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Land Park News

VOL 33 • ISSUE 03

Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

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TEMP. CLOSED**



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Bringing The World To Sac

Local Shop Lifts Up Communities from Across the Globe



From left: owners Josh Varner and Scott Farrell.

**Story and photos by
Kristina Rogers**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Stepping into Zanzibar, you are welcomed by meditating Buddhas, fierce dragons, and an array of

tribal curiosities. The first thing to consider is which part of the world you visit first? Morocco? Kenya? Mexico? Tibet? At last count, the store offers items from around 125 countries.

The name fits. “Zanzibar is an island off the coast of Tanzania in East Africa,” explains Josh Varner. “The infamous Silk Road was the method of transportation, but Zanzibar was the destination. Whatever

needed: spices, lumber, dried fish. For centuries, the world stopped there.” Josh Varner and Scott Farrell have been business partners for 25 years. They lost the lease to

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Rosie the Riveter Dinner Coming Soon



The GrooveThang Band plays a diverse mix of non-stop dance cover music. Photo courtesy of the Groove Thang Band

**By Stephen B. Clazie,
Sacramento Elks 6**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - This May marks the 81st anniversary of Norman Rockwell’s painting of Rosie the Riveter, featured on the cover of a 1943 issue of the Saturday Evening Post. It remains the most well-known wartime image of Rosie the

Riveter. Yet today, when people hear “Rosie the Riveter,” Rockwell’s painting isn’t the one that comes to mind.

It is ironic that Rosie the Riveter is not often associated with a California girl. Also, it is a little-known fact that the Rosie the Riveter World War II Home Front National Historical Park is located in Richmond, California, near

San Francisco. The park preserves and interprets the legacy of the United States home front during World War II, including the Kaiser Richmond Shipyards and the Victory ship SS Red Oak Victory. The construction of 747 ships during the war here is a feat not equaled anywhere else in the world, before or since.

Those Rosie the Riveters who worked in their overalls in the Richmond shipyards still liked to get all dressed up on Friday night to take a ferry to San Francisco. Being dressed meant high heels, a dress, gloves, and a hat.

Sacramento Elks Lodge No. 6 is hosting a themed ‘Rosie the Riveter’ dinner dance on

Continued on Page 2



Presidential Primary Election Update

**Ballot Drop Box
and Vote Center
Locations Posted**

**Sacramento County
News Release**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Voter Registration and Elections (VRE) has posted the list of Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations for the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election on the website.

Vote by Mail ballots will be mailed to voters beginning Monday, February 5, 2024. Ballot Drop Boxes will begin opening Monday, February 5, 2024, and Vote Centers will begin opening Saturday, February 24, 2024. A complete list of Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations, their days and hours of operation, and an interactive map can be found at: <https://elections.saccounty.net/votecenters/pages/locations.aspx>

A QR code to the interactive map will be included in the County Voter Information Guide to replace the flat printed map. This simple change supports the County’s GoGreen policy, is accessible to voters with disabilities and is fiscally responsible, saving the county over two (2) million pages of printed material and the associated mailing cost.

For more information, contact VRE at (916) 875-6451, email voterinfo@saccounty.gov, or by using the toll-free voter assistance hotline at (800) 762-8019. The hotline has the ability to connect voters with disabilities with TTY (Text Telephone).

Key Election Dates

-Monday, February 5 - Mailing of ballots to all registered voters begins

-Monday, February 5 - Voted ballots may be returned in any

Continued on Page 6

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Sacramento Jewish Film Festival Celebrates 25 Years

March 9 - 24, 2024

The Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Since 1997, the Sacramento Jewish Film Festival (SJFF) has presented the best films reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the Jewish experience. In 2024, the festival celebrates its SILVER JUBILEE, with 30 plus feature films over two weekends of live theatre and two weeks of films streaming online. The event will take place March 9 - 24, 2024.

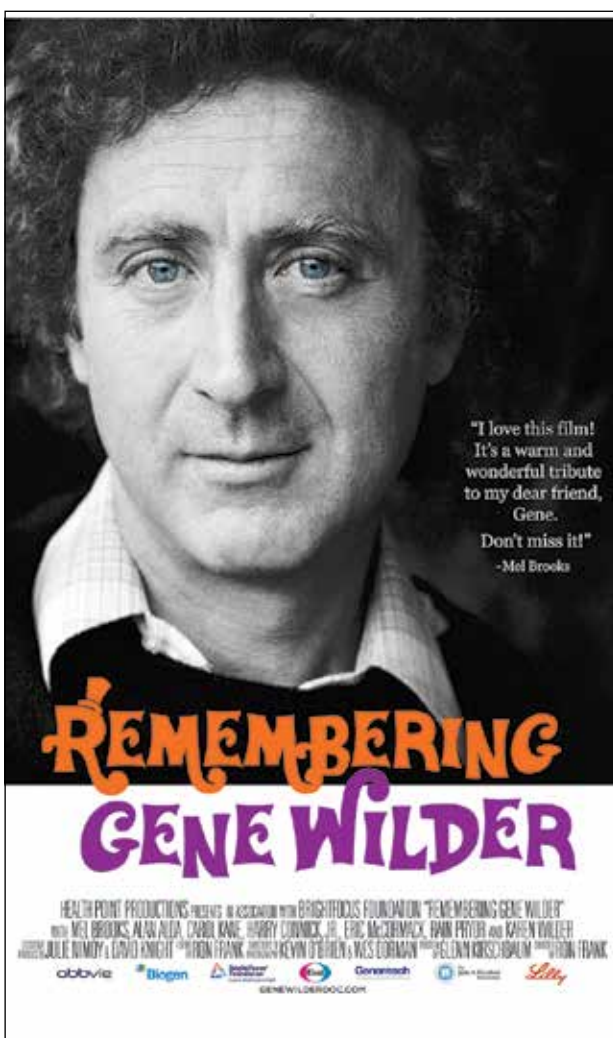
The variety of films include comedies, dramas, and documentaries from all over the world, plus Q&As, mini-concerts, special panels, and in-person receptions.

Opening weekend will be live on the big screen at the Veterans Memorial Theatre in Davis on Saturday night, March 9 and Sunday, March 10.

Closing weekend will be live in-theater at The Center at 2300 Sierra Blvd in Sacramento on Saturday night, March 16 and Sunday, March 17.

All-Festival Passes are \$150 and include all in-person films and streaming films, plus receptions and film chats. Weekend passes and individual film tickets will also be sold. The website will go live, and tickets and passes will be on sale on January 22, 2024.

Visit the festival website at <https://sacjewishfilmfest.org/> for a complete list of



REMEMBERING GENE WILDER celebrates the beloved star of classics such as "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles," and "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory." Gene's life is brought to life through never-before-seen home movies and photographs, as well as the intimate insights of friends and colleagues including Mel Brooks, Alan Alda, Carol Kane, Harry Connick Jr., (Saturday night, March 16, at the Veterans Memorial Theatre in Davis.) Photo courtesy of Sacramento Jewish Film Festival

feature films, shorts, special events, ticket sales and sponsorship opportunities.

Questions? Call the Jewish Federation at (916) 486-0906 or email jbirch@jewishsac.org.

Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/SacJewishFilm>

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[sacramentojewishfilmfestival/?hl=en](https://sacramentojewishfilmfestival.org/?hl=en)

SJFF is a program of the Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region.

The mission of SJFF is to showcase thought-provoking, entertaining films that inform, inspire, and celebrate the Jewish story for audiences everywhere. ★

Rosie the Riveter Dinner Dance Coming March 1st

Continued from Page 1

Friday, March 1, 2024, and those 1940 "Rosies" would not believe how things have changed.

To honor our local and national women's accomplishments, Elks 6 is kicking off the month of March with a great World War II-themed dinner celebration for National Women's History Month starting at 5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. with a no-host cocktail hour on March 1, 2024.

The \$45 per person dinner at 6:30 p.m. is being prepared by the Barone family, who have been doing Sunday breakfasts, Wednesday night dinners, and many outstanding special dinners at Elks 6 for over ten years. This WW II-themed dinner will feature meatloaf. Cathy Barone said, "I think many Rosie the Riveters made meatloaf for dinner after working in the factories all day!"

The Elks 6's dinner will also have mashed potatoes, green beans, salad, dinner rolls, coffee/tea, water, and chocolate cake for dessert. Vegetarian lasagna will be provided per request. The JFK Wrestling Team will be bussing tables, and they will appreciate your tips to support their activities. Tip jars will be on the tables.

John Stellmach, an Elks 6 member working with the JFK wrestlers, said, "We did a car wash at the Greenhaven Pocket Farmers Market to raise money to buy head protectors that cost \$40 for each team member." Julian Sarille, coach of junior Cougars, said, "We really appreciate all the support Yvonne York and Vic Cima with the Greenhaven Pocket Farmers Market at the Elks give the Cougar wrestlers. We are looking forward to the Rosie the Riveter dinner."

Rosies all over the world became famous during WWII. While our men were being drafted and sent overseas after the bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1942, the US homeland and financial economy still needed to be maintained.

Yvonne York, who is co-hosting the Elks 6 Rosie the Riveter dinner/dance along with Gina Skinner, said, "To do this, our government realized we had an untapped resource: our very own homemakers — grandmothers, mothers, wives, daughters, sisters! While men were normally considered the financial breadwinners for the family, it was the women who were the family's backbone, providing the day-to-day structure that supported the family emotionally, enforced family values, and basically, held it all together."

So the government put their propaganda machine to work, and that meant putting their women to work. If women could run the family,



Julian Sarille, coach of Junior Cougars, is looking forward to being with some of his female wrestlers at Elks 6's Rosie the Riveter dinner. Photo courtesy of JFK wrestling team

they obviously had assets and skills that could keep this country going while their loved ones — fathers, husbands, and brothers — were off on foreign soil putting themselves in harm's way, defending our freedom and supporting our democracy.

Gina Skinner, co-hosting with Yvonne on the Rosie the Riveter event, said, "During WWII, our women were not only put to work in traditional jobs such as educators, nurses, and office assistants, but they were also taught job skills normally held by men (mechanical, electrical, etc.) and put to work. Thus, Rosie the Riveter was born."

Yvonne said, "Come join Elks Lodge No. 6 in celebration of all the varied contributions women have made, not only here in America but also worldwide." Gina added, "After dinner, enjoy an evening with The Groove Thang Band. They play a diverse mix of non-stop dance cover music, including R&B, Funk, Motown, Disco, Smooth Jazz, Rock, and even some Country from the 70s, 80s, and 90s. The Groove Thang Band is undoubtedly the best "get-off-your-seat-and-dance" entertainment party cover band in Northern California and Nevada."

Tickets are on sale now. Contact Sacramento Elks Lodge No. 6 at 916-422-6666 or visit the lodge to purchase your tickets at: 6446 Riverside Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95831. For more information, contact Yvonne York at yayork@gmail.com or Gina Skinner at hippiechicklette62@gmail.com. ★

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See important details below.

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2. To receive the Fortune Dragon Ceramic Money Bank, personal clients must open a qualified Cathay Value Plus Checking with minimum opening deposit with new money. Limit one Fortune Dragon Ceramic Money Bank per qualified account, household, or business.

3. To receive promotional 3.88% Annual Percentage Yield (APY) and Fortune Dragon Ceramic Money Bank, personal and business clients must open a Promotional Statement Savings or Promotional Business Savings with minimum opening deposit of \$30,000 new money. New money does not include funds transferred from an existing account or funds closed from Cathay Bank account within the previous 90 business days. Promotional APY is guaranteed through June 30, 2024, and the minimum balance required is \$30,000. For Personal Statement Savings account and balance between \$30,000 - \$100,000 for Business Savings account. The non-promotional rate will apply to any balance outside of this tier after June 30, 2024, the promotional APY will no longer apply, and the account will revert to the standard balance tier and APY associated with the regular Personal Statement Savings account or Business Savings account. The interest rate and APY paid depend on the balance tier into which the account's end-of-day balance falls. The interest rate that corresponds to the balance tier is paid on the full collected balance in the account at the end-of-day. Funds can reduce earnings on the account. You must maintain the \$500 minimum daily balance in the Personal Statement Savings account or Business Savings account to avoid a monthly maintenance charge.

4. Gift offers also apply to personal accounts opened through the Bank's online account opening platform. To receive the promotional Annual Percentage Yield (APY) and Gold-Plated Lucky Dragon Figurine a Digital Personal 6-month or 12-month CD account must be opened with minimum \$50,000 in new money required. To receive the Fortune Dragon Ceramic Money Bank, a Digital Personal Interest Checking with minimum opening deposit with new money. Online account opening limited to residents of CA, WA, NV, TX, IL, IN, NJ, MA, and MD. Account must be funded within 30 days of opening and initial deposit must be made at one-time and not cumulative. Gift will be shipped within 30 days of initial deposit receipt.

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Leafy Greens Thrive in the Winter

Story and photos by
Mitch Barber

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Under the freeway at 8th and W streets, adjacent to downtown Sacramento, there is a bustling farmers’ market on Sundays from 8 a.m. to 12 noon. The freeway provides a concrete canopy to protect visitors from the rain in the wet months, and a shady refuge when temperatures creep toward 100 degrees.

This writer visited the Certified Farmers’ Market on February 4th. At a table close to the main entrance, next to the parking lot, sits a husband and wife pair, Dan and Renae Best. They operate and manage the market they said was founded in 1980.

Renae humbly boasted that the Certified Farmers’ Market is one of the largest in California, and that growers come from near and far — counties like Sacramento and El Dorado that are close by, and distant areas like the North Coast and Fresno.

When asked what was in season, Renae emphatically said “leafy greens,” which became the focal point of this article.

The first stall visited was the Salle Orchards tables where Billie Jean Salle greeted this MPG writer, standing behind a bevy of green leafy vegetables. She owns the farm in Wheatland with her husband of over 50 years, Nick, who happened to be born on the farm. Their children Nicole and Gene do the farming while Billie Jean displays the produce at the market.

Bille Jean explained the various ways to eat leafy greens — vegetables such as curly and dino kale, swiss chard, and cabbage — saying, “The possibilities are

endless.” There are cabbage rolls, soups, stews, vegetable lasagnas, and chips (like kale chips). Cats enjoy the produce as well; she mentioned that some customers make natural, nutritious cat food that includes leafy greens.

She said of leafy greens, “You can grow some of them year-round, when it isn’t hot. Heat makes lettuce bitter.”

Another vendor was Brent Levin who sells organic produce from Spreadwing Farm, a farm he owns with his wife and another couple. The farm is in Rumsey, a very small town in the Capay Valley. He was all smiles.

At the entrance of his stall were an assortment of kales for \$3 a bunch — dinosaur, red Russian, and white Russian kale. He said his favorite way to prepare them was simply cooking them in butter with garlic salt. He said other folks juice them.

He also sells head lettuces and cabbage, which is a disputed leafy green. He talked to customers and weighed produce while taking part in the interview.

And the farm’s name? It comes from a type of dragonfly: one of the female owners specializes in entomology. He got specific with the leafy-green growing season on his farm: November through April or early May.

Lettuce was \$3.50 per head, and cabbage was \$2 per pound. The different kales were \$3 a bunch.

Bargains were to be found at the Toledo Farms booth on the north side of the market. Juan Toledo, who owns the business with his father Federico Toledo, was selling heads of lettuce for \$1. They also sell dandelion greens, swiss chard and kale.

What does one do with dandelion greens? Juan said they



Cabbage for sale at the Salle Orchards stall.



Spreadwing produce, from left, leeks, red Russian kale, dinosaur kale, and white Russian kale.



Brent Levin stands at his Spreadwing Farm stall, ready to serve.



Juan Toledo, owner of Toledo Farms, stands behind his economically-priced produce.



A variety of chards, and spinach on the right, at the Barbageleta Farms stall.



Martin Barbageleta, left, and Francisco Barbageleta, right, stand in front of their company truck and farmers’ market sign.

are good “juiced, roasted, diced up, and in salad.” He said people are split into “eat-it-raw” and “cook-it” camps.

Theirs is an organic, family-owned farm in Lodi.

Next door was Barbageleta Farms, based in Linden, which is just to the east of Stockton. Martin and

Francisco Barbageleta were speaking Spanish when this writer approached — a customer was slinging the Spanish language, as well.

Martin explained that his Swiss chard that was a rainbow of colors is best steamed or boiled, and cooked with other things, like meat.

He said that the current weather was conducive to chard growth and that it is too hot during the summer for it to grow well. He was selling leafy bunches of spinach, as well. Bunches of greens were \$3 and two for \$5.

Unfortunately, about 10 vendors canceled on February

4th, largely due to the high winds. Fortunately, the freeway’s columns serve as a wind break, as well.

Why not come out and shop on a Sunday in the temperate friendly confines of the Certified Farmers’ Market under the freeway? ★



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A horizontal banner with a dark background. On the left, the text "WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS" is written in large, bold, white capital letters. To the right of the text is the MPG logo, which consists of the letters "MPG" in a stylized font, with a small star above the "P", all enclosed within a white oval. On the far right, there is a close-up, black and white photograph of a police vehicle's emergency light bar, showing the lights are on.

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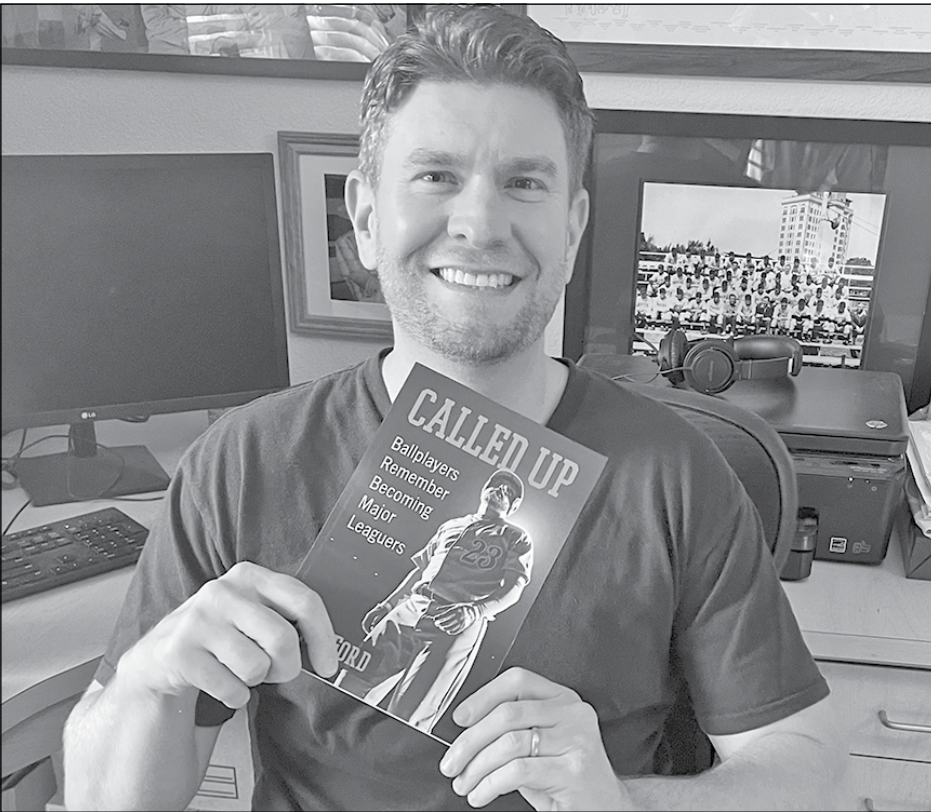
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Local Author Calls Up Baseball Fans with New Book



Zak Ford, author of Called Up: Ballplayers Remember Becoming Major Leaguers. Photo courtesy of Zak Ford

By Tamara Warta

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (MPG)

The San Francisco Giants baseball team clearly has countless fans across Northern California, and have inspired many young baseball players to dream of going on to the Major Leagues themselves. One of those dreamers was Zak Ford, who grew up in the 1980s and 90s — the heyday of Candlestick Park.

Ford not only enjoyed cheering from the stands at many a Giants game growing up, but he also heralded from some pro-ball genetics. His great-uncle, Larry Powell, pitched in 14 professional seasons in the 1930s through 1950s. He was picked up by the Boston Red Sox out of spring training, but was released two weeks later. Powell was then signed by the Boston Braves, but again was released — this time after only one week. His MLB dreams died without ever stepping into a game.

Ford grew up knowing of Powell’s experience, but never asked him how that journey felt. Instead, Powell — who struggled to hit .200 throughout his own Little League years — decided to write about baseball instead.

Ford’s book, *Called Up: Ballplayers Remember Becoming Major Leaguers*, may not include Larry Powell’s perspective, but it does delight readers with 109 stories of MLB players reflecting upon the moment they were called up to the big leagues. Written in a first-person narrative, it’s a human interest book that will obviously be enjoyed by baseball fans, but written with such skill that it will also draw in readers that have limited knowledge of the process and history of the game.

“It really captures the

feelings and emotions of becoming a MLB player,” says Ford. “To be able to capture 109 stories about the achievement is something I’m very glad of being capable to do.”

Out of the 109 featured in the book, about 10 of them are local to the Sacramento region — those that either came out of the area, and reside in the Sacramento region now. Ford himself grew up in the Rancho Cordova area and now lives in Cameron Park. He works in workforce development policy, which aims to improve outcomes for people with disabilities. He was also a member of the Folsom-Cordova School Board from 2010-2018.

Ford clearly has a passion and enthusiasm for people and bettering the world around him, but the world of baseball — and later writing about it — has always captured him.

“I’ve always been a fan of baseball dating back to when I was a 7- or 8-year-old kid,” says Ford. “I kind of realized that I was going to have to choose a different avenue for me to find my niche in the game and decided to pursue writing. I’ve basically been doing it as a hobby since I was a teenager. One of the goals I’ve always had was to write a baseball book, and now at 45 [years old] I’ve achieved it.”

To write the book, Ford interviewed former MLB players for about two and a half years. When asked what stories really stuck out to him, Ford took a thoughtful pause to answer.

“All of these players had to exhibit extreme dedication and perseverance to meet the goal of becoming a MLB player,” he said. “All of them are

great inspirational stories. I grew up a Giants fan, and I was able to capture the stories of some of the guys who came up with the Giants during the time I was a young baseball fan. Those are the stories that stick out to me.”

Sean Estes, who is now active with Giants broadcasts, is one example of a player that shared his story of being a number one pick.

“It took him four or five years to reach the major leagues,” Ford recalls. “He was up in the major leagues for the majority of the next 12 or 13 years.”

The lesson to be learned? Never give up on your dreams.

“There are many stories that show ups and downs, that show hardship and overcoming adversity. It’s an inspirational book about going through that journey and showing dedication and perseverance,” said Ford.

Since his book’s publication, Ford has done virtual presentations for baseball groups, as well as a local book signing. He’s also working on a second book. Potentially entitled *Next Up*, the new manuscript will focus on MLB players’ lives in the normal workforce outside of baseball — perhaps disproving the belief that all MLB players retire wealthy.

“The vast majority of them need to have jobs after their playing careers,” says Ford.

“There are players that have had pretty big challenges trying to find what’s next, while others have that hustling mentality they picked up in baseball that serve them well after their playing days. That scrappy mentality has paid off.”

It has paid off for this successful local author as well. You can keep up with Zak’s career by visiting his website, zakford.com. ★



BY NORRIS BURKES

“How many of you remember the first time you saw a black person?” asked my sociology professor in my freshman class at Baylor University.

Several students answered with stories about the first time they saw a black person walking beside the road or working in their backyard.

I was shocked. But I really shouldn’t have been. It was 1975 and my southern friends had enjoyed school holidays for “confederated heroes,” yet not for Abraham Lincoln.

As a Californian, I was out of my element, but I counted myself lucky to be free of their racist upbringing.

Or was I?

With the beginning of Black History Month we might find how confessing our own history can provide insight into understanding racial issues.

As a boy growing up in the San Francisco Bay Area, my skin was as white as the fog that shrouded my hometown hills. But it was mostly the fog of my family’s southern roots that made me “color blind” to other races and cultures.

It was from the distant listening post of my Richmond, Calif., home where I began hearing the cries of social change, muffled and off-key.

In 1967, I started fifth grade with the announcement that our school, Balboa Elementary, would soon receive our first black students.

Few of my classmates said anything, holding our comments for the playground, where we assembled around Keith, our class troublemaker.

A Dream For All

Keith seemed to always be fighting someone on the schoolyard. It was even rumored that he was once suspended for hitting a teacher.

He persuaded us that we needn’t fear these black children — as long as “us white kids stick together.”

“Don’t anyone talk to them,” he commanded. We agreed. We’d follow our appointed leader and stick together.

“If they cause any trouble,” Keith said, slamming his fist into his palm, “we’ll show them who really runs this playground.”

We weren’t just counting on Keith; we were counting on our geography too.

For you see, while many U.S. towns were segregated by only railroad tracks, Richmond was segregated by a freeway. And with the district out of money for bussing, we thought our school would be safe from integration.

And it would have been — except for one thing.

“The tunnel,” as the kids called it, was a darkened pedestrian walkway under our freeway that reeked of urine and was paved with broken soda bottles..

Located only a few hundred yards from our playground, the tunnel was forbidden territory. All of our parents warned that none of us were to ever cross through the tunnel that connected the black community to the white one.

So, one September morning in 1967, as troop strength in Viet Nam approached 500,000, a small group of 10-year-old soldiers in the war on prejudice emerged from the tunnel. They carried the look of a scraggly group

of Pop Warner football players returning to a halftime deficit — overwhelmed both by the size of the field and the stakes of the game.

Among those kids were Deborah, Agnes, Geoffrey and Gregory. I still remember their names because that was the first time I truly “saw” a black person.

Usually my columns work toward a dramatic climax, but the most dramatic thing in today’s story is that nothing happened. No drama. Nothing

Keith didn’t beat anyone up. Nobody rioted or protested. We just had life happen right amongst us. Agnes stole my pencils, but Deborah stole my heart. Gregory beat me out on the history quizzes. Both he and Agnes easily beat me in the 50-yard dash.

No drama until that first Thursday in April 1968. Sometime after the evening fog returned to the Richmond hills, a friend came over to tell me he’d just heard that Martin Luther King had been assassinated in Memphis

Now, almost fifty-five years, it seems to me that in the end, our little school became part of King’s dream as it was “...transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.”

That’s my history. What’s yours?

Please email me so I can add you to my weekly column email. My books can be purchased on my website www.thechaplain.net. Comments are received at 10556 Combie Rd Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602 or by email comment@thechaplain.net or at (843) 608-9715. ★

Presidential Primary Election Update

Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center Locations Posted

Continued from Page 1
of the Ballot Drop Boxes located throughout the County
-Monday, February 19 - Close of voter registration for this election. Voter registration forms must be postmarked by this date or delivered to the VRE Office at 7000 65th Street, Suite A, Sacramento 95823 by 5:00 p.m. Online voter registration must be completed before midnight on this date at www.registertovote.ca.gov
-Tuesday, February 20 – Conditional Voter Registration (VBM) begins
-Saturday, February 24 – 11 Day Vote Centers open
-Tuesday, February 27 – Last day a Vote by Mail (VBM) ballot can be mailed to you. After this date, VBM ballots are only available at the VRE office or at any of the 90 Vote Centers
-Saturday, March 2 – All Vote Centers open throughout the County
-Tuesday, March 5 – Election Day ★

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Bringing The World To Sacramento

Local Shop Lifts Up Communities from Across the Globe

Continued from Page 1

their Midtown shop in January 2020 and toured 87 buildings to find their “Goldilocks location” at 1315 Broadway. The space is 4,000 square feet and floor-to-ceiling international delights.

When I asked about the most unusual item they’ve sold, Scott replied, “The most interesting was a lion’s hairball, which was three centuries old. The Masai of East Africa use it as a talisman for good fortune.” He grinned, “These are extremely rare, but lions are just big cats when it comes down to it.” (And to think we are throwing our cats’ hairballs away!)

Josh pointed to a decorative wooden longhouse door from Papa New Guinea. “In this tribe, the men stay in a giant hut on stilts with this door as the only entrance. The tribes’ precious treasures and loot are stored there. When invaders stick their heads in the large hole, they got whacked and dragged inside.”

Typically, most shoppers are just searching for a unique gift, and that’s an easy sell. Prices vary from pocket change to investment. Scott and Josh are connected to over 2,000 artisans across the globe whom they visit regularly.

Scott explained: “If you point to anything in the store, we can tell you who made it and show photos and video of their process.” They work with individual artisans, small family workshops, cooperatives, and women’s groups. Quality and fair trade is a top priority. “Others come to these artists wanting



Wooden longhouse door from Papa New Guinea.

things cheaper; we want things better,” explained Varner. “If they spend twice as much time making the product, we’ll pay more.” Some of their artists are world-famous, with pieces in the Louvre and Smithsonian.

The owners are also sticklers about no child labor, but support youngsters learning a trade, which is different. Varner

said, “One of my most prized possessions is a piece of Mexican folk art by a 4-year-old. Her parents are master artists. It was the first thing she made, and now she’s in her early twenties and a famous artist in her own right.”

Life-long friendships are formed by helping, too. They support programs that teach tribes how to dig wells and get micro-loans



Artisan creatures from Mexico.

for new businesses. During the pandemic, they continued to trade with over 250 families in Mexico and over 300 jewelers from India when other income sources dried up.

I’ve been a fan of Zanzibar for some time. Where else can you try out various Tibetan singing bowls? Or enjoy an array of creatures in eye-catching hues by the Indigenous

Zapotec Indians of Oaxaca, Mexico? The store carries incense and stone bracelets to every size of fanciful Day of the Dead skeletons. A large off-site storage unit allows the owners to frequently freshen up the shop with something new.

Right now, their biggest challenge is competition from online shopping. Josh explained, “We noticed sales dropped

in the Summer of 2022. We’ve lost about 40% to 80% in the last 18 months. This is sad because people don’t know where their merchandise comes from. Sure, it’s cheaper, but that means it comes at a cost to someone.”


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The Sun is Rising on Public Safety

A Commitment to Protecting, Connecting, and Preserving Public Safety in Sacramento

Story by Kristina Rogers

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - On January 31st, Sacramento District Attorney Thien Ho gave a public safety address to a packed room at Clunie Hall. Guests included Police Chief Kathy Lester, elected officials, colleagues, community leaders, crime victims, and friends. D.A. Ho laid out his department’s mission and here are a few important highlights. To begin, since January 2021, more than 600 people have died in Sacramento County of Fentanyl. D.A. Ho explained those numbers are expected to rise. Most parents don’t know social media is the leading platform for drug dealers. Counterfeit pills mixed with fentanyl are marketed online as “prescription pills.”

Laura Didier was there to share her story about how her own son got access to one such counterfeit pill. It was Christmas break in 2020. Her son Zack was a straight-A student, athlete, and musician. He was a good kid, and parents didn’t seem to have any reason to worry. Unfortunately, Zack went online and bought a pill marketed as a prescription Percocet, but it wasn’t. He tried it once, and his father found him dead in his bedroom. It was a somber reminder deadly drugs are now easily accessible to anyone, anywhere. With tears, Laura said, “He’ll always be 17.” Heartbroken, she wanted to make something good from this tragedy. Didier partnered with the District Attorney’s office to promote “one pill can kill.” Now she joins Thien Ho and Angela Webb to speak at educational school forums about fentanyl awareness. They plan on expanding their youth-focused program in 2024. To learn more about One Pill Can Kill and watch Zack’s story, go to: 1pillcankillsac.com. Awareness is vital

to helping protect our communities, but accountability is equally essential. Thien Ho is working with other District Attorneys to provide harsher sentences for drug dealers. The loss of even one life is too much to allow a dealer to walk away without real consequences. He noted January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month. According to the California Department of Justice, California is the #1 state for human trafficking. (<https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/what-is>). The Human Trafficking Unit in the District Attorney’s office partners with the Sacramento Child Exploitation Task Force (CETF), which includes the Sacramento County Sherriff, FB, and Sacramento Police Department. And while they aggressively pursue and prosecute human traffickers, child predators, and domestic abusers, there is a new outreach arm. Victims of these crimes can go to GetHelpSac.org for answers. There, they can access organizations like My Sisters House, Weave, and the Community Against Sexual Harm (CASH). The discussion moved to the fear and crime our local businesses and property owners are experiencing. It’s no secret that retail theft has skyrocketed in California. The D.A.’s office is taking aim with a new organized retail theft unit. Not only are they focused on fighting the crimes that shutter our local businesses, but D.A. Ho is advocating for answers to nearby encampments as well. He noted that these homeless camps “put people between compassion and chaos.” To help people on the street get back on their feet, Thien Ho supports the development of a shelter model called Hope for Sacramento. This model allows anyone on the streets to get shelter and move toward sobriety and housing at



District Attorney Thien Ho giving the State of Public Safety Address. Photos courtesy of District Attorney’s Office

a reasonable pace (hopeforsacramento.org). District Attorney Ho knows Incarceration isn’t the only solution to crime. This is why his office has another answer. Non-violent offenders will receive an opportunity at redemption with the new Changing Courses program. Instead of prison, those accused of a crime can choose to enter an apprenticeship program in the trades. If they complete the program, they can move toward a lucrative job, and a real future. D.A. Ho explained, “This allows them to change their course from a life of crime to a life of construction.” Still, there is another hurdle that our law enforcement professionals can’t handle alone. Current legislation in California is one of the biggest obstacles to public safety. That is why Thien Ho and District Attorneys across California are advocating for a measure to be added to the fall ballot called The Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act. Many law enforcement professionals point to Prop 47 as a contributor to the rise in crime across California. It’s been ten years since the proposition passed, and they believe it is time to change things. Interested folks can review the petition details and how to

get involved go to; casafecommunities.com. The presentation ended on a hopeful note. D.A. Ho believes Sacramento has been sleeping, and although it’s a slow process, she is waking up. The sunrise is coming, and our Thien Ho is welcoming us with coffee. To review the entire presentation and learn more about the Sacramento District Attorney’s office, go to: sacda.org. ★



Laura Didier sharing her story about her beloved son.



Thien Ho and Sacramento Police Chief Kathy Lester



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Vote Early! Vote by Mail.


Update your language preference

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The Presidential Primary is Party Specific

During the March 5, 2024 Presidential Primary Election voters will nominate one presidential candidate from each party to run against each other in the November 5, 2024 General Election. To vote for the presidential candidate you want in the primary election, ensure you are registered with your preferred party by visiting www.elections.saccounty.gov or calling our office at (800) 762-8019.



If you would like to change your party, reregister at: registertovote.ca.gov or scan:

Visit www.elections.saccounty.gov or Call Toll Free (800) 762-8019



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Concerned Citizens;

The City of Sacramento and the Youth, Parks & Community Enrichment Department (YPCE) continue to conduct business inconsistent with the betterment of the community and with tax payers who contribute tax dollars to Sacramento with 223 City Parks located on 4225.5 Acres of Land. Recently, on Jan. 1, 2024, local car clubs held an annual gathering, to celebrate a New Years Day in William Land Park's Panhandle area. As in the past, the organizers of this event did not secure the required permits, park use documents or pay the fees for the use of the entire Panhandle area for their New Years Day event. The YPCE overlooked this event and the required submission of documentation, permits and payments that this event required. <https://www.cityofsacramento.org/ParksandRec/Permits/Picnics>

Each year, this event continues to grow which includes many

local visitors along with participants from other cities and states. There were hundreds of attendees to this annual/yearly car event in which many custom vehicles were towed, as they were beautiful 'show cars' and proudly built by their owners, costing hundreds and thousands of dollars. The event is also located adjacent to residences that overlook the Panhandle. These residences had to deal with the: Noise, Drug & Alcohol Usage, Side Shows, Non-Permitted Amplified Sound/Music, Illegal Parking, Food Vendors, Lack of Restrooms/Toilets, Lack of Parking and hundreds of vehicles and event participants. With so many people and vehicles blocking egress, Emergency Vehicles would not have had immediate access in response to an emergency.

On January 23, 2024, the Sacramento City Council met, during which time, the Parks Department gave a full presentation on the status of our parks at the City Council meeting,

for consideration of the 2024-2025 Sacramento YPCE budget. What was missing is the 'lack of fees, oversight and management' that the YPCE does not charge or manage for certain Park Permits, Use Fees and Permit fees for some events that are overlooked, to include large events, such as the recent Jan. 1, 2024 Car club annual gathering. If the YPCE and City of Sacramento continue with 'selective event fees/NO fees', the City and YPCE will cut services and staff at our City Parks.

I am requesting that the City of Sacramento and YPCE manage the 223 City Parks as Assets, and as such, not be selective as to who or what is charged to those who want to utilize our City Parks. I also request that YPCE manage and recommend the size and type of event with the City Park, to make the event a success for both the participants and also for the community where the park is located.

Sincerely-A
Concerned Sacramento Tax Payer and Voter ★



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Belle Cooledge Library Will be Closed Temporarily Starting February 20



Belle Cooledge Library. Photo courtesy of Belle Cooledge Library

Sacramento Public Library News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento will be replacing the stucco and tile on the exterior of the Belle Cooledge Library building. We hope to

reopen in May. Your holds will be available at this location through February 16. They will be transferred to Martin Luther King, Jr. Library after that date. You can cancel your hold by logging into your

account online or calling 916-264-2920 for assistance. While Belle Cooledge Library is closed, please visit us at any of our other library locations. Thank you for your patience. ★

Voter Registration and Elections Update

My Voter Portal

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Voter Registration and Elections is excited to introduce My Voter Portal (MVP) to access your voter registration record, view your ballot status and voting history, access accessible election materials, view your County Voter Information Guide, obtain information regarding the current election, find Vote Center and Official

Ballot Drop Box locations near you, and so much more!
Visit the My Voter Portal link and check it out on the Sacramento County website. If you have questions or need help, contact VRE at (916) 875-6451, email voterinfo@sacounty.gov, or use the toll-free voter assistance hotline at (800) 762-8019. The hotline has the ability to connect voters with disabilities with TTY (Text Telephone). ★

LOCAL VOTING / BALLET DROP OFF

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