamboree>.

Flashlights & Friends After Hour Tours – Friday, December 1 from 6 to 8:30 p.m.

For those seeking fun and adventure in a unique space, Flashlight & Friends may be just the ticket. The holiday themed evening provides an opportunity to explore Sutter’s Fort Historic Park like never before – by flashlight or lantern light (guests can bring their own or purchase them on-site). The self-guided tour experience is family friendly and includes live music, games, and treats for event attendees. For tickets and/or more information about Flashlights & Friends, please visit <https://suttersfort.org/event/flashlights-friends/>

The special events and activations support the nonprofit Friends of Sutter’s Fort to help provide upcoming programming such as field trips and future events at Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park.

For those interested in visiting inside Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park (that is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily), all Fort admission fees will be waived for the duration of a major roof replacement and seismic stabilization project that is currently underway. Visitors can observe the rehabilitation project firsthand and tour the Central Building, which remains open.

Friends of Sutter’s Fort

Friends of Sutter’s Fort is a 501c3 charitable foundation. As a state park cooperating association, we collaborate with California State Parks at Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park to preserve and protect historic structures, and artifacts, and to engage visitors of all ages. For more information, please visit www.suttersfort.org



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CLUES

ACROSS

1. *Bow Wow Wow's "I Candy"

5. Money source

8. *'s Root Beer

11. Pelvic parts

12. Start of something big?

13. Round openings

15. RPM gauge

16. Cantina cooker

17. Car sound, to a toddler

18. *Ninepins namesake

20. Kiln for drying hops

21. They had

22. Division, abbr.

23. Informal wear

26. "Tail" on letter C

30. Kamakawiwo'ole's strings

31. Real estate sale agreement

34. Denials

35. 9 a.m. prayer

37. Even, to a poet

38. *Desert plant harvested for sweet syrup

39. Forbidden

40. Quickly or slowly, e.g.

42. *Sweet ____ brew

43. Breathe in

45. Westernmost city in Germany

47. Soldier's bed

48. Mensch, alt. sp.

50. Italian car brand

52. *Jolly livestock raisers?

55. Russia's hard liquor

56. Ctrl + Z

57. Consumes food

59. Checks out

60. Famous French couturier (1905-1957)

61. Heavy Metal's Quiet

62. Caustic soda

63. Newsman Rather

64. Kill, as in dragon

DOWN

1. Clever humor

2. Unfortunately, exclamation

3. Actor Nolte

4. Island in French Polynesia

5. *Donut filler

6. Checked out

7. Bleats

8. Rocky & Bullwinkle and Mary Kate & Ashley, pl.

9. To a very great degree (2 words)

10. Not bright

12. Sacred choral compositions

13. Roundish

14. *Sweet tooth, technically

19. * ____ Musketeers, spelled out

22. Drops at dawn

23. * ____-Frutti

24. Highlander's dagger

25. Sage and rosemary

26. *Scoop holder

27. Averse

28. "Drove my chevy to the "

29. Southeast Asian org.

32. Relinquish, as in property

33. Clergyman's title, abbr.

36. *Single serving treat

38. Embarrass

40. Arthur, to friends

41. Hard feelings

44. Is to Greeks, pl.

46. TV's "Where everybody knows your name"

48. Opposite of depression

49. " ____ a high note"

50. Same as fogey

51. Inactive

52. "Ant-Man" leading actor

53. Not top-shelf in a bar

54. Greek portico

55. Radio knob, abbr.

58. Farm pen

CROSSWORD

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Oriental Fruit Flies Detected in Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner, in cooperation with the California Department of Food and Agriculture and the United States Department of Agriculture, have initiated an extensive survey and eradication plan in response to the detection of nine male oriental fruit flies (OFF), *Bactrocera dorsalis*, near the city of Rancho Cordova and the American River Parkway in Sacramento County.

The initial detection was confirmed on Sept. 12, 2023. The detections were made as part of our coordinated pest prevention system that protects our agriculture and natural resources from invasive species, with early detection as a key component to successfully eradicating an infestation before it can become established.

The extensive survey, also known as a delimitation survey, consists of multiple oriental fruit fly traps at prescribed densities going out 4.5 miles in each direction from the oriental fruit fly detection sites. These nine OFF will trigger a quarantine, which will be announced shortly by the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

Following the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM), agricultural officials use “male attractant” technique as the mainstay of the eradication effort for this invasive species. This approach has successfully eliminated dozens of fruit fly infestations in California. Trained workers squirt a small patch of fruit fly attractant mixed with a very small dose of Spinosad, a natural pesticide made by a soil



Bactrocera dorsalis, the oriental fruit fly, can enter the state by “hitchhiking” in fruits and vegetables brought back illegally by travelers. Photo Courtesy of Martin Hauser/California Department of Food and Agriculture

bacterium and approved for use on organic crops, approximately 8-10 feet off the ground on street trees and similar surfaces; male fruit flies are attracted to the mixture and perish after consuming it. The male attractant treatment program is being carried out over an area that extends 1.5 miles from each site where the oriental fruit flies were trapped.

While fruit flies and other invasive species that threaten California’s crops and natural environment are sometimes detected in agricultural areas, the vast majority are found in urban and suburban communities. The most common pathway for these pests to enter the state is by “hitchhiking” in fruits and vegetables brought back illegally by travelers as they return from infested regions of the world or from packages of homegrown produce sent to California. Help protect California’s agricultural and natural resources; please don’t pack a pest when traveling or mailing packages.

“Invasive non-native fruit flies are serious pests for California’s agricultural industry and backyard gardens,” said Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner Chris Flores. “These recent detections remind us that we need to remain vigilant in protecting our agricultural and natural resources. When traveling abroad or mailing packages to California, we urge the public not to

bring back or ship fruits and vegetables as they are pathways for oriental fruit flies and other invasive species entering our state.”

The oriental fruit fly is known to target over 230 different fruit, vegetable and plant commodities. Important California crops at risk include grapes, pome and stone fruits, citrus, dates, avocados, tomatoes and peppers. Damage occurs when the female fruit fly lays her eggs inside the fruit. The eggs hatch into maggots, which tunnel through the flesh of the fruit, making it unfit for consumption.

The oriental fruit fly is widespread throughout much of the mainland of southern Asia and neighboring islands, including Sri Lanka and Taiwan, and it has invaded other areas, most notably Africa and Hawaii.

Federal, State and County agricultural officials work year-round, 365 days a year, to prevent, deter, detect, and eliminate the threat of invasive species and diseases that can damage or destroy our agricultural products and natural environment. The efforts are aimed at keeping California’s natural environment and food supply plentiful, safe and pest-free.

Residents with questions about the project may call the Sacramento County Agricultural Commissioner’s office at 916-875-6603 or the California Department of Food and Agriculture’s Pest Hotline at 1-800-491-1899. ★

Fitzgerald, Harrison, Brooks Named Triple-A All-Stars

Sacramento River Cats News Release

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - To put the finishing touches on the 2023 campaign, Minor League Baseball™ (MiLB™) has announced the Triple-A league awards and All-Star teams. Among the list of Pacific Coast League All-Stars are a trio of Sacramento River Cats in INF Tyler Fitzgerald, LHP Kyle Harrison, and OF/1B Trenton Brooks.

Culminating a year in which he was also named Team MVP, Fitzgerald was named the PCL’s All-Star shortstop by closing the 2023 season slashing .287/.358/.499 with 20 home runs and 69 RBI. In addition to his 20 dingers, Fitzgerald also swiped 29 bases making him the first River Cat since 2015 to reach the 20-20 club. Just as impressively, one of Fitzgerald’s home runs was of the inside-the-park variety, the first for Sacramento since early in the 2018 season.

The Louisville product was also the team leader in multi-hit games (33) and multi-RBI games (16), and in addition to producing eight hitting streaks of five games or more, ended the campaign with 20 doubles and four triples. This was the second Triple-A award of the season for Fitzgerald, as he was named the PCL Player of the Week for May 8-14, just his second week at Triple-A. This is the third All-Star honor in Fitzgerald’s career, as he was named a NWL Post-Season All-Star in 2021 with the Eugene Emeralds (A+) while also being named an MiLB.com Organization All-Star that same year.

Starting the year as the top left-handed pitching prospect in baseball according to MLB Pipeline, Harrison earned his All-Star honor after he made a total of 20 appearances for the River Cats while recording a 1-3 record, 4.66 ERA and 1.52 WHIP. A strikeout machine, the southpaw finished his first Triple-A campaign by totaling 105 strikeouts prior to his promotion to the big leagues, leading to a rate of 14.39 strikeouts per nine innings. Proving his prowess, Harrison logged 11 consecutive starts in which he fanned five or more batters, the third longest streak in Triple-A this season.

Also named to the 2023 Futures game, opposing batters managed just a .215 average against Harrison, which included left-handed batters hitting just .171 (14-for-82). His first Triple-A win came on June 15 against Sugar Land in which he allowed only two runs on three hits in 5.0 innings, striking out eight along the way. This is the fourth All-Star award in the career for Harrison, as he was named a MiLB.com Organization All-Star in each of the past two years (2021, 2022) while also being selected as a CAL Post-Season All-Star with the San Jose Giants



(A) in 2021. A mid-season addition, Brooks captured his PCL All-Star honor at designated hitter after posting a slash line of .286/.400/.516 while also swatting 22 homers and 90 RBI. Though he played just 24 contests with Sacramento, Brooks made an immediate splash by homering in his second and third games with the River Cats, ultimately going on to tally six of his homers and 19 of his RBI in a Sacramento uniform.

In his short time, Brooks was one of only two River Cats to hit home runs in consecutive games on three different occasions. Among those instances included leaving the yard in three straight games from Sept. 7-9 against the team he spent much of the season with, the Las Vegas Aviators. Overall for the season, the left-handed hitting Brooks also compiled 31 doubles, one triple, and drew 78 walks to 77 strikeouts. This is the second All-Star honor in Brooks’ career, as he was named a MiLB.com Organization All-Star with the Cleveland Indians in 2021.

Secure your spot to watch the next group of Sacramento All-Stars by renewing your season ticket membership for 2024 or by placing a deposit to become a new member. More information on memberships can be found by visiting rivercatsrenewal.com, emailing tickets@rivercats.com, or calling (916) 371-HITS (4487). Single game tickets will go on sale at the River Cats’ Preseason Party in March 2024.

Sutter Health Park is the West Sacramento home of the three-time Triple-A Champion Sacramento River Cats, and a proud affiliate of the three-time World Series Champion San Francisco Giants. Sutter Health Park is consistently voted one of the top ballparks in America. Memberships, Mini-Plans, hospitality rentals, and other ways to join the fun for the 2024 season may be purchased now by calling the River Cats Ticket Hotline at (916) 371-HITS (4487) or visiting www.rivercats.com. For information on other events at Sutter Health Park, visit www.sutterhealthpark.com. ★

Safe Sleep Baby Education: A Lifesaving Initiative

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County’s Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign is a testament to the power of community-based initiatives. The program has made a significant impact on the lives of many families since its inception in 2014. In honor of National Baby Safety Month, Sacramento County’s Department of Child, Family and Adult Services is sharing the life-saving efforts of the Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign and how it’s reducing the prevalence of baby sleep-related deaths.

On average, 27 babies die from sleep-related deaths in Sacramento County each year. These deaths are especially prevalent among African American babies, who are three times more likely to experience infant sleep-related fatalities than their non-African American counterparts. The goal of the Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign is to reduce infant sleep-related deaths, especially within the African American community. These heartbreaking deaths are preventable when parents are equipped with the knowledge

and tools to ensure their babies sleep safely.

“Every other week in Sacramento County, an infant dies of a sleep-related death, half are African American babies. However, these are nearly all preventable when a parent understands and uses the six steps to safely sleep their baby every time the baby sleeps. Every infant sleep-related death is more than a tragic statistic; it’s a deafening silence in a home, first steps that will never be taken, future laughter that will never be heard, and dreams unfulfilled. Through Safe Sleep Baby, we are not just disseminating information but reclaiming the promise of life itself for every child in our community,” says Child Abuse Prevention Center Chief Program Officer Stephanie Biegler.

The six steps Stephanie refers to are part of the program’s core mission to educate parents and caregivers about safely putting a baby to sleep. Remember: Alone, Back, Crib Always when sleeping a baby. These are the six steps:

Sleep the baby ALONE; Sleep the baby on their BACK; Sleep baby in a CRIB; Put nothing in the baby’s sleep area; Do not

overdress the baby; Do not smoke anything around the baby.

The Safe Sleep Baby Program does more than just provide parents and caregivers with these safety steps. Rather than simply distributing brochures, the program’s model involves parents connecting with home visitors for at least an hour to go through a comprehensive PowerPoint presentation. The personal touch ensures that parents receive accurate information and have the opportunity to ask questions. The program goes above and beyond to break barriers and help families in need. If the family does not have a place to safely sleep their baby, the program can provide them with a portable crib. One new parent shared, “The Safe Sleep Baby workshop not only pertained to sleep but covered several topics that are imperative to keeping your baby safe, happy, and healthy. Reach one, teach one, is being fulfilled by Safe Sleep Baby to set a foundation for generations to come.”

Data shows that since the Safe Sleep Baby Program started, Sacramento County infant sleep-related deaths decreased by 54% among African American infants,



The Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign is actively working to break generational and cultural misconceptions about safe sleeping practices. MPG Courtesy Photo

and the disparity gap in deaths between African American infants and all other racial groups has decreased by 60%.

Safe Sleep Baby education is imperative for infants with a Sacramento County Child Protective Services (CPS) referral. From 2010-2019, the infant sleep-related death rate was nearly four times greater for infants with CPS referrals compared with those infants who had no history of CPS.

In addition to reducing deaths, the Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign is actively working to break generational and cultural misconceptions about safe

sleeping practices. Staff from the program say parents they’ve worked with express gratitude and feel empowered. The campaign also works with hospitals to make sure nurses and doctors are actively modeling safe sleep behaviors.

Through education, outreach, and collaboration with service providers, Sacramento County’s Safe Sleep Baby Education Campaign is keeping babies safe while empowering parents and caregivers. Initiatives like this one make a lasting impact in our community. With knowledge,

resources, and dedication, we can protect Sacramento County’s most vulnerable children and communities.

While most parents and guardians who participate in the Safe Sleep Baby Program are referred to the program, any parent/caregiver with an infant under the age of one in Sacramento County can take the one-hour education training. To learn more about the campaign or for assistance, contact the Information & Referral Line at (916) 244-1900. Together, we can ensure every baby in Sacramento County sleeps safely and soundly. ★

October 16 Tax Filing Extension

Deadline Nears for Millions of Taxpayers

IRS Special Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - The Internal Revenue Service today reminded taxpayers about the upcoming tax filing extension deadline. To avoid a possible late filing penalty, those who requested an extension to file their 2022 tax return should file their Form 1040 on or before Monday, Oct. 16.

Disaster-area taxpayers in most of California and in parts of Alabama and Georgia also have until Oct. 16, 2023, to file various federal individual and business tax returns and make tax payments.

Those with an IRS address of record in other areas covered by Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster declarations and those returning from a combat zone may have additional time to file. They include: Taxpayers affected by flooding in Illinois and Alaska. They have until Oct. 31, 2023, to file: Those affected by flooding in Vermont. They have until Nov. 15, 2023, to file: Taxpayers affected by recent natural disasters including those impacted by the recent Maui fires and hurricane Idalia in parts of Florida, South Carolina and Georgia. Those in the counties of Maui, Hawaii, and many counties in Florida, South Carolina and Georgia have until Feb. 24, 2024, to file various individual and business tax returns. This list continues to be updated regularly. Taxpayers potentially affected by recent storms should visit the disaster

relief page on IRS.gov for the latest information.: Members of the military and others serving in a combat zone. They typically have 180 days after they leave the combat zone to file returns and pay any taxes due.

IRS Free File and other online resources

IRS Free File is available through Oct. 16 and lets qualified taxpayers prepare and file federal income tax returns online using guided tax preparation software. It's available to any person or family with an adjusted gross income (AGI) of \$73,000 or less in 2022. Taxpayers can use IRS Free File to claim the Child Tax Credit, the Earned Income Tax Credit, and other important credits. IRS Free File Fillable Forms is available for taxpayers whose 2022 AGI was greater than \$73,00 and are comfortable preparing their own tax return.

Taxpayers can get answers to many tax law questions by using the IRS's Interactive Tax Assistant tool. Additionally, taxpayers can view tax information in several languages by clicking on the "English" tab located on the IRS.gov home page.

The IRS Online Account feature provides information to help taxpayers file an accurate return including AGI amounts from last year's return, estimated tax payment amounts and refunds applied as a credit.

Schedule and pay electronically

Taxpayers can file anytime and schedule their federal tax payments up to the Oct.

16 due date. They can pay online, by phone or with their mobile device and the IRS2Go app. Some other key points to keep in mind when filing and paying federal taxes electronically include:

Convenience. Electronic payment options are easy and flexible. Taxpayers can pay when they file electronically using online tax software. Those who use a tax preparer should ask the preparer to make the tax payment through an electronic funds withdrawal from a bank account.

IRS Direct Pay. This feature allows taxpayers to pay online directly from a checking or savings account for free and schedule payments up to 365 days in advance. An IRS Online Account is needed, however, to use IRS Direct Pay.

Pay by card. Payments can be made with a credit card, debit card or a digital wallet option. These are available through a payment processor. The payment processor, not the IRS, charges a fee for this service.

IRS2Go. The IRS2Go mobile app provides access to mobile-friendly payment options, including Direct Pay and debit or credit card payments.

Electronic Federal Tax Payment System (EFTPS). Convenient, safe and easy, EFTPS allows for payments online or by phone using the EFTPS Voice Response System. EFTPS payments must be scheduled by 8 p.m. ET at least one calendar day before the tax due date. ★

Let's Ensure an Age-Friendly Future

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The age of the global population is shifting. Across the United States, a growing number of adults are 60 years of age or older. Sacramento County Senior and Adult Services (SAS) Division and Agency on Aging Area 4 are collaborating with community partners to ensure the well-being and quality of life for older adults in our community. Agency on Aging Area 4 is one of 33 area agencies on aging in California designated by the State to develop, coordinate, and fund programs designed to help older adults and people with disabilities maintain their health and independence.

Recent projections from California's Department of Finance show that by the year 2026, the number of people who are 60 years of age and older is poised to surpass the number of children for the first time. There are several new collaborative efforts geared towards strengthening support networks for older adults in Sacramento County. These efforts include but are not limited to:

The Senior Connection Program: A joint effort between SAS and the Agency on Aging/Area 4 which provides people with access to essential resources and social

engagement opportunities.

The Blue Zones Project: Sacramento County Public Health is partnering with Blue Zones, a global leader in longevity research. The project will include a comprehensive assessment of the County to establish dementia-friendly communities and promote overall well-being.

Nottoli Place: A shelter for older adults who are eligible for Sacramento County's Adult Protective Services (APS) and experiencing homelessness or housing instability. While at Nottoli Place, case management and housing services are provided.

WEAVE/Family Justice Center: A partnership to support domestic violence survivors. The initiative is dedicated to ensuring older individuals impacted by abuse from a partner or family member have access to the specialized care and resources they need to heal and rebuild their lives.

The Career Pathways Program: A joint effort between In-Home Supportive Services Public Authority and the Career Pathways Program to address the critical need for trained caregivers. This program equips caregivers with the skills and knowledge necessary to provide high-quality care to older adults.

Community Care Expansion (CCE) Preservation: A project funded by the California

Department of Social Services and administered by Sacramento County to preserve licensed senior and adult residential facilities that serve lower-income older adults. Funding will assist eligible facilities with operating costs and/or costs related to major repairs or upgrades that may prevent facility closure or the reduction in the number of beds available to older adults.

Through these partnerships and the ongoing hard work of its dedicated staff, Sacramento County and the Agency on Aging / Area 4 are shaping a future where aging is synonymous with respect, care, and empowerment.

"It is because of our strong partnerships with Sacramento County that we've been able to expand and enhance the services we can provide to older adults and people with disabilities – from programs to connect aging adults to resources to helping them out of isolation through case management, access to technology, and meal delivery," says Pam Miller, Agency on Aging Area 4 Executive Director. "We look forward to strengthening our partnership to support our older adult population."

As we navigate the demographic shift, the County and Agency on Aging Area 4 remain dedicated to collaborating with and supporting all residents as they age. ★




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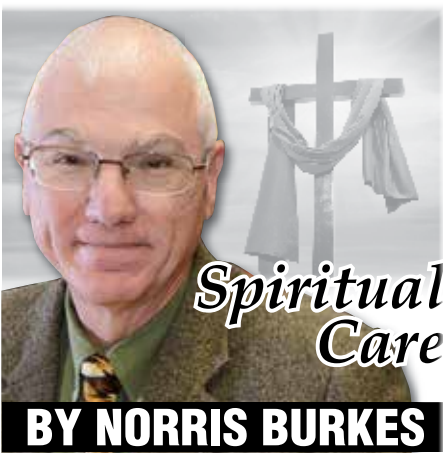
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Living with Chispa Chutzpah

I sent an email to readers a few days ago with this plea:
“A historic girls school has asked Chispa Project to help them establish a library at José Cecilio del Valle located in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.
We need your help to raise the needed \$5,000.”
A few minutes later I received a reply asking if Chispa Project was “Christ-centered.”
I have to assume the question to be sincere, but my Southern Baptist roots hear judgment.
If you’ve been reading this column for a few years, you know that my daughter Sara started Chispa Project to create small libraries in under-served Honduran schools. And most of you

know that Chispa is not about evangelizing those schools.
It feels like my inquisitor wants me to say, “You bet it is! We stock our libraries with boatloads of Bibles, Jesus stories and salvation pamphlets.”
And if that answer will bring a large donation, I might.
Not really.
Still, I strive to formulate a reply for my examiner.
My mind drifts to one of the first schools the project helped. Prior to Chispa’s arrival, the school library consisted of a dozen books from their teachers’ personal collections. Few were in Spanish and most books weren’t suitable to the children’s reading levels.
The school principal escorted Sara and I into each classroom. Most rooms bulged with 42 students squeezed three-to-a-seat at desks intended for only two students.
Despite the bleak design, the school’s walls sprouted spirit posters boasting of the school’s dedication to reading. The principal led a student-cheer with snapping fingers that emphasized the English translation of the word “Chispa” – spark. During

the cheer, the principal told the children that Chispa Project books would spark their education.
Later in the morning, children poured onto the playground. They had no sports equipment, nevertheless, their imagination sparked their made-up games. Kids climbed and dangled from the small soccer goal posts on each side of the playground. They paused occasionally to stare down at the tall, white chaplain watching them from a bench.
Returning to the question, “Is Chispa Project Christ-centered?”
An educational organization doesn’t become “Christ-centered” just because it incorporates theology into its written mission statement. After all, reading is still reading whether you’re reading the Bible or a science textbook. Math is always just math. Add 2+2 and you get the same result whether summed by a Christian, Jew or atheist.
The Christian part, or the “Christ-centeredness,” comes not from the organization, but from the heart of the one serving. A nonprofit needn’t be parochial to be “Christ-centered.” Jesus taught that whenever we help “...someone overlooked or ignored, that was me—you did it to me.”
In the six years I’ve been going to Honduras, I

can testify that the mission of Chispa Project beats with the heart of Jesus who said, “Let the little children come to me ... for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these.”
“Is that what you told him, Dad?” Sara asked.
“I told him that and one more thing.”
Sara was quiet, sensing what was coming.
“I asked him how much he’d be sending,” I added.
Sara shook her head. “I’ve always admired your chutzpah.”
I smiled. “It’s what I like to call “Chispa chutzpah.”
Her groan at the dad joke remains memorable.
Please consider donating online at www.chispaproject.org/girls or sending a check made to “Chispa Project” to 10556 Combie Rd Suite 6643 Auburn CA 95602.
This column excerpted from the Chispa chapter in my upcoming book, “Tell it to the Chaplain.”
If you didn’t get my email, be sure and sign up for my weekly column by email at thechaplain.net/newsletter. Send comments to comment@thechaplain.net. Leave recorded comments at (843) 608-9715..

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A Journey from Homelessness to Hope and Stability

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Amelia reaches to gently pet the fluffing feathers of her baby parrot Sunshine. Her brilliant orange, yellow and green feathers puff up in happiness as she moves her head around, signaling her content.

Amelia maneuvers around her one-bedroom cottage in a push wheelchair. Her bedroom has enough room for a twin bed, Sunshine’s cage and perch and a vanity that is strewn with makeup and lotions. The living room has a couch, a kitchen table and a corner shelf filled with paints, brushes, and a few painted canvases. Every canvas has a flower scape – beautiful colors and symmetry. The bathroom is also covered in painted canvases – except for the shower, which is filled with a shower chair to accommodate Ameila’s needs.

Quinn Cottages is tucked away on a forgotten street just north of downtown Sacramento, between Women’s Empowerment and the North A Street shelter. It is fully fenced and secure, but when you walk into the unassuming community, the colorful bungalows are beautiful and eye-catching. Flowerpots and windchimes cover tiny porches and patches of grass. Residents lounge around in the communal spaces – one person totes a laundry basket to the machines near the front of the compound. Another puts a dollar into a soda machine. A small black dog barks protectively at each person who walks by while perched on his owner’s lap.

The cottages are clustered in a series of small neighborhoods, each oriented around

a shared common space. The perimeter is fenced, monitored with a security system, and has controlled front gate access. A central community building houses a computer room, a library/small conference room, a multipurpose room, and a community kitchen. Residents participate in a rigorous and comprehensive two-year program from which they graduate. The campus is funded through Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA), which is partially funded by Sacramento County, and operated by Mercy Housing.

To qualify for a referral to Quinn Cottages, residents must have a disability – either physically or mentally. In Ameila’s case, she is mostly wheelchair-bound – from a car accident that nearly took her life, but instead, drastically changed everything about her and her future.

Ameila came to Sacramento when she was 15 – placed out of San Francisco into a group home for foster children. Ameila is a self-described jack of all trades. She was a singer, a bartender – she loved to goldmine. “I gave those boys a run for their money! I always find gold.” Her favorite spot is up near Bear River.

She had a dream to be on American Idol – a beautiful singing voice, only heard now in saved files on her phone. Ameila was going to school to be a nurse – until her life was turned upside down. Nearly three years ago, Amelia was driving in a convertible BMW when she was hit by a tow truck. The accident was horrific – part of the windshield frame went into her forehead; her windpipe was crushed and her spine fractured. First responders performed a tracheotomy just to help her breathe. She lay in the



Amelia and her brightly colored, feathered friend, Sunshine, make the best of their lives thanks to the support they get at Quinn Cottages. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County.

hospital, in a coma for days. While in a coma, Amelia suffered two strokes, leaving the left side of her body weak. Doctors planned to take her off life-support, but a friend insisted she would get better and wake up. And she did wake up – but she was severely injured, permanently.

The singing voice she once had was forever damaged, the left side of her body was weak and useless, and her legs were unable to hold up her body. She needed full-time care. She lived with her father, whom she had been caretaking for before the accident. They hired an in-home caretaker for Amelia, but after they started abusing her, Amelia fired the caretaker. Amelia, without a job, insurance money to fall back on, and no trust in other people, became homeless.

Amelia was able to get into a shelter quickly – her various disabilities made her highly vulnerable outside. But an empty promise from a boyfriend to move into a hotel, causing her to self-exit the shelter, again left her on the streets with few resources and nowhere to go.

Amelia’s situation

represents the greatest fear – many people are just one major life curveball away from homelessness. Disabled, homeless and desperate, Amelia used drugs to numb the pain of her accident – physically, emotionally, and mentally. Drugs were her escape from the nightmare her life had become, but also the deep scars of her upbringing. A mother who never loved her, children who had been put into the system and dream after dream shattered through bad decisions and bad relationships.

Six months ago, Amelia went into the Salvation Army shelter – again, a chance to shelter safely while pursuing recovery and stability. But Amelia knew she blew it again when they found drugs on her person. She was exited from the shelter for violating the rules. She moved out onto the American River Parkway. It was there she met Jenny, an outreach worker with Community HealthWorks, formerly Sacramento Covered. Jenny and her colleagues do outreach and engagement to unhoused people, specifically on the Parkway – a



Art helps Amelia in keeping a good spirit after a horrific accident left her disabled, homeless and desperate. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County.

priority funded by the Board of Supervisors to help alleviate the burden on both the campers and the environment.

Considering Amelia’s history and disabilities, Jenny worked with Amelia on an application for Quinn Cottages. It took nearly six months of consistent work with Amelia, following up on her application, making sure she had all her documents in place and getting adequate health care for treatment of her injuries before a bungalow opened up at Quinn Cottages.

Before Amelia could move in, she suffered another injury – a broken foot. The day that Community HealthWorks workers came to move her out of her tent and into her own apartment – they had to lift her out of her tent because she couldn’t move. It truly does take a village of compassionate, dedicated people to help the most vulnerable.

Amelia sits, grateful and

peaceful as she looks around her cottage. “It is safe and secure here. There are rules and structure. People can’t just come in here without permission.” She puts around the compound in a power wheelchair. Her friend Larry, also in a power wheelchair, challenges her to a friendly race. They zip ahead, laughing.

She is clean and sober – knowing that she cannot succeed here if she uses. She wants to go to art school and maybe teach others how to paint. Maybe it will bring them the same peace it brings her. She enjoys cooking for herself and getting together with the other residents of Quinn Cottages. “We’re a community.” Her sister comes and visits her every week. Amelia is only 49 years old – despite her disabilities, she has so much life ahead of her. She is ready to make the most of it.

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Keep Your Pets Safe During a Disaster



These seven steps can help ensure that all family members – including our beloved pets—are ready to face an emergency together. MPG Stock Photo

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - As September unfolds, it's not only a time when the seasons begin to change, but also a poignant reminder that preparedness is a vital aspect of responsible pet ownership. September, designated as National Preparedness Month, serves as a timely prompt to underscore the importance of preparing for emergencies that can impact our furry companions. While many of us diligently stock up on emergency supplies and develop evacuation plans for our families, it's equally crucial to extend this preparedness to our beloved pets. After all, they are not just animals, but cherished members of our households, relying on us for their safety and well-being when unforeseen disasters strike.

- Pet parents should follow seven quick steps to ensure their pet's safety during an emergency:
- (1) Ensure your pet can be identified by both a microchip and collar ID tag, and that contact information is up-to-date. Pet owners can talk to their current veterinarians about microchipping their pets, or they can visit a clinic hosted by Bradshaw Animal Shelter;
 - (2) Prepare a "Pet Emergency Go-Kit" of pet supplies and make sure it is readily accessible in an emergency;
 - (3) Display a pet rescue decal on your front door or window to let first responders know there is a pet in the house. Include your veterinarian's contact information.
 - (4) Learn where your pet likes to hide in your house when frightened. Finding your pet quickly will help you evacuate faster;

- (5) Identify a location to take your pet if you need to leave your immediate area. Keep in mind that disaster shelters for people may not be open to pets. Scout hotels and motels with pet-friendly policies in advance and ask relatives or friends if they could house you and your pet;
 - (6) Carry pictures of your pet in the event of separation. Pictures should be high-resolution and well-lit so that your pet is easily identifiable;
 - (7) If you need to evacuate, consider taking a pet carrier or crate for transport and safe-keeping.
- These seven steps can help ensure that all family members – including our beloved pets—are ready to face an emergency together. Families looking to learn more about disaster preparedness and safety for family members both two- and four-legged can visit the Ready Campaign website. ★

We Can Do It Together



Role models at the Aerospace Museum's "We can Do it Together" event include Karen Jones (left), Karen Mogus, Erin Donnette, Meghan Roberts, Cathy Cook, Heidi Sanborn, Rashel Cedeno de Abreu, Lauren Grindstaff and Amber Motley. The open day encourages STEAM-based education for young women.

Story and photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Almost 1000 teenage girls recently flocked to the Aerospace Museum of California's third annual "We Can Do It Together" open day. Free to middle and high school students, the event aimed to introduce its visitors to STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) careers. One attraction was the opportunity to meet role models who have succeeded in STEAM fields.

Architects, pilots and women making waves in energy, medicine, dentistry and construction discussed their careers. The teens had free range of museum exhibits, including artifacts from aviation's early years. They also got handy with STEAM-based activities like Alka Seltzer rocket art, making wind turbines and designing their own space craft. "Our 'We Can Do It Together' events take Rosie the Riveter as an example of what was achieved by women during WW 11," explained

Aerospace Museum Advancement Director Karen Jones. "Rosie was all about strength, determination and breaking the mold. We want girls to know they can be anything they want to be. The sky is their limit – and beyond. We want them to aim high and dream big." Event sponsors included: Aerojet Rocketdyne; Boeing; Girl Scouts; Carmichael Kiwanis, San Juan and Twin Rivers School Districts; SAFE Credit Union; SMUD. Learn about Aerospace Museum events at www.aerospaceCA.org ★

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