

Youngsters Trip the Light Fantastic in Wilton

**CSD** Board **Approves** New IT Position



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MARCH 8, 2024

# SDD NSIDE

# **Man Makes Incredible Recovery**

Wilton Man Clinically Dead for Nearly 40 Minutes Makes Remarkable Recovery









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Mark and Betsy Hite of Wilton reunite with three members of the Kaiser Permanente South emergency room trauma team who restarted his heart after nearly 40 minutes of clinical death. From left, are Chase Wiley, RN, Tyrone Tiu, RN, the Hites, and Chistopher Beck, MD. A Cosumnes Fire ambulance transported Hite to the hospital. Photo by Gail Bullen

By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times** Reporter

WILTON, CA (MPG) - A month after his heart stopped, Wilton resident Mark Hite, 77, had the chance to reunite with three members of the team who brought him back to life although he had been clinically dead for nearly 40 minutes.

The reunion took place outside the Kaiser

Permanente South emergency room on Feb. 27. "I've got to admit, I don't remember a whole lot about what happened when we were here," Hite told Dr. Christopher Beck, the emergency physician who spearheaded the effort to revive him.

"I'm glad you don't remember. We had you paralyzed. We had you knocked out with a breathing tube," Beck said. "You

certainly put me through the gamut of almost everything I know about running a code. We had four doctors in there, probably six nurses, a couple of medical students, and a resident. I was almost at the end of what I knew how to do."

Hite's heart had endured 14 shocks from a defibrillator, three times by Wilton firefighters at their home, four times by Cosumnes Fire medics in

the ambulance, and seven times at the hospital. CPR was being administered continuously in between. Additionally, the hospital staff administered 10 or 12 medications.

"I mean it was a kitchen sink effort at that point," Beck recalled.

That's when Beck resorted to a tool he had only used three or four times in his 10-year

Continued on page 2



**CSD** Receives a Relatively **Good Audit Report for** 2020/2021 **Fiscal Year** 

By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times** Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - The just-completed audit report for the 2020/2021 fiscal year finally became a topic when the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Financial Committee met on Feb. 29.

General Manager Mimi Morris described it as a "fine audit" despite being a qualified report. "There is a lot of forward motion that can happen now that the audit is done," she said.

The district had been working on the audit since the summer of 2022, which is an unusually long time, Morris said. However, later in the meeting, she described the 2020/2021 fiscal year "as a big of a dumpster fire." The auditors also sent the district a punch list of 79 financial record problems that had to be fixed before they could complete an audit. The Finance Committee is comprised of Directors Martin Pohll and Stephen Booth, Morris, Director of Finance and Administration Mark Matulich, and other staff. They review financial issues in depth and make recommendations to the entire board. Morris asked Matulich to go into detail about the audit report, which had been sent to the district by Richardson & Co. several days earlier. Matulich said the district is like five businesses, which adds complexity to the accounting. He said the auditors gave an unmodified opinion, which is a clean audit, on the drainage, solid waste, and security funds. However, the district received a qualified opinion on the water and sewer funds. "What that means is that except for a specific matter than the auditors discuss here in their report, the financial statements are presented fairly in all material respects," he said. The qualification has to do with the district's lack of methodology for valuing and recording easements and developer-donated infrastructure as capital Continued on page 5



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# **Resident Warns of Impending Train** Wreck Inside Rancho Murieta



Resident Ted Hart believes the three major entities in the community are on the same track heading for a train wreck. He spoke at the Rancho Murieta Association Board meeting on Feb. 20 and at the CSD Board meeting on Feb. 21. Photo by Gail Bullen

#### By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times** Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** 

- A resident's warning about an imminent train wreck, a storm damage

report, a new water fountain at Clementia Park, and upcoming street repairs were topics when the Rancho Murieta Association Board met on Feb. 20. Several committee chairs recent activities.

Train wreck

Longtime resident Ted Hart told the board he was worried about liability falling onto homeowners because of

also updated the board on problems being experienced by the three major entities in Rancho Murieta. Besides RMA, the entities are the, Rancho Murieta Community Services *Continued on page 3* 

# TheRiverValleyTimes.com

# Youngsters Trip the Light Wilton Man Clinically Dead for Nearly 40 Minutes **Fantastic in Wilton**



All participants in a talent show gather on stage for the finale at the Wilton Community center on Feb. 23. The Cosumnes Parks and Recreation Council sponsored the event. Photos courtesy Patsv Nemetz

### By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times Reporter**

WILTON, CA (MPG) - It was all about kids showing off, but in a good way, when the Cosumnes Parks and Recreation Council presented a talent show at the Wilton Community Center on Feb. 23.

The event featured 13 youngsters who entertained the crowd with various talents, including playing musical instruments, singing solos, or performing bicycle tricks.

"We received a lot of positive feedback from parents about the value of the opportunity to perform in public," Nemetz noted, highlighting the joy and satisfaction experienced by all the young participants. Each child received a prize—a \$10 gift card to Coldstone Creamery-adding to the celebratory atmosphere.

Maryanne Evans, a teacher at Dillard Elementary, served as the emcee for the show, while her husband, Mike Evans, contributed by bringing a popcorn machine to the center, delighting attendees with free popcorn.

Looking ahead, Nemetz revealed that the council is already planning another talent show for elementary school-age youngsters next year. "Our goal is to bring the community together in a positive way," she said.  $\star$ 



Third grader Silas Barnes demonstrates a bicv



First graders Rylen Wells, Elijah Hiatt, Alan Ramos, and Emilio Alcaraz take part in a beatboxing performance



Third grader Charlotte Thebeau performs a solo vocal.



Third grader Grayson Suda performs on the



# **Makes Remarkable Recovery**

#### Continued from page 1

career as an emergency room (ER) doctor. "We had to double shock you three times and managed to get you back," he told Hite. "But then you were in a dangerous, life-threatening arrhythmia once you got a pulse, but we still had to shock you another three or four times."

Beck said the situation was so precarious that he hesitated to leave the ER to update the family. "We were with you for over an hour before you were safe to come out of the sickest room in the ER," he told Hite.

One of Beck's colleagues checked on Hite that night and found him awake, and Beck visited the intensive care unit (ICU) the following day. He recounted how they shook hands, and Hite wrote him a note.

"It was a wonderful CPR case," Beck said. "The amazing thing is you were down for almost 40 minutes and you are still neurologically intact."

Beck commended everyone who administered CPR, beginning with Betsy Hite and ending with students at the hospital. "Your heart was not effectively pumping for that entire time," Beck said. "So it was those people's hands that keep blood going to your brain to where you are awake now. They all did a wonderful job."

Betsy Hite will never forget what happened late in the afternoon on Jan. 25. She and Hite had come home from an uneventful test to visualize his leaking mitral valve that was to be surgically repaired in upcoming weeks at Mercy General Hospital.

Since he had fasted all day, she began to fix him some eggs when she heard his head hit the table. She felt his neck and couldn't find a pulse, and when she picked up his arm, it flopped down.

"I threw a glass of iced water at him, but he couldn't talk," she said. "So I just called 911 with the house phone and put it on speaker."

Guided by the 911 operator, who remained calm and directive, she pulled Hite down to the floor, cracking his head in the process. But the 911 operator assured her that was the least of her worries.

Asked if she knew CPR, she said had taken a CPR class but couldn't remember. Reminding her of a drill sergeant, the 911 operator kept counting "One. Two. Three. Four." He also told her to stick to compressions with no mouth-to-mouth breathing.

The 911 operator could tell by her breathing that she hadn't initially placed her hands in the right position and told her to move her hand down into the softer tissue. "Then I was really deep, and could see him exhaling air, she said.

At one point she heard something snap and stopped. "Oh my God, I've broken a rib," she said.



Married for nearly 40 years, the Hites are grateful for his recovery. She performed CPR for seven minutes after his heart stopped at home on Jan. 25. Photos by Gail Bullen



Marveling at the basket of goodies from Betsy Hite, who is a chef, Beck assures her that he isn't a volunteer and gets paid to save lives

The vigil outside the emergency room was tense although one of her daughter's friends who works for Kaiser arranged for a doctor and a social worker to meet with them in a private room.

Hite seemed completely out of it the following day at the ICU. They worried he might not wake up. However, their grandchildren who are "super 49ers fans" still lobbied him to watch the game against the Detroit Lions.

"They all just kept saying 'Papa, you know the Niners can't get to the Super Bowl without you. They need you," Betsy Hite recalled. "That when Mark squeezed our granddaughter Sawyer's hand," she said. Transferred to Mercy General on Jan. 29, Hite underwent extensive cardiac surgery on Feb. 1st, repairing the mitral valve and implanting a pacemaker/defibrillator. His recovery progressed, and he was discharged on Feb. 5.

Grateful for the care they received at Kaiser, Betsy Hite arranged for the heartfelt reunion with Dr. Beck. She presented him with a basket of homemade Meyer Lemon marmalade, Meyer Lemon curd and scones she had made herself and her daughter Kali Dittrich gave him specialized candied walnuts from her orchard in Clements.

"You know that I am not a volunteer and



Fourth grader Helix Huynh plays piano.



Third grader Dave Chu elicits a reaction from the crowd.

Sixth grader Hunter Huynh plays piano.



Jesse Stark performs a vocal solo.

That means you are doing it right, just keep going," he told her.

Betsy Hite appreciated how the 911 operator also kept her apprised of the arrival time for medics.

After seven minutes, four Wilton firefighters burst through the unlocked front door and swiftly took over CPR, started an IV, put nitroglycerin under Hite's tongue, and administered the first shock. One of the firefighters realized Betsy Hite was seeing the flat line on the monitor and turned it away before they administered a second shock.

After shocking Hite a third time, she heard them say: "We've got something. It's faint. Let's go," As they loaded him up in the Cosumnes ambulance, she directed them to take Hite to Mercy General Hospital.

"No," a Cosumnes paramedic told her. "We don't have an extra 12 minutes. We are going to Kaiser South Trauma Center."

Karen is a Presidential Award Holder

that I get paid to do this," Beck told them as he juggled the baskets of goodies.

Two of the nurses who worked that night also came outside for the reunion. Tyrone Tiu said they usually don't know what happens to code patients after they are taken to the ICU. "For you guys to take the time to say thank you, is a big deal for us," he said.

Hite's case also was a reminder about why he went into nursing, Tiu added.

"You were a cool story," Chase Wiley told Hite. "You were the talk of the town for several weeks."

Hite was asked his thoughts in the aftermath of the extraordinary efforts to save him. "I owe my life to the dedication, skill, and extraordinary competence of a lot of people, including my wife; Wilton Fire; Cosumnes Fire, Kaiser South ER personnel, and the cardiology unit at Mercy General Hospital. I'm looking forward to whatever is in store for me on this unexpected extension of my life."



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# **Resident Warns of Impending Train Wreck Inside Rancho Murieta**

Continued from page 1 District (CSD) and the Rancho Murieta Country Club. Hart made his remarks during public comments.

"For years they have run down separate tracks," he said. "Now they are converging onto the same track, heading for a collision.'

As examples of the problems, Hart said the country club is pursuing bankruptcy, CSD has security issues and another lawsuit, and RMA is trying to decide whether to take over security.

Hart said homeowners end of paying for all up the entities.

"These entities, each one of them, needs to be turned over to an outside contractor. We need to be rid of them," Hart said. "The primary reason is to remove the homeowner liability for all of these things that have gone on and seem to continue going on with a proven inability to manage."

Hart urged the RMA Board to take over security immediately and to contract with a private security company that doesn't arm its employees with guns.

Hart said his primary focus was to get the community to come together with the board. "This board, CSD, and the country club, you need to sit down together and say if this happens in bankruptcy, that will have an effect on everyone," he said.

Because Hart made his remarks during public comments and his topic wasn't on the agenda the board didn't respond. This is the customary practice under the law covering HOAs.

Hart made similar remarks at the CSD Board meeting the following night. He said what happens at the country club and elsewhere will influence what happens with security. "You will never be able to compare to an outside private entity as for cost and coverage," he said.

CSD Board President Time Maybee thanked Hart for his comments and said he understood the issues he had raised.

### Storm Damage

Maintenance Manager Troy Schaffer reported that all three of the work crews had been cleaning up storm damage for a couple of weeks. During and after the worst storm on Feb. 4, they cut up a couple dozen trees including two that fell on houses. The Feb. 29 storm only took down one large tree on Terreno Drive, but employees had to respond on the holiday.

The storm also caused some damage to a baseball field at Stonehouse Park, the Chesbro Lake boat dock, and nine signs. He said the crews also stayed busy cleaning up the streets and hauling away debris piles.

Asked about flooding, Schaffner said he hadn't received any reports. That was likely due to the crews clearing the storm drains before and after the storms.

#### Water Fountain

Director Renee Bechthold, who also is the president of the Rancho Murieta Optimist

Club, said her group was disbanding at the end of the month and was donating \$2,000 to install a new water fountain at Clementia Park. She asked the board to approve spending \$1,500 from the exclusive use fund to cover the remaining cost of the bi-level water fountain that is ADA compliant and includes a pet bowl. The vote to approve her motion was unanimous.

General Manager Rod Hart said the old fountain was falling apart because of age and was taken out when the crews expanded the concrete at the park. He said employees installed plumbing to a new location for a replacement fountain so it wouldn't get hit by vehicles.

#### Street repairs

During his general manager's report. Hart said he and Schaffner had met with the association's consultant and have selected the roads that will be addressed this year and said the bids would be moving forward.

Hart said that Domingo Court will receive an overlay, partial concrete gutter replacement, concrete valley gutter replacement, and additional valley gutter to address a drainage issue. Lago Circle will be overlayed including the parks and miscellaneous concrete repairs. Reynosa Drive from the golf cart crossing to Riverview Park will be overlayed.

Streets that will be crack-sealed with a micro surface include Murieta Parkway from first Guadalupe Drive to



A new fountain is to be installed at Clementia with the Optimist Club paying \$2,000 of the \$3,500. The old one was taken out after it failed due to old age. Photo courtesy of RMA

Camino Del Lago, Nueva Drive, Medella Circle and Rebano Court.

Hart said asphalt dig-out repairs and concrete repairs will take place throughout the community. Other business

• In his president's report, Director Scott Adams said the board received an update from the attorney at the Greenfield lawsuit and legal enforcement of the community's trail system, both in executive session. He said the board also discussed how to deal with a specific vendor who has had numerous speed violations.

• Director Danny Carrillo, who chairs the Communication Committee, said his group discussed many issues such as updating RMA forms and improving the website.

• Director Tom Reimers, who chairs the Compliance Committee, said CSD security officers issues nine citations in January while RMA compliance officers issued 39. He said the

Bidwell

Folsom

committee also discussed revising nonarchitectural rule to address parking by vehicles and golf carts in red zones and areas roped off for special events.

• Director Renee Bechthold said her group spent most of the last meeting scheduling upcoming events for 2024 that included four Bingo games, the opening of the spray park, and events for Halloween and Christmas.

The board will hold its next meeting at 6:30 p.m. on March 19.

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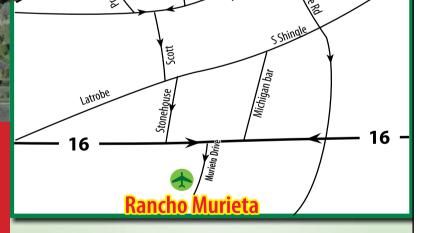


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# **Propane Available at Rancho Murieta Airport**





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# **Reclamation Trustees Discuss Building Bridges** With State Water Agency

#### By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times** Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - Could there be anything more rewarding than being one of only four private levee districts nationwide chosen for inclusion in an Army Corps of Engineers pilot study, offering invaluable data without cost? Yes, indeed. What surpasses that is finally receiving some acknowledgment and recognition from the California Department of Water Resources (DWR).

This realization unfolded when the Reclamation District 800 (RD800) Board of Trustees. met on Feb. 15. The conversation revolved around the levee tour held on Feb. 13 so that Corps engineers could inspect the levees and banks on the north side of the Cosumnes River. Top officials from DWR's Division of Flood Management also went along.

Board President Brian Takemori, Trustee Leland Schneider, along with the district's contracted engineer Patrick Erwin, and the contracted attorney Rebecca Smith, shared an enthusiastic report about the tour's outcome.

In other business, Schneider introduced new employee Trevor Dosh, who is the district superintendent patrolling and maintaining the levees. The board also approved a contract with Marsha Holmes, who recently came back from retirement to again serve as the secretary.

#### Background

RD 800 maintains and repairs 34 miles of privately owned levees along the Cosumnes River between Rancho Murieta and Freeman Road off Dillard Road in Wilton and Freeman Road off Grant Line Road in Sheldon. The funding to maintain the levees at a 10-year flood standard comes from an



agreed that there should be a clean slate going forward. "If nothing else comes of it, at least it was building a bridge between us, and DWR having a real understanding of what it has been like out here when the river was at the top," Ervin said.

Smith agreed that the district's relationship with DWR has not always been good.

"And, that's putting it lightly," Trustee Jack Kautz added.

Smith said the meeting with the DWR folks had been very collaborative and helpful. "I think we need to keep building on that relationship because it was very positive."

The top DWR official on the tour was Jeremy Arrich, who is the manager of the Division of Flood Management. Schneider said Arrich approached him during a break and commented to the effect: "I've got a whole new respect for vour district. We didn't really understand what went on out here until today," he said. "DWR will have involvement. All you have to do is ask. We need to help you guys so it is not just your board members and your employees who are flood-fighting out here."

Schneider also reported on a conversation with Supervising Engineer Wade Wiley, who runs the DWR inspections from Redding to Bakersfield. He told Schneider he was on the RD800 levee last spring and was seeing it again on the tour. 'I'm amazed at all the work that you guys got done," Schneider quoted him saying. In other DWR conversations, Engineer Alberto De Leon offered to put on a daylong flood fighting class in Spanish for RD800. Another talked about putting all of the RD800 information and photos into the DRW flood fight incident database.



Marsha Homes, who came out of retirement to serve as board secretary, interacts with the board.

maintain and patrol the levees. Sounding far more mature than his 18 years, Dosh reported on his activities after being on the job for a week. One of his major assignments was opening the gates and clearing any impediments from the levee road so that the Corps inspection could take place. Schneider said 12 vehicles went on the tour.

The board also spent a considerable amount of time suggesting and approving purchases such as a chainsaw, a 50-gallon gas tank for the district truck, a toolbox, an iPad, and two new district cell phones, one for Dosh and one for the truck. Schneider also asked him to register for an upcoming safety class. Additionally, the board discussed hiring up to three temporary employees to help him with the initial work of clearing the levees this spring. Dosh is being paid \$20 an hour.

The board also approved an employment contract with Marsha Holmes, who will be paid \$400 a month to serve as the district's contracted secretary. She worked for the district for 25 years before retiring five years ago. But at the board's request, she came back with the understanding she wouldn't have to handle the bookkeeping. That is being handled by another contracted employee Perla

# **Fishing Club Stocks Calero** with Blackfish



An employee with Freshwater Fish Company of Wilton gets ready to disperse 300 adult Blackfish at Lake Calero on Feb. 20. The Rancho Murieta Fishing Club is introducing the new species as a forage fish for the existing fish in the reservoir. The Rancho Murieta Association Recreation Committee funded the project with a \$3,000 donation. Photo courtesy Jim Monical

# **Combating the Loneliness Epidemic**

#### Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - This time of year can feel especially lonely for many — as the holiday season fades and Valentine's Day adds extra pressure to be in a romantic relationship. If you feel this way, you are not alone. A recent Gallup poll found that about 44 million American adults report feeling lonely. In fact, the US Surgeon General even declared loneliness an epidemic last year due to its serious physical health consequences. According to the Surgeon General's "Our Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation" report, poor social connection increases the risk of heart disease, stroke and dementia.

Additionally, loneliness can lead to mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. The CDC reports that having a mental health condition, like depression, can also increase one's risk of feeling lonely and isolated.

American men are at an especially increased risk of experiencing loneliness and social isolation. While 30 years ago, 55% of American men reported having at least six close friends, that number is now closer to 27%. In fact, 15% of men report having no close friendships at all. Unfortunately, men also experience increased stigma around sharing their emotions and expressing vulnerability, which also contributes to them reporting more instances of feeling lonely. There are multiple reasons our modern world can feel so isolating regardless of gender. The COVID-19 pandemic led to physical and social isolation that led many to develop thoughts of hopelessness and helplessness. Social media, smartphones and cars have all contributed to a world where people live far apart from each other and are not incentivized to connect in person. It is now common to go for weeks without seeing or speaking to loved ones.

foster the inclusion and connection that provides us with the necessary support we need to overcome life's challenges. Here are some ways to combat loneliness from the CDC:

-Keep in regular contact with others. Reach out to different friends and family regularly. If one person is unavailable to take your call, someone else probably is. -Ask for help. If you need extra support, ask a mental health provider. The Stop Stigma Sacramento Services page has a list of resources. -Help others. Lending a hand lets the people you love know how much you care. This can create a deeper connection and can feel rewarding. Volunteering is a great way to help others and meet people. -Unplug. Ironically, the technology we have to connect us makes people feel lonelier. In-person interactions make us feel closer to our loved ones.

Being more socially connected can also improve stress responses and minimize the negative health effects of stress, according to a National Library of Medicine publication. To get connected, join a social group. Sacramento has many organizations to join for activities like yoga, a fitness group, art classes and book clubs. Being part of a group with shared interests, values or goals can foster a sense of belonging.

assessment district that generates only \$514,000 a year. The January 2023 storms broke RD800 levees in three locations and caused massive erosion elsewhere. The district borrowed money to make more than \$6.5 million in repairs and is currently in the red by \$7.475 million.

#### Levee tour

RD 800 was able to participate in a Corps pilot study after another district in Louisiana dropped out. Over the next 10 years, the Corps plans to put together a national database of all private levees in the nation with an assessment of their conditions and risks.

In addition to taking the Corps engineers on the Feb. 13 tour, Ervin told the board that he Schneider and Takemori answered many questions about the levees over the next two days. The end result will be a Corps report outlining the deficiencies of the levees with an estimate of what it will take to get them up on par. Ervin said he didn't know when to expect the report.

Ervin said the best part about the Corps tour was having DWR involved, and he reported talking to Senior Engineer Sterling York about the district's past relationship with the state agency. "I told him that I wouldn't say it was bad blood. There's just been some cynicism in the district, just because we've felt like we have always been left out here on our own."

Ervin said he and York

Ervin made the most telling point about the DWR interaction. "Ultimately, we are hoping what comes out of this is some funding from the state," he said.

As for interactions with the Corps engineers on the tour, Brown and Schneider found the on-the-spot modeling very interesting. Schneider said the river hydrology involved would be very helpful "so we can be ahead of the game when it happens."

#### **Employees**

Schneider introduced the district's first employee in more than three years. Trevor Dosh is the district's new superintendent who will

Tzintzun-Garibay. Even after Holmes was

retired, she still answered district calls from county and state agencies and news organizations, especially during the January 2023 storms. That was because her private cell phone was still listed in many databases.

The board voted to reinstitute what had been the district's official phone number, 916-594-1018, which Holmes will answer.

#### **Other business:**

• The board approved spending \$17,700 for audits of the years ending in 2021 and 2022. Smith said the other reclamation districts also are having trouble keeping up with their audits because of the difficulty of finding auditors.

• Ervin reported he had completed the last of the paperwork required by FEMA after the January 2023 storms. Now it was just a matter of waiting.

The board's next meeting will be at 9 a.m. on March 21 at the Wilton Community Center.



Director Leland Schneider, left, is mentoring the district's new employee Trevor Dosh. Photos by Gail Bullen

However, it is still possible for us to

While it can seem daunting to contact someone when you are feeling lonely, keep in mind that reaching out can often help you feel relieved and hopeful. Maintaining your social connections is the key to combatting loneliness.

If you're struggling with your mental health you can visit the Stop Stigma Sacramento Services page or call NAMI's (National Alliance on Mental Illness) free helpline at 800-950-NAMI (6264). Know that help and hope is always available.



Loneliness can lead to mental health conditions like depression and anxiety. MPG Courtesy Photo

# **Find Back Issues at** TheRiverValleyTimes.com

# CSD Receives a Relatively Good Audit Report for 2020/2021 Fiscal Year

Continued from page 1 assets. Matulich said the district has developed a procedure to account for new infrastructure moving forward. The challenge will be going backward to account for past donations that were never booked, a task the auditors are assuming will take a long time.

Matulich also discussed and answered questions about the district's financial statements that were incorporated into the report. Among the points of interest were that the district's net position, increased by \$5.1 million over the previous year, but the operating budget still ended up \$1.2 million in the red. The reserves also stood at \$7.9 million.

Pohll asked if the board would have to wait for 21/22 and 21/23 to be completed before having confidence in the reserve balances. Matulich told him that based on the solid numbers as of June 30, 2021, staff will be able to make "good estimates" so the board has the information it needs to make spending decisions.

"Well, an estimate is better than we have right now," Pohll said.

Pohll also asked about the schedule for the remaining audits. Morris said it might take nine months to finish 21/22 and 22/23 and that 23/24 probably would be finished by December.

The 20/21 audit report can be viewed on the district's website inside the packet for the Feb. 29 Finance Committee meeting. ★



Mark Matulich explains the long-awaited audit of the 2020/21 fiscal year at the Feb. 29 meeting of the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Finance Committee on Feb. 29. Photo by Gail Bullen



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# **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**

### Kiwanis Slates Easter Egg Hunt March 30

The Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta's annual Easter Egg Hunt and no-host Family Picnic is scheduled for Saturday morning, March 30, at Stonehouse Park from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Children, their families, and their guests are invited to attend the Easter Egg Hunt with over 4,500 sticker and candy-stuffed plastic Easter eggs. During the Easter Egg Hunt, kids can pet the animals at the Petting Zoo, do Easter crafts, decorate Easter cookies, and get glitter tattoos for family-friendly costs. Cash or credit cards can purchase tickets for activities, popcorn, juice, and water on Saturday morning. There will be photo opportunities with the Easter Bunny. The Fire Department will display their trucks and equipment (if not on a call), and the Sheriff's Department will have an information table. The Easter Egg Hunt will be divided by age groups on the softball field outfield with these starting times: 11:20 a.m.: ages 2-4 egg hunt with stickers; 11:40 a.m.: ages 5-7 egg hunt with candy: and noon, ages 8-10 egg hunt with candy The Murieta Dance Company will conclude the event with a performance at 12:30 p.m. The event will happen, rain or shine. Our Kiwanis Club thanks the Girl Scouts, CRES K-Kids, and the Rancho Murieta Key Club for stuffing all 4,500 plastic eggs, the Rancho Murieta Key Club for helping with the various activities and refreshment sales, and the Scouts of Troop 633 for helping to set up and tear down the event. We also thank the RMA for their invaluable help in making our Easter Egg Hunt a joyous time for

our Rancho Murieta families. Please get in touch with Bronwyn Anthony at (916) 384-6444 for more information. We hope to see you there.

## RM Community Church Slates Easter Services.

The Rancho Murieta Community Church is planning five Easter services. The first will be on Good Friday, March 29 at 6 p.m. The Sunrise Service is slated on Gazebo Hill on Sunday, March 31 at 6:30 a.m. Easter Services at the church will take place on Saturday, March 30 at 6 p.m. and on Sunday, March 31 at 9 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

## Pre-registration Required for Kid's Fishing Day April 6

The Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta has scheduled the annual Kid's Fishing Day event rain or shine for Saturday, April 6 from 8 a.m. to noon at Lake Clementia in Rancho Murieta. The event is open to children in kindergarten through 8th grade. A total of 120 children can be accommodated on a first come, first served basis. However, preregistration is required. Waiver of liability forms will be required from parents or guardians to allow children to participate. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff will provide pre-fishing education through the Fishing in the City program prior to fishing. After the DFW presentation, local fishermen will provide guidance on techniques to the children lakeside on how to land a fish. Kiwanis cannot put on events like this without generous community sponsorship. We would like to thank G. Pucci & Sons for providing fishing tackle, and The Bass Hookup for bait. Prizes for the largest

fish landed are being provided by Nick and Thomas Kanemoto, 1st Gen Fishing. A hot dog lunch sponsored by Rancho Murieta Riverview will be provided to participants and guests after fishing. To pre-register call (916) 689-9669 and leave your contact phone number and the number of children who will be participating. A Kid's Fishing Day representative will then contact you to complete pre-registration.

## Women's Club Slates 'Easter Bonnet Bingo' in March

Easter Bonnet Bingo will be on tap when the Rancho Murieta Women's Club holds its next luncheon on March 27. Decorate and wear your best Easter Bonnet and join us for Bingo. A prize will be awarded for the best Easter Bonnett. French onion soup, tea sandwiches and strawberry shortcake will be on the menu. The cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for nonmembers. The reservation deadline is March 15. The contacts are Cindy Shamrock at 916-354-1918 or Barbara Armstrong at 916-541-1884.

### Rancho Murieta Voices Choral Group Seeking Volunteers

Rancho Murieta Voices choral group is in need of volunteers to fill two key positions in their 35 year old non-profit group. We are looking to fill the positions of Chior Master/ Director and Pianist . We practice Thursday afternoons at St. Vincent de Paul Church from 2pm to 3:30pm. We perform 14 times a year at **Assisted Living Homes** in the local area. Please

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# **CSD Board Approves New IT Position, Takes in Bridge Update**

### By Gail Bullen **River Valley Times** Reporter

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - Except for a bone of contention over adding a full-time information technology (IT) position and the attorney's wry report about the wooden bridge, most of the discussion at the Feb. 21 meeting of the Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD) was about the monthly staff reports.

## IT Position

At their December Board meeting, the board approved a request by General Manager Mimi Morris to create a part-time IT position to replace contracted services

At the February meeting, Morris asked to make the position fulltime because staff had determined there were far more duties than originally envisioned. The salary would be about \$120,000 with a total cost of \$185,000 with the inclusion of benefits. Morris said a full-time position would allow the district to consolidate all information technology work, (including the surveillance camera system, the security database, and computers for the plants and lift stations), under one position to better control costs and fully integrate all district IT needs.

Morris said she was proposing a reclassification of an existing position that hasn't been filled since July. In her memo, she said it would cost \$62,000 to transition from contracted services to an in-house IT manager. After Directors Linda Butler and Stephen Booth raised strenuous objections, Morris clarified that eliminating the contracted IT services would more than pay for the increased salary for the already budgeted position and leave the district about \$20,000 in the black. At the end of the discussion, the board voted 3:2 to approve the new position. Butler and Booth were the nay votes. Butler said she couldn't understand paying an additional \$62,000. "We are in no financial position to spend more money unless it is an emergency," she said. "In my opinion, this isn't an emergency...We can survive until we are better

FDIC

shape financially." Booth said the timing wasn't right for the district to create another high-paid, full-time administrative position although he still favored a part-time IT position.

Director Randy Jenco asked Morris to explain some of the arguments she made to the Personnel Committee to justify the new fulltime position. She said that even since then her laptop has been malfunctioning for 10 days even though the contracted vendor has made three attempts to fix it.

Morris said the district has struggled for years with limited IT support. "Between my database capabilities, Mark's (Matulich) abilities with information technology, and this IT person, I think we would get the district's multiple systems that rely on technology to a much higher mode," she said. "It is all related to moving the organization forward."

After Director Martin Pohl asked her about the math, Morris provided a rough estimation off the top of her head. The salary for a budgeted, vacant position for an accounting technician is \$70,000. With benefits, the total cost would be \$105,000 to \$110,000. Reclassifying the position and increasing the salary to \$185,000 with benefits would increase the costs by about \$70,000. However, the savings from eliminating the \$120,000 in contracted services would leave the district \$50,000 in the black. On the other hand, the \$30,000 cost for a parttime payroll clerk must be subtracted, which would leave the district about \$20,000 in the black

money ever," she said.

"But I think this will be like a jetpack for us."

Booth told Morris he was impressed with her revenue enhancement efforts, but he still didn't think the timing for a full-time IT position was right and wouldn't recommend it to the community.

Jenco said the issue was being mischaracterized. "So in the big picture, we are trading one position for another, and we are really not adding any expenses to our budget," he said.

Audience member Mike Martell, a past CSD Board member, recommended a full-time IT position, saying it would be essential for getting the most benefit as the district increases its surveillance camera system after more funding comes in from the new housing.

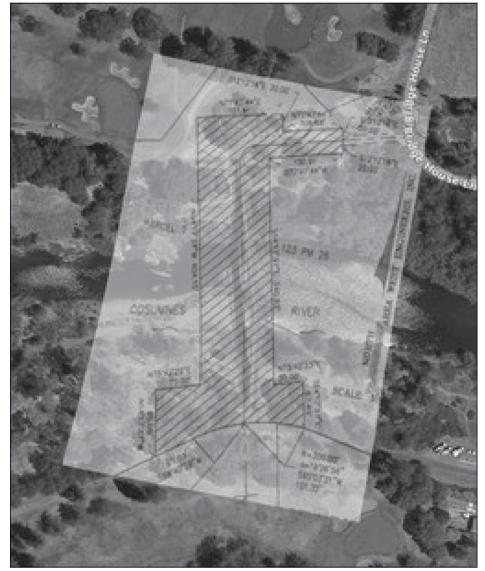
After President Tim Maybee called for the vote on the full-time IT position, he, Jenco, and Pohl voted yes. Butler and Booth voted no.

## Wooden Bridge

District Counsel Andrew Ramos provided an update on the district's efforts to transfer the wooden bridge to the Rancho Murieta Association which has been going on for years. Ramos said the most recent effort was a board resolution in November asking that the bridge be exempt from surplus property under the Surplus Lands Act, which is administered by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. After spending two months reviewing request, the department attorneys ignored "the rules of geometry that no houses could fit on the property," Ramos said. However they did suggest the district could use another exemption that



Director Linda Butler argues against the creation of a new IT position at the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Board meeting on Feb. 21. President Tim Maybee is to her right. Photos by Gail Bullen



A document shows the wooden bridge parcel lines imposed over aerial photography from Google Maps. Photo Courtesy of RM CSI

Ramos was presenting to the board.

"The bottom line is they didn't know what to do with us. The department's job is to make

town hall. A town hall date hadn't been determined as press time.

 Morris delivered the security report since a contract with the Security Supervisor Kelly Benitez has resigned. See the story in the Feb. 23 issue. Of 93 patrol shifts in January, 27 weren't covered. She also reported that two dash cameras had been installed in the two patrol vehicles. • Morris said four information requests has been made to the district in January. One was from Richard Gehrs, who asked where footage from the CSD patrol dash camera would go. She said it would be stored on a district server. • The River Valley Times protested a decision to discontinue publication of the security logs after Benitez's resignation. • Fritschi said the district will put a project to improve safety at Granlee's Dam out to bid with funding to come from a \$1.3 million state grant. • Morris staff is preparing a report on progress made since the Sacramento County Grand Jury published a critical report in March

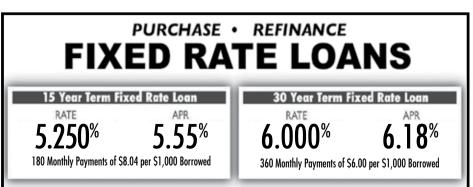
2023. She said it should be ready by the March 20 board meeting.

• Although approval of

Butler again objected to creating a full-time position. "We are very financially stressed at this point, not because we have too little money necessarily, but because we don't know how much money we have," she said.

Morris told her that staff has moved district funds from a bank and a state fund to significantly increase the interest rates. That will mean new revenue of \$600,000 from one of them.

Morris also told Butler she couldn't be any more cost-conscious. "I do not recommend wasting



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sure public agencies are making property available for affordable housing uses before selling it on the open market or doing something with it," Ramos said. "They didn't know what to do with a wooden bridge over the Cosumnes River."

The board voted 5:0 for the new resolution to seek a different exemption.

#### **Other business**

• Morris reported she expected the release of the long overdue audit 2020/21 fiscal year the following week. She said the Finance Committee would review it on Feb. 29.

Director of **Operations** Michael Fritschi reported the final phase of the Integrated Water Master Plan would be presented to the board on March 20, with a town hall meeting the following day. The other board members agreed with Butler that the community must be given at least 14 days to consider plan before scheduling a employee union, Operating Engineers Local 3, was on the agenda, the board tabled it because one small issue is still being worked out.

• Fritschi reported that the utility staff spent much time over three weeks remodeling the front office at the CSD Building.

• Fritschi also reviewed the updated matrix of capital improvement projects for the current fiscal year.

 Speaking during public comments, resident Ted Hart warned the board that all three major entities in Rancho Murieta are heading for a collision. See the RMA meeting story this issue.

• The board approved changing the entity that handles employee payroll deductions for retirement savings. Morris said the new CalPERS 457 Plan won't result in any cost to the district but it will reduce the administrative costs for employees on their savings.

The board will hold its next regular meeting at 5 p.m. on March 20.







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# **Memory Care Communities**

#### By Tenfold Senior Living

In this series, we discuss topics that are top-of-mind for a person navigating the changes that occur when a family member has Alzheimer's disease or any other type of dementia. In this article, we provide guidance for selecting a Memory Care community.

When dealing with the complexity of caring for a loved one with dementia, many of us consider a Memory Care community. While browsing websites and brochures is one step, those resources don't necessarily tell you what to look for to ensure the best situation for your loved one and your family. Here are our suggestions for what to look for when you research and visit Memory Care communities.

1. Understand types of communities.

- A community with

'a continuum of care' has Independent Living, Assisted Living, and a secure Memory Care area, enabling residents to stay as they need additional support. Others are stand-alone Memory Care, with the entire community being a secured facility. Size is important. A smaller community may be more intimate, while large communities sometimes offer additional services.

2. Be smart in your research.

- These 3 tips will make the most of your time:

a. When you look at ratings, pay attention to how the community responds to both negative and positive comments. If they've taken the time to answer thoughtfully, that means they take feedback seriously.

b. Check the community's Facebook or Instagram page. Frequent updates and photos of activities indicate a strong activities director and program.

c. It's essential to see communities in person. Visit at different times of day to see the range of activities. Be wary of a community that limits you to preplanned visits.

3. Look at the physical environment.

- This will be home for your loved one. Is the environment warm and inviting, or does it feel institutional? What's in the common area? Are activities the main focus, or is the living area dominated by a TV?

4. A s k about programming.

- What does a typical day look like? Ask to see the activities calendar. Is there a mix of activities to engage the mind, encourage social interaction and maintain physical mobility? Is there a dedicated activities director? If you're seriously considering this community, ask to meet them.

5. Talk to the staff. - How you're treated is a



When dealing with the complexity of caring for a loved one with dementia, many of us consider a Memory Care community. MPG Courtesy Photo

good indication of how your loved one will be treated. Are you greeted as you walk through the community? Are staff interacting with residents? Talk to a staff member. Ask them about their favorite activities to do with residents.

Resources such as senior placement services and agencies offer information about senior living communities and help you to compare factors like cost and services offered. But just like buying a home, the best choice will be very

much about how you feel. When we speak with families that are happy with the choice they've made, they often say simply "It just felt right." In our next article: how to talk to your family and loved one about memory care.

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# **Out of Crisis Comes Opportunity**

**Reducing Ambulance Patient Offload Time** 

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Every second counts in an emergency, and when it comes to medical emergencies, time is of the essence.

The time it takes for an ambulance to offload a patient to the emergency department (ED) can make all the difference; the longer the wait, the more critical their condition can become.

It's an emotional and stressful situation for patients and their loved ones, who are already worried about the outcome of their medical emergency.

As the population of Sacramento County continues to grow, so do the demands on its emergency medical services. One crucial metric that affects patient outcomes and the overall efficiency of emergency medical services is the Ambulance Patient Offload Time (APOT).

The time interval is between the arrival of an ambulance patient at an ED and the time that the patient is transferred to the ED gurney, bed, chair or other acceptable location and the emergency department assumes the responsibility for care of the patient. In Sacramento County, that time has hit a high of 72 minutes but the county has an ambitious goal to drop that time to 20 minutes. This goal comes as Assembly Bill 40, which takes effect on July 1, will require every local EMS agency to develop a plan not to exceed 30 minutes for 90% of ambulance arrivals and report the standardized time to the authority.

Sacramento County, with prehospital providers, local hospitals, interested community members and Sacramento County Board of Supervisors Patrick Kennedy and Pat Hume, shared their innovations and best practices Feb. 13 to address the Ambulance Patient Off-Load Time crisis.

Dr. Gregory Kann stated the importance of sharing ideas and innovations to create better services for all, adding that out of this crisis comes opportunity.

Sutter Roseville, a not-for profit hospital that is part of the Sutter Health network, shared a real-time data system implemented to monitor its Ambulance Patient Offload Time. By using its medical health record system, EPIC, Sutter Roseville tracked a patient's emergency room trip from entrance to transfer, allowing obstacles to be identified and any issues to be corrected. The hospital leadership also educated staff to help identify when a patient needed ER treatment or could be moved to another department or service. These efforts



Sacramento County Board of Supervisors want to reduce the time that it takes to get an ambulance patient into a doctor's care from 72 minutes down to 20 minutes. MPG Courtesy Photo

helped the hospital reduce the time from 100 minutes to 31 minutes, according to the Sutter Roseville presentation.

A Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (SMFD) presentation approached the Ambulance Patient Offload Time issue another way. The fire district implemented the county's revised protocol (Policy Number 5050 – Destination), which authorizes patients to be taken to their medical health system's hospital, instead of the closest hospital, allowing for faster treatment since their medical records were already there.

The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District also determined if a patient needed to be directly taken to the ER or if they could safely wait in the lobby. The fire district also partnered with other ambulance providers to provide additional ambulances to support the 9-1-1 system.

The fire district implemented a Mobile Integrated Health program, which means a Physician Assistance/Nurse Practitioner teams with a paramedic who responds to calls and determines what a patient might need and if they can be treated at the scene without going to the emergency department.

The Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District's innovations aim to get patients to the right place the first time, whether that's the ER, lobby or another service, according to the presentation.

The Feb. 13 event demonstrated that local hospitals, prehospital provider and the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors are strongly committed to improving Ambulance Patient Offload Time and emergency medical services, according to the county. With continued collaboration, innovation and inspiration, Dr. Kann emphasized that these conversations are what will fuel the plan to better lead the Ambulance Patient Offload Time and deliver better outcomes for patients in Sacramento County. ★



Ten years ago, I was at a writing seminar hanging around the snack table, when one of the seminar instructors joined me for a Danish.

He was a quiet, introspective man, truly a statesman among aspiring student writers. That's why I guided him to the quiet side of the room to tell him I thought he was lying.

Not in those exact words. I constructed a more diplomatic approach that went something like this:

"You were introduced as a 'Pulitzer Prize nominee,' but a quick Internet search tells me that we share some confusion over the term 'nominee.""

For a moment he glanced at this watch, but unfortunately realized he had time to hear me out.

"If you'd met me last year," I explained, "I would have told you that my syndicated column had received a Pulitzer Prize nomination."

"And it was not?" he asked.

"Sadly, no."

I told the aging professor how my "Florida Today" editor had submitted the dozen columns I'd written during my 2009 deployment to a combat field hospital in Iraq.

"Yes," said the professor, "My publisher also submitted my work."

As he gathered his lecture notes, he dismissively added, "Congratulations, it sounds like we are both Pulitzer nominees."

"No, we are not." I said, "but we both made the same assumption. We assumed that our editor's submission of our work equaled a Pulitzer

# To Tell the Truth, I Wasn't

nomination."

Sadly, the difference between a Pulitzer submission and a Pulitzer nomination is about as far as "ticket purchaser" is from "lotto winner."

I showed him the Pulitzer website on my tablet where he read "More than 2,500 entries are submitted annually for Pulitzer Prize consideration, yet only three in each category are bestowed with the prestigious title of Pulitzer Nominee."

"In fact," I said, "anyone of my fellow conferees can submit their work for Pulitzer consideration as long as they send \$75. But only the Pulitzer committee can bestow the title of Nominee."

The professor seemed embarrassed that a pupil had schooled him in the difference.

Our stories beg the complicated question: "Can one be a lair if one doesn't know he's lying?" Another facet of the question is: "Does one's story default to becoming the truth if one doesn't bother to fact check the story?"

In other words, in a quick check of the Pulitzer website you'll note the glaring absence of our names. And that omission, for a time, made us both liar.

For the duration of the conference, the professor continued to allow his introductions to claim a Pulitzer connection. Just as it took some time for me to remove the notation from my website.

I guess we felt much like the claim made in the movie in "A Few Good Men," by Jack Nicholson's character, Col. Jessup.

When Jessup is questioned on the witness stand, a shouting match ensues. Tom Cruise's character Lt. j.g.Kaffee demands the court finally be told the truth behind a hazing incident in the Marine barracks.

We all know Col. Jessup's answer, so say it with me.

"You can't handle the truth!"

Neither the professor nor I handled our truths very well. Sadly, our websites boasted our Pulitzer claim for a few more months.

But centuries before that movie, Jesus set the scene for real truth in John 8:32 when he said, "You will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The professor, while not religious, had no doubt heard the scripture quoted in his academic circles by those promoting academic freedom and the power of learning.

It was a minute before he and I found a way to handle our truth, but the truth eventually set us free from our egos-just as Jesus promised it would.

Note: While nowhere near Pulitzer fame, Norris does boast the 2019 Will Rogers Humanitarian Award for his columns about Chispa Project. The charity, started by his daughter Sara, establishes Spanish libraries in Honduran elementary schools. The Honduran school year began this month so your continued support is greatly needed at https:// www.chispaproject.org/ nextchapter.

Send Chispa Project donations to 10556 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. Send comments to comment@thechaplain.net or message at (843) 608-9715. Send book order to same address or order online at www.thechaplain.net.



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