



**Easter Bonnet
Bingo at
Women's Club**

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**Fishing Day Draws
100 Youngsters
to Clementia**

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RIVER VALLEY TIMES

40TH YEAR • ISSUE 08

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IN WORKS**



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**A TRIBUTE
TO RADIO'S
JOEY MITCHELL**



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**WRONG
PANTS,
CHAPLAIN**



PAGE 11

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Build-out Puts RM at Risk Unless Water Supply Boosted

Technical Observations – Supply Augmentation Alternatives

Scenario	1a	1b	1c	2a	2b	3a	3b	3c	3d
Average Year	Average Year	Average Year	Average Year	Historic Drought	Historic Drought	Historic Drought	Historic Drought	Historic Drought	Historic Drought
Current	Buildout	Buildout	Buildout	Current	Buildout	Current	Buildout	Buildout	Buildout
NO	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES
Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Do not meet SB 552	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Do not meet SB 552	Significant Shortfall	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552	Meet Monthly Demands and SB 552
NO	Back-up needed	NO	Back-up needed	Necessary	1,200 gpm capacity source	500 gpm capacity source	2,000 gpm capacity source	1,200 gpm capacity source	



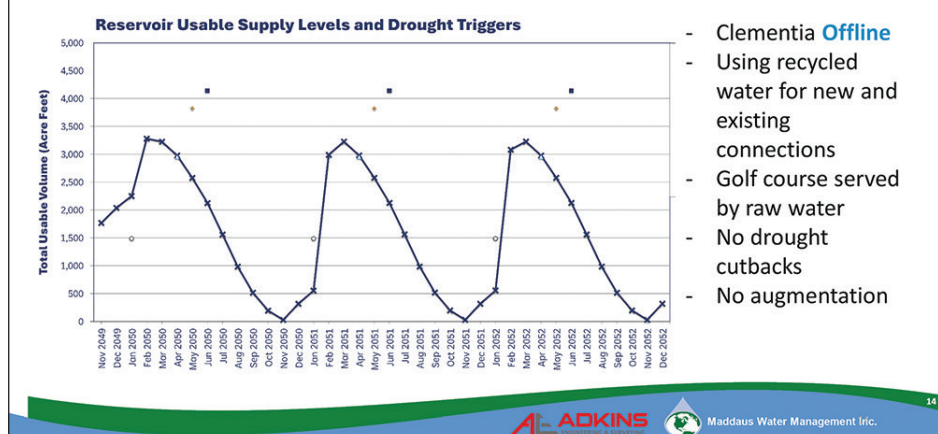
Engineer Lisa Maddaus uses slides to explain three water supply scenarios. Courtesy photos

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Will Rancho Murieta have sufficient water to support upcoming developments, particularly given the challenges posed by climate change and drought over the next two decades?

The answer seems to be yes, contingent on several factors. Firstly, the utilization of Lake Clementia as a drinking water source is considered essential, though obtaining state approval for this endeavor is anticipated to be problematic. Additionally, the implementation of new well installations to bolster the water supply is deemed necessary, albeit potentially exorbitant in cost. In the event of a severe drought, reliance on one or both of these new water sources, coupled with a

Scenario 1b – Average Recent Year with Climate Change Buildout Demand Outcome



A slide shows that Rancho Murieta at full buildout will barely have enough water storage during an average recent year. It was part of a presentation about the Integrated Master Water Plan at the April 17 meeting of the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Board.

comprehensive drought plan involving water usage reductions of up to 30%, would be imperative.

These insights were gleaned from the initial presentation about the third phase of the Integrated Master Water Plan (IWMP) delivered to the Rancho

Murieta Community Services Board on April 17.

The speaker, engineer Lisa Maddaus, brings a wealth of experience, as her California-based engineering firm has undertaken numerous water studies. Maddaus,

who also contributed to the 2010 Community Services District water study, collaborated on this endeavor with Dan Scalas of Adkins Engineering, located in Klamath Falls, Ore. Scalas, who conducted the sonar surveys of Calero and
Continued on page 4



Bob Keil, the Residences East subdivision developer, points out a sewer access road that will double as a trail in Unit 1 of his project. He was speaking at the Rancho Murieta Association Board meeting on April 16. Photo by Gail Bullen

Subdivision Trails Plans Stir Emotions at RMA Meeting

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter

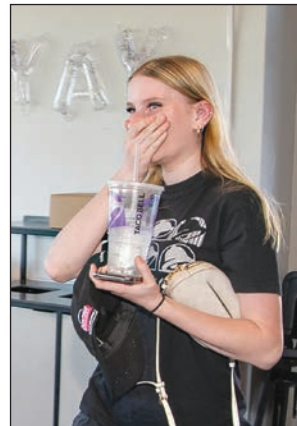
RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Proposed trails in two subdivisions dominated the discussion when the Rancho Murieta Association Board of Directors met on April 16.

The first was a proposed trail through the Residences East and West subdivision with 198 lots next to Stonehouse Park. Developer Bob Keil plans to begin work at the beginning of May.

The second was a trail system map for the Ranch North subdivision that is proposing 687 lots near and around the back lakes that is still pending at Sacramento County.

Residences trail

Keil previously clashed with the board in January over his plan for a trail. The dispute centered on a one-mile trail that would connect Puerto Drive to Stonehouse Park. Keil proposed a natural surface
Continued on page 7



Ainsley Martin is astounded as she walks into Taco Bell on April 18 and sees a celebration happening that is all about her. Photo by Gail Bullen

RM Resident Wins \$10K Taco Bell Scholarship

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Ainsley Martin, a Taco Bell employee in Rancho Murieta, felt a bit miffed on April 18 when her manager asked her and a co-worker to run for coffee earlier than she had planned for a break. However, upon returning less than 40 minutes later, she was in for a surprise. "The entire lobby was decorated. My whole family was there, even though I hadn't seen their cars," she said.

Martin zeroed in on her father, clutching a Liv Mas Scholarship \$10,000 check from the Taco Bell Foundation, amidst the chorus of congratulations from her co-workers and managers.

"I've never been so surprised before," she said.

Martin was aware that Taco Bell would soon announce the recipients of scholarships nationwide.

"I really didn't have any hope because of the number of applicants," she said.

Despite this, she found herself discussing it frequently with her coworkers, some of whom had been aware she had won a scholarship as much as three weeks earlier.

"They kind of made me feel like I wasn't going to get it," Martin said. "Now I know they did that to surprise me. Even my best friend didn't say a word."

Unlike conventional scholarships, the Taco Bell Live Mas scholarships are not awarded on scholastic excellence, test scores or extracurricular activities. Instead, they are awarded to students between 16 and 26 who are passionate about shaping a better future and fostering a positive change in their communities. The funding comes from customers who agreed to round up the cost of their orders.

According to the Taco Bell Foundation, it awarded approximately
Continued on page 5



Anglers fishing at Lake Clementia either staked out a spot along the dam or at the swimming beach across the water.

Kiwanis Kids Fishing Day Draws 100 Youngsters to Clementia

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The popular Kids Fishing Day made a successful return to Lake Clementia on a brisk yet sunny day on April 6.

Hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta with support from the Rancho Murieta Fishing Club and the Bass Fishing Club, the event attracted about 100 children aged 12 and under, along with numerous siblings, parents and grandparents.

The day kicked off with educational classes from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) on fish biology, fishing ethics and casting techniques as part of its Fishing in the City Program. Additionally, fishing rods and reels were loaned out and fishing club volunteers were on hand to assist the young anglers in catching trout, cleaning their catch and enjoying a complimentary hot dog lunch. The event also included prizes.

Three lucky participants won prizes for catching the largest fish. In the Boys' Division, Rhett Ross, 5, and Kai Sleeper, 11, both snagged a fish weighing 3.17 pounds, resulting in a tie. In the Girls' Division, Aspen Acaves took the top spot with a trout weighing 2.67 pounds.

Bill Kinney, the Kiwanis member who chaired the Fishing Day committee, reported that 600 pounds of rainbow trout had been stocked in the Clementia swimming area two days prior, kept within a net installed by the Rancho Murieta Association Maintenance Department.

Fishing Club members not only helped the children reel in their catches but also ran a cleaning station where around 200 pounds of fish were processed and bagged in ice.

Regarding the broader community support, Kinney highlighted the essential sponsorships that made the event possible. Notable contributions came from Nick and Thomas Kanemoto of 1st Gen Fishing, who supplied the biggest fish prizes;



Jeff Prather helps Sawyer Prather with his casting.

G. Pucci & Sons, who provided fishing tackle; and the Bass Hookup, which donated bait. The Pro Bass Shop contributed by giving away \$25 gift certificates to eight lucky raffle winners.

Rancho Murieta Riverview sponsored the hot dog lunch, which also included chips, water and juice. Kinney noted that the Kiwanis members grilled and served 180 hot dogs, reflecting the event's high turnout.

When asked to reflect on the event, Kinney expressed great satisfaction: "It went wonderfully. People said it was the best-quality fish they had seen in years."

Kinney credited the source of the fish, the Mt. Lassen Trout Farm, known for its cool spring water, a perfect environment for raising trout.

Candy O'Hearn, a volunteer at the lunch, was delighted by the large turnout of children.

"It brings kids out into nature and it exposes some of them to something they would never do," she said.

"Fishing isn't as popular as it once was, so you've got to hook these kids when they are little." ★



Rhett Ross, 5, is excited about catching a 3.17-pound rainbow fish at Kiwanis Kids Fishing Day on April 6. He tied in the boys' division for landing the biggest fish. Photos by Gail Bullen



California Department of Fish and Wildlife educator Lacey Carlson explains basic fish biology to some youngsters.



Ben Cowell comforts his daughter, Glory, after she discovers that the fish she had been so excited about catching "is hurt and bleeding."



Admiring the fish in their net, are, from left, Nikki Wise, Brooke Wise and Kennedy Brenner, who is also enjoying a hot dog.



Ethan and Isaac Leonard watch fishing club member Michael Wasserman clean their fish.

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Women's Club Celebrates Easter Bonnet Bingo

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Whimsically decorated hats were the highlight as the Rancho Murieta Women's Club members held their Easter Bonnet Bingo during a bi-monthly luncheon at the Rancho Murieta Country Club on March 27.

Sharon McGowan, sporting a pink fringed masterpiece, and Kathryn Richardson, with her wide-brimmed hat adorned like an Easter basket, took home the prizes in the hat contest.

Club President Bonnie Kirshman

led a brief program, announcing that Mindy Fullerton had recently joined the board to manage publicity and a vice-president position remained open. She also noted the upcoming blood drive on April 29 and shared exciting plans for the next luncheon scheduled for May 22.

At the May 22 event, Tracy Beckner from Taste Restaurant and Wine Bar will make a return appearance to host a tasting session that will pair specialty chocolates with champagne. Beckner had previously drawn more than 150 members with a similar event featuring chocolates and sparkling wines. "Hopefully, we

will have even a bigger turnout this time," Kirshman said.

Kirshman expressed gratitude to board member Vickie Joyner for assembling an enticing array of prizes for the Bingo winners. She also managed the ball-blowing machine that churned out numbers during the Bingo games. After the prizes were distributed, participants relished a lunch of onion soup, tea sandwiches and strawberry shortcake.

For more information on the luncheons, contact Cindy Shamrock at 916-354-1918 or Barbara Armstrong at 916-541-1884.



★ Club President Bonnie Kirshman calls out the Bingo numbers.



Vickie Joyner announces that Sharon McGowan is one of two winners of the best hat contest when the Rancho Murieta Women's Club hosted an Easter Bonnet Bingo luncheon on March 27. Photos by Gail Bullen



Ivy Applebaum makes her selection from a collection of luxurious prizes rounded up by Vickie Joyner.



The Terrace Lounge morphs into a Bingo parlor.

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Build-out Puts RM at Risk Unless Water Supply Boosted

Continued from page 1
Chesbro, revealing that both reservoirs contain less water than previously estimated, participated in the meeting remotely.

Water Supply

Maddaus initiated her presentation with a recap of the community's water supply, which was laid out in the first phase of the Integrated Master Water Plan and is posted on the district's website in a Story Map format. Her slide illustrated that Rancho Murieta has 4,400 acre feet (AF) of usable storage capacity in the reservoirs when flashboards are deployed. This capacity comprises 2,330 acre feet in Calero, 1,110 acre feet in Chesbro and 960 acre feet in Clementia. An acre-foot of water is almost enough to flood a football field 1 foot deep.

However, due to state regulations prohibiting the use of Clementia as a potable water source, the current useable amount stands at 3,440 acre feet. Although Community Services District possesses a water rights permit to use Clementia as a drought solution, Community Services District must also meet state drinking water standards. Jumping through that second hoop won't be easy based on past discussions at many Community Services District meetings.

The current water system also supplies 435 acre feet of recycled water a year. The future supply will be 955 acre feet in average precipitation years.

Water demand

The slide recapping the water demand indicates that the baseline potable water existing demands stand at 1,716 acre feet per year, based on Dec. 31, 2022, connections. Projections for future demands at buildout would add another 1,574 acre feet per year, totaling 3,290 acre feet per year, inclusive of system losses such as seepage and evaporation. Subtracting the projected

future usage of 3,290 acre feet from the usable storage capacity of 3,440 acre feet would leave 150 acre feet in the reservoirs.

A Story Map explaining the second phase of the Integrated Master Water Plan is accessible on the CSD website.

Phase 3 options

Maddaus proceeded to discuss the ongoing third phase of the IWMP. She emphasized the engineers' aim to develop a resilient system at the least cost. The remaining steps in this phase entail employing a model to construct various scenarios, analyzing options, deliberating on key alternatives, hosting public town hall discussions, refining alternatives and finalizing the document.

Maddaus noted that their analysis did not incorporate water conservation measures, which could reduce the community's water demand. However, she highlighted the inevitability of conservation measures due to impending state laws mandating that utilities adhere to water budgets. Additionally, Senate Bill 552 mandates that communities like Rancho Murieta establish backup water supplies.

Presenting three scenarios in which climate change was assumed, Maddaus outlined the first for an average recent year, the second for a historical "worst-case" drought scenario and the third for a similar historical drought scenario mitigated by groundwater from wells and the integration of Clementia as a water source.

Though not explicitly stated, all Maddaus' slides also assumed the use of raw water for irrigating the golf courses. Currently, the district utilizes all its recycled water for this purpose.

Following the meeting, Community Services District Maintenance Director Michael Fritsch clarified that Community Services District intends

to utilize an existing but unused water right to divert raw water year-round from the Cosumnes River to irrigate the golf courses. However, he said that the district would supplement this with recycled water as necessary.

Another underlying assumption evident in each slide was the utilization of recycled water for both new and existing connections. Implementing recycled water for irrigation purposes mitigates the demand for potable water. However, despite certain areas of Rancho Murieta having purple pipe infrastructure, CSD cannot presently generate adequate recycled water beyond what is allocated for golf course irrigation. Furthermore, some necessary infrastructure is currently absent. Nonetheless, as new residential properties are constructed, the availability of recycled water is expected to increase.

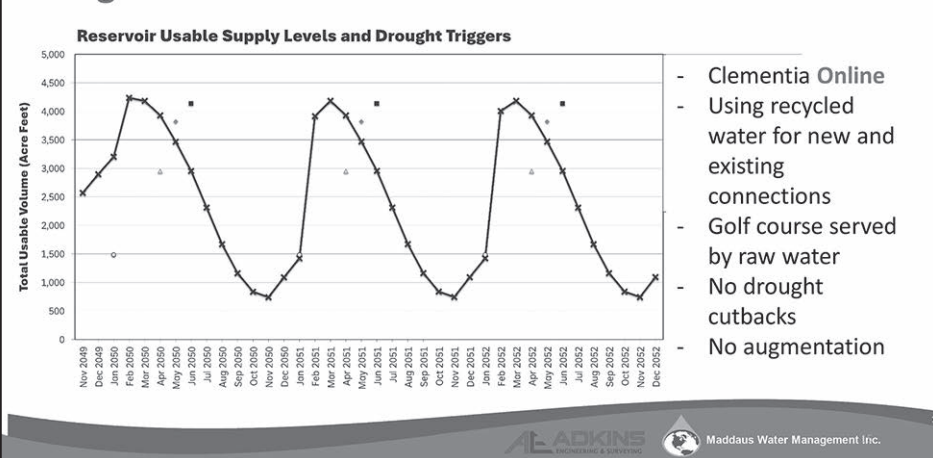
The Scenario 1a slide shows a sufficient supply of water in the reservoirs in an average recent year (2021 through 2024) if there were no drought cutbacks or water augmentation measures.

The Scenario 1b slide illustrates the consequences of maintaining the status quo and continuing to the full buildout of development. Although the graph indicates the reservoirs reaching near zero in November, Maddaus clarified that approximately 70 cubic feet (CF) of usable storage would remain. However, transporting the water to the treatment plant would necessitate the use of a floating pump, which is suboptimal.

The Scenario 1c slide depicts the impact of integrating Clementia into the system upon buildout. According to the graph, this integration would maintain sufficient reservoir levels, with no dip below 750 CF in November.

Maddaus outlined that the second and third

Scenario 1c – Average Recent Year with Climate Change Buildout Demand Outcome



A second slide shows that bringing Lake Clementia online provides enough water in for a buildout demand in an average recent year. However, a severe drought could mean a 30% cutback in water and the addition of groundwater from wells. Courtesy photo

scenarios were predicated on a worst-case drought scenario. This scenario was modeled after the severe drought experienced in 1977 and 1978, during which Rancho Murieta was unable to divert any water from the river. All slides depicting the worst-case drought scenarios in both scenarios incorporated the assumption of a potential 30% reduction in water usage, contingent upon the stage of the drought plan.

The second scenario illustrates the repercussions of water scarcity without augmentation measures. The graph indicates that under current demand levels, the reservoirs would reach critically low levels by November, termed as a minimal shortfall on the slide. Additionally, there would be insufficient water to meet the demands of buildout, with useable water in reservoirs bottoming out for six months, resulting in a more significant shortfall.

The third scenario slides demonstrated the impact of implementing water augmentation strategies during an extreme drought. These variations included integrating Clementia into the system and utilizing wells with capacities including 500, 1200 to 2,000 gallons per minute.

The conclusions drawn indicated that current demand could be marginally met using a backup 1,200-gallon-per-minute well without Clementia. However, a larger capacity well, Clementia, or a combination would suffice to meet the demands of buildout.

Maddaus noted that alternative augmentation options, such as dredging Calero, were explored but deemed impractical due to either high costs or

insufficient water supply.

The PowerPoint slides from the presentation have been uploaded to the CSD website and are included in the packet for the April 17 board meeting.

Comments

President Tim Maybee opened the floor for board comments following Maddaus's presentation. Director Linda Butler expressed skepticism regarding recycled water and groundwater storage wells as viable solutions. "My personal belief is that we must prioritize the needs of our current residents. Adding another 697 homes, plus 248 adjacent to us, will only exacerbate the situation," she said referring to the proposed Rancho North project.

The first audience member to speak was John Merchant, a former CSD director who resigned to focus on water issues. He raised more than a dozen concerns, including the origin of projected recycled water and the detrimental effects of a 30% reduction in water usage on trees in 2014. He also highlighted the exorbitant costs associated with well construction and questioned the interpretation of Community Services District water rights. Moreover, he outlined various challenges associated with using Clementia as a water source and emphasized the uncertainties surrounding the economic impact on home values during droughts or catastrophes.

Janis Eckard, a persistent critic of conclusions drawn in previous water studies, echoed concerns regarding the feasibility of using Clementia as a water source. She also noted the absence of consultants addressing changes

occurring in the Cosumnes, which could potentially affect the community's ability to access water in the future.

Next steps

While the consultants will present further refinements of the scenarios at the May 15 board meeting, Maybee expressed greater concern regarding the upcoming May 30 town hall meeting. He asked Maddaus about setting a deadline for questions, suggesting May 23 initially, but Maddaus recommended May 17 for better preparation time. She emphasized that the sooner questions are submitted, the sooner they can be incorporated into the Story Map. Maddaus also sought clarification on the board's preference for the release date of the Story Map.

Director Randy Jenco said he would like to see a question-and-answer format developed before the completion of the Story Map. Audience member John Van Doren, who is an RMA director, liked the idea, saying a "non-responsive narrative" doesn't answer the questions.

As the discussion concluded, director Stephen Booth directed his comments to Maddaus.

"You are asking us as a board to pick our poison," Booth said. "I think the conclusion has been made that there ain't enough water so what are we going to do to augment it... I need you as a consultant to say, 'Here are ways that you might address your problem and here is how long it is going to take and here is how much it is going to cost.'" ★

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CSD Resolves Tompkins, O'Keefe Lawsuits

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The Rancho Murieta Community Services District (CSD) issued an April 22 announcement stating it had reached resolutions in two lawsuits filed by former employees. Although the statement

didn't disclose the names, they were Rick Tompkins, a security sergeant who filed a wrongful termination lawsuit on Oct. 28, 2022, and Paula O'Keefe, the director of administration who after resigning filed a lawsuit on Jan. 25 alleging effective termination. "The District resolved the two cases

in consultation with its risk pool provider," the Community Services District statement said. "Both cases were resolved without admission of fault or liability by the District and with awareness of the very high costs of litigation defense in California. The conclusion of these cases is significant because it underscores the

end of a rocky period for the District. It also brings into focus the significant progress made to improve overall District management over the past year." According to Sacramento County Superior Court records, Tompkins' case was dismissed on Feb. 5. It is noted that he accepted a settlement offer of

\$275,001 in September 2023, with the court subsequently adding \$103,066 in attorney fees in January. Records also indicate that O'Keefe's case was dismissed on April 8, although there is no information available regarding a settlement. Neither Tompkins nor O'Keefe specified the monetary damages sought

when they filed their initial complaints. However, both complaints contained similar strongly worded criticisms of Community Services District management. The district was unable to publicly address these allegations, due to confidentiality requirements concerning personnel matters. ★

Construction of Tesla EV Charging Station Slated in Rancho Murieta

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times
Reporter

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - Given the scarcity of electric vehicle charging stations across the state, the addition of a Tesla 12-unit electric vehicle (EV) charging station at the Bel Air shopping center should be welcomed by the residents of Rancho Murieta and commuters on Jackson Highway.

Tesla's construction manager, Brad Peyton, convened a meeting with nearly a dozen contractors on April 11 on the east side of the parking lot. He announced that construction would



Holding a clipboard, Tesla construction manager Brad Peyton meets with prospective contractors in the Bel Air parking lot on April 11. Work on a new electric vehicle charging station is expected to begin in early May on the island where the group is standing. Photo by Gail Bullen

begin in about three weeks and was expected to last between eight to 10 weeks, with minimal disruption anticipated. "Obviously in the long

run, it is going to benefit all the tenants around here by bringing in additional customers," he said. Tony Velez, the chief financial officer for Rancho

Murieta Properties and manager of the shopping center, explained the backstory of the Tesla EV charging station. "I started the



The photo shows an example of Tesla charging units. Courtesy Photo

conversation with Tesla when we were building the hotel seven years ago. We installed one level 2 charger there," Velez said. "Almost two years ago, Tesla reached out to me about installing these 12 fast chargers at the shopping center." When asked whether chargers at the new station

would accommodate other EV models, Velez said that would happen. "From what I've been told, Tesla has been working with other EV car manufacturers to allow them to use their fast chargers. Special adapters will be needed to do so," Velez said. ★

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Murieta Village Trash and Treasure Sale April 27

The Murieta Village Social Club will hold its annual trash and treasure sale on Saturday, April 27 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Vendors will sell their wares at the clubhouse patio and in carports and driveways throughout the village. Vendors who want to sell at the patio can rent a table. The cost is \$20 for residents and \$25 for non-residents. Call Jackie VanBuskirk at 916-354-1544 to reserve a table.

RM Blood Drive Slated April 29

The Rancho Murieta Women's Club's next blood drive is Monday, April 29 from noon to 6 p.m. at the Rancho Murieta Community Church, 14670 Cantova Way. Make appointments to donate online at donors.

vitalant.org by using blood drive code SMFM053 or call Vitalant at 877-258-4825. Walk-ins will be accommodated if space permits. Donors will be entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card for Local Bean Cafe that was donated by Carole Thames of Town & Country Real Estate. All donors receive a 10% off coupon for Local Bean Cafe. Please bring a photo ID. For questions, call Vitalant at 877-258-4825 or Vitalant.org.

ETC Offers Scholarship Essay Contest

Entertainment, Theater and Culture (ETC) for the Rancho Murieta Community is sponsoring its annual Scholarship Essay Contest for graduating high school seniors who live in Rancho Murieta North or South. The winner of the contest will be awarded a \$2,000 scholarship.

Essays must be 550 to 600 words in length and entries must be postmarked by May 30. Application form with contest rules is available at the Rancho Murieta Association Building or by request to Stephanie Stanislaus, ETC Philanthropy Chair at stephslaus2@ranchomurieta.org. For additional information, contact Stephanie Stanislaus at 916-354-0901.

Family Movie Night in Rancho Murieta

Get ready for a free unforgettable Family Movie Nights Series on Fridays that will be held at St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church at 14673 Cantova Way in Rancho Murieta. Mark your calendars for May 31, June 28 and July 26. Doors open at 5:15 p.m. Delicious food will be served beginning at 5:30 p.m., so there's no need to rush

dinner. The movie magic begins at 6 p.m. Kids are welcome to wear their pajamas and to bring their snuggle essentials. Let's make it a cozy and comfy movie night. This is a family affair, so no drop-offs are allowed. Although it is free, tickets are required for admission. Sign up on Eventbrite at <http://tinyurl.com/4spzywmp>. The sponsors are the church, The Grove Youth Ministry, the Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta, Entertainment, Theatre & Culture for Rancho Murieta (ETC), and the Knights of Columbus

Scout Troop Slates Shedding Event on May 4

Are you spring cleaning? If so, bring those boxes of discarded paperwork to Boy Scout Troop 633's first annual shredding event from 9 a.m. to noon Saturday May 4 in the RMA

parking lot. The cost is \$10 per standard storage box. For questions, call 916-212-9600.

Women's Club Slates Bubbles and Chocolate

Join the Rancho Murieta Women's Club for an afternoon of fun and indulgence including a program on Bubbles and Chocolate pairings, with Tracey Berkner of Taste Restaurant. At the luncheon on May 22, after enjoying a charcuterie appetizer, attendees will choose a mixed green salad topped with their choice of grilled chicken or salmon and of course, a dessert of specialty chocolates paired with Bubbles. The cost is \$35 for members and \$40 for nonmembers.

For more information, contact Cindy Shamrock at 916-354-1918 or Barbara Armstrong at 916-541-1884. ★

RM Resident Wins \$10K Taco Bell Scholarship

Continued from page 1
150 scholarships to employees nationwide in 2023. Sixteen received scholarships for \$25,000, 86 received \$10,000 scholarships and 48 received \$5,000 awards. The funding for these scholarships is sourced from customers who opt to round up the cost of their orders.

In her application, Martin produced a video outlining her passion, her pursuit of it, her vision for enacting positive change in her community and beyond, and how her education would facilitate this endeavor.

"My passion is to become a labor and delivery nurse," she said.

Martin is attending Cosumnes River Community College where she is majoring in biology and pre-nursing.

"I am a full-time student while also working full-time at Taco Bell, aspiring to become a shift leader," she said.

"I plan to use my passion to make my community and the world a better place by assisting mothers and newborns during



Ainsley Martin poses for a photo with her co-workers. They kept the award secret for three weeks so they could surprise her.

the emotional and physical duress during labor and delivery," Martin said. "Earning this scholarship can be just what I need to make this dream come true."

Asked to elaborate later, Martin shared her love for helping very young children and her understanding of the challenges associated with labor and delivering a baby.

"Bringing a human into the world is very scary but it is one of the most amazing parts of someone's life," she said. "I just want to be part of that. ... People dream of having children and I want to make their dreams come true."

The 19-year-old lives

with her family in Rancho Murieta. Having attended Pleasant Grove High School for three years, she transferred to Elk Grove Charter School for her senior year. She has worked for Taco Bell for about a year.

Martin's performance in her initial semester at Cosumnes River Community College prompted her counselor to recommend she take five classes this semester, despite four being considered a full load.

One of her classes meets in person, while the remaining four are conducted online. She utilizes her days off to attend school, with in-person



Roger Martin holds a replica of a \$10,000 check for a scholarship that his daughter just won. From left are her brother, Collum Martin; grandmother, Rebecca Wyner; and mother, Heather Martin. Photos by Gail Bullen

classes on Wednesdays and dedicated Saturdays for completing online coursework, all while maintaining a 4.0 grade point average.

Martin intends to transfer to a four-year institution to pursue her bachelor's degree, with aspirations for a master's degree. She is considering Cal State due to its affordability and excellent nursing program.

During the celebration at Taco Bell, Martin's father, Roger Martin, said he "was floored" when store manager Christian Irizarry contacted him three weeks earlier. "She worked so hard for it."

Irizarry said Martin deserved the scholarship.

"She always puts in 100%", he said. "I'm sure she will do that in her later career." ★

Also present was Chris Plunkett, who owns Summit Franchise Management that oversees 10 Taco Bell restaurants, including the one in Rancho Murieta. His two area managers also attended the fete.

Plunkett said that four employees with his franchise group have won scholarships.

Media Icon Joey Mitchell Leaves a Legacy of Laughter

By Mary Jane Popp

After 50 plus years on the air, an icon in radio signs off for his final journey. But I'm sure if there is a microphone in the clouds, Joey Mitchell will be at the helm with his joyous voice that always made his fans feel that he truly cared about each and every one.

What can I say about Joey that hasn't already been said... talented, dedicated, award-winning personality, a great sense of humor, total love of family and what meant so much to me was that he was genuinely a really nice guy and gentleman. He greeted everyone he met with a big smile and you felt he knew you forever.

Joey was the first on-air radio guy I worked with when I first came to Sacramento in 1977. It was at the hit country music station, KRAK Radio. I would pop in with the news updates, and truly, I never knew what to expect. There were times I would go into the studio and no Joey...until he popped up from under the board trying to scare me with that silly grin on his face. But it was always in fun. He would try to break me up on the air but little did he know I came from doing a television show in Indianapolis with a crew that did all they could to break me up with antics behind the guests so only I could see. But I loved the friendship Joey shared with everyone, including me, for all these many years.

I think I admired Joey most for his caring about the community, especially when we would host telethons to raise money for so many worthy charities from Easter Seals to the Children's Miracle Network and more. Back in the '80s, there were eight or nine telethons on the air and they were the 24-hour ones. But Joey's energy level never waned. Always professional yes, but with a fun competitive spirit as we would compete for on-camera time, with the ultimate goal of raising as much money as we could for charity. Joey was always game for fun too, like when we were asked to host an event for, I believe, the Opera Association. So we dressed in silly opera garb, and we laughed our way through the event, always ready for anything we could do to help the community.

Stories about Joey were so many I had to limit them, or I would need several pages to tell them all. But I had to share this one from Ken Knoll who did lots of film work in Sacramento. When Joey was named Country Music D.J. of the year and hosted names such as Freddy Fender, Loretta Lynn and Merle Haggard at the Lonesome Armadillo in Roseville, he would do TV funny skits to promote his show. Ken still laughs at this one. Wait until you hear what happened. Ken and Joey came up with the idea to do a skit at the Folsom Zoo in the tiger cage, and yes, with a real tiger. The idea was for Joey to first dress up in lady garb, moustache, and all, and pretend that the tiger was going to attack her/him. Then Joey would change back into guy clothes, and with the magic of television editing, come to her rescue. Funny, right? The trainer assured Joey that the tiger was tame and not to worry. To be honest, Joey



was rather nervous and began sweating some. But being the trooper he was, Joey got into the enclosure. Ken was not sure but perhaps the tiger sensed Joey's fear and began to growl and started to get too close for comfort. It was too close for Joey and he began to shout "please get me out of here." But it was hard to hear him above the laughter of the crew. Suffice to say, Joey was not going into a

wild critter space alone for a long time.

Here's one that will give you a laugh but I'm not sure Joey laughed. Ken told me about the time President Clinton came to town on Air Force One, and we don't know how Joey did it but he planted a bumper sticker on the back of Air Force One promoting the Joey Mitchell Show. Sounds funny now but the Secret Service was not amused, and

he actually got arrested. Don't know if he had to spend time in the pokey but leave it to Joey to come up with this stunt and look for more to do.

Another side of Joey was always wanting to help others in the business. Jennifer Steele, executive producer of the morning news at KFBK, had fond memories of him. She worked with Joey at FM 101.5 for 10 years and knew him more than

30 years. Despite his being a celebrity, she said, he was always a real human being, a mentor, teacher and nice to all.

And Big Jim Hall worked with Joey at KRAK Radio for many years. That's where I met them both. Jim and Joey both began working at KRAK Radio together. One did the morning, and one did the afternoon, and their friendship grew over the many years. Jim said he was always fearless and always wanted to support organizations to help the community. Fondly, Jim said, Joey was an incredible co-worker and friend for 40 years, along with having a caring heart and always being super funny. Jim said he was a joy to work with and to know.

There are many stories to tell and perhaps some of the pictures can tell the Joey Mitchell life and his work, but I asked his son, Joe Jr., who sent me so many wonderful pictures to choose of his dad, if he could tell me his fondest memories of "Dad" Joey. I could not end this piece any better. Here is Joe Jr and his heartfelt thoughts about his dad in his own words.

"My dad was just my dad to me, and I never really appreciated all he had accomplished until I grew older. Many people didn't know he had severe and painful scoliosis that would keep him up nights. Getting up at 3 a.m. was a chore for anyone, but for him, it was a daily struggle to get ready for his radio show. Even though he was in pain, he always had a smile on his face and wanted to make people laugh. It wasn't an act, it was who he was. He truly was an amazing man, husband, father, friend and radio legend who will leave a huge void in our hearts. I strive to be like him. He was my HERO!"

What more can be said about this icon and truly good human being?

And so the memory of Joey Mitchell goes on and I'm sure he is wowing them up there behind the mic with his wit and big smile. We will miss you Joey, but our memories will always be with us. Rest in peace, good friend.

Editor's note: Joey Mitchell died March 24 after a battle with a lung condition and pneumonia. Photos provided by Joey's family. ★



Joey ready and eager for retirement.



Joey with the KRAK radio team.



Joey (far right) with Mary Jane Popp (next to him) worked together on local on-air fundraisers to raise money for local causes.



Joey always had a smile and a joke, even if it was on him.

Sacramento Loaves and Fishes Joins Big Day of Giving 2024 with Match Campaign

Sacramento Loaves & Fishes News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Sacramento Loaves and Fishes, a cornerstone of the Sacramento community for four decades, is proud to announce its participation in this year's Big Day of Giving on Thursday, May 2 from midnight to midnight. This annual fundraising event highlights the spirit of philanthropy in the Sacramento region, supporting numerous nonprofit organizations making a positive impact. Founded in 1983, Loaves and Fishes has been dedicated to serving the homeless population by providing essential survival services, including meals, day-shelter, and advocacy.

With 41 years in the local community, Sacramento Loaves & Fishes recognizes the pivotal role individual supporters offer to aid in programs and services for people experiencing homelessness. Oftentimes this can mean simply being a listening ear for many of the guests who have been isolated through homelessness. "Our theme this year is Walk Alongside and Listen. This is one of the key ways in which our founders served the unhoused community and today this wisdom continues to resonate with how we approach our guests," said Angela Hassell, Executive Director of Sacramento Loaves & Fishes.

In celebration of its longstanding commitment to the community, Loaves and Fishes is launching a special Match

Campaign as part of its Big Day of Giving efforts. Generous donors, including individuals and businesses, are invited to participate by contributing \$5,000 or more.

This initiative aims to raise at least half of the organization's \$150,000 goal before May 2. Early giving begins April 18. "We are thrilled to be part of Big Day of Giving once again and to introduce our Match Campaign," said Naomi Cabral, Development Director at Loaves and Fishes. "This is an opportunity for our community to come together and make a significant impact in the lives of those experiencing homelessness. With the support of our generous donors, we can continue to provide vital services

and work towards creating a more equitable and compassionate society. I'd like to invite our community to walk alongside us with support on the "Big Day of Giving."

Interested participants can sign up or donate via phone, mobile device, or computer via <https://sacloaves.org/>.

Donors interested in participating in the Match Campaign or seeking further information are encouraged to contact Naomi Cabral at naomi@sacloaves.org or 916-637-2517. Contributions can also be made by sending a check made to Sacramento Loaves and Fishes at P.O. Box 13495, Sacramento, CA 95813. Indicate that you are making a 'BDOG MATCH' donation on your check or online payment reply email. ★

Subdivision Trails Plans Stir Emotions at RMA Meeting

Continued from page 1

trail. However, the board insisted on the construction of a Class 1 asphalt trail that would be 12 feet with 2-foot shoulders. Keil also said an asphalt trail would require the removal of numerous trees that would "devastate" a wooded section of the trail in addition to being far more costly.

The ultimate decision body on trails is the parks committee, which is comprised of two representatives from the Rancho Murieta Association (Adams and director John Van Doren), two from the development community, (Keil and Tony Velez, who is developing Rancho North), and one from the Rancho Murieta Community Services District (director Linda Butler).

Adams attended the Community Services District meeting the following night and asked that they direct Butler to support the Rancho Murieta Association position, which the CSD Board agreed to do.

The Parks Committee hasn't met since 2018 but is now scheduled to meet on May 2 at 5 p.m. at the RMA building.

Since the contentious January meeting, Keil has been meeting with Adams and Rancho Murieta Association General Manager Rod Hart and an occasional board member, to work on a compromise. At the April board meeting, Keil presented two maps. One was a map of Unit 1, which will have 68 lots and that isn't wooded. The second was a map of Unit 2 which will have 130 lots with a wooded area in the green open space.

Keil and Adams both indicated they had reached a compromise for a paved trail for Unit 1 thanks to the Community Services District. That's because the district needed a sewer access road to get into Unit 1. Keil agreed to move his trail over the access road, and Rancho Murieta Association agreed to accept it even though the paved road will only be 10 feet wide.

However, some controversy came up again when Keil said he wanted to bar the use of golf carts on the trail and would place bollards at all the access points. Adams said that the Rancho Murieta Association hadn't agreed to that during their negotiations. After a lengthy discussion that included several audience comments supporting Keil and Adams referencing the many hours of negotiation, the developer urged the board to vote he needed an agreement to start construction. In the end, the board voted unanimously



Rancho Murieta Association General Manager Rod Hart displays a Rancho North development trail map. The Rancho Murieta Association and the parks committee rejected the developer's map in 2018 and will likely do so again. Photo by Gail Bullen

to direct their Park Committee representatives to approve the Unit 1 trail. Adams also told Keil that Rancho Murieta Association would continue discussing the use of golf carts and might even hold a town hall to garner public opinion.

As for the trail in Unit 2, Community Services District again came to the rescue with another sewer access road. The new map for Unit 2 now shows a shorter trail because it now connects to that paved road. However, Keil was still proposing a 6-foot natural trail through the wooded section. He presented an arborist's report that about 309 trees in the immediate vicinity would be adversely affected. He also quoted a contractor who has installed asphalt trails in other locations about the damage the heavy equipment would cause. Keil also contended the mitigation cost to cut down oak trees at \$325 an inch would cost more than building 198 homes.

Adams said the board wasn't scheduled to take any action and said there was still time for a town hall meeting. Keil said he

didn't have time for a town hall unless it happened in a couple of weeks. That is because he must submit a transportation management plan before he can pull permits.

"The plan is dependent on this trail," Keil said. "We have a little bit of time but not seven months."

Saying he thought they had more time, Adams described the trail as a constantly moving target, noting it had changed again the previous week because of another Community Services District access road.

After more fraught comments with several from Director Danny Carrillo who was skeptical about the arborist report, Adams brought the discussion to an end.

Rancho North

Hart said that Velez has asked Rancho Murieta Association to send a letter to the county approving the Rancho North trail map that was submitted to the county in 2018. It shows trails located on paved roads and another 17 miles of natural trails.

Hart said the board can't do that because Rancho Murieta Association came up with its own version of a trail map that was approved by the Parks Committee in 2018. However, Rancho Murieta Association didn't submit its plan to the county but is in the process of doing so.

The board didn't take any action.

In other business

The board approved Hart's request to place a topographical survey of the Escuela Park site on the Parks Committee agenda. If approved, the \$13,900 cost of the survey would come from Parks Fund which stood at \$301,000 as of the board meeting. Hart is exploring building more athletic fields at the site.

Hart reported was working on a memorandum of understanding with Keil so that construction equipment and supply deliveries could use the Escuela Gate on weekdays only. The construction employees would still come in through the North gate.

The board approved Adams' request to seek \$8,500 reimbursement from the Parks Fund for a pre-design/feasibility study and appraisal for a community center on country club property. The community center effort was suspended after the country club announced it likely would file for bankruptcy.

Director Renee Bechtold, who chairs the Recreation Committee, reported that her group had approved a request by the Cosumnes River Activities League to present a Big Truck event at Stonehouse Park on June 6. She also reported that the spray park will open on May 18. ★

Adams described the trail as a constantly moving target, noting it had changed again the previous week because of another Community Services District access road.

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Murieta Dance Company Performs in The Disneyland Parade

MPG Staff

RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG) - The Murieta Dance Company has returned from Disneyland, where 18 students participated in a Dance the Magic event at the theme park on April 6.

After months of preparations and practices, video auditions and in-person auditions, 18 students with the biggest smiles made it to Main Street U.S.A. The youngest was 7 and the oldest was 13.

Many Rancho Murieta residents saw students dancing in the streets practicing for weeks and cheered them on.

By 7:45 a.m. April 6, the students were ready

to go in full hair, makeup and costume for a final rehearsal with the Dance the Magic Disneyland staff, a final audition for each group of dancers, a breakfast buffet with eggs, bacon, fruits and Micky Mouse waffles, a group and individual photo shoot, and a friendship bracelets exchange with all the participating dancers.

The lineup time for the parade was 1:45 p.m. Students walked from the Grand Californian Hotel through Downtown Disney to a side gate to head backstage.

"It was amazing to see so many dancers in lines of twos through Downtown Disney," said Murieta

Dance Company director Doreen Zimmerman.

Dancers came from throughout the world, including from several studios in Australia. More than 400 colorfully-dressed dancers performed in the 2 p.m. parade.

"It was truly magical watching so many talented dancers making their way down Main Street to 'I Just Can't Wait to Be King' from 'The Lion King,'" Zimmerman said. "The smiles were priceless. The audience lined up on either side of Main Street and cheered on all the performers. The 25-minute parade was over so quickly, and everyone just wanted to go again. It was so much fun



Main Street U.S.A. in Disneyland becomes the latest venue for the Murieta Dance Company on April 6. Eighteen local youth participated in a parade featuring about 400 dancers. The parade is held at the theme park several times a year. Courtesy photo

for the proud dancers, their parents, and, of course, me, too."

At 11 p.m., Pixar Pier in California Adventure Park opened up again for just the dancers and their families. There were no lines to any rides.

"We got to enjoy desserts and soft drinks throughout the Pier. It was amazing. By about 1 a.m. we all fell into our beds and dreamed

about the most magical day," Zimmerman said. "Sunday was another park day for everyone, with lots of fun memories made with friends and family. Monday was a travel day back to reality for most of us."

"Dancing in Disney with Dance the Magic is an awesome experience for any kid, from 7 to 99. We have made this trip now

twice and decided to make this a permanent event (if we get a minimum of 15 dancers) on our schedule to offer this fun experience to more children in and around Rancho Murieta," Zimmerman added.

"No prior dance experience is needed to participate. We are looking forward to another fun trip in the spring of 2025." ★

Small Business Week Looks at AI

MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Capital Region Small Business Week is April 29 through May 4. The City of Rancho Cordova is a sponsor of SacBiz Connect: Small Business Week Resource Expo and Kickoff on April 29.

Sacramento County Office of Economic Development is partnering with the City of Sacramento's Office of Innovation and Economic Development to host "BizX, Leveraging AI Technologies to Stay Ahead of the Curve" on May 1 at The Sophia, Home of B Street Theatre.

Capital Region Small Business Week brings together entrepreneurs, seasoned business owners and business experts from public and private entities from across the Greater Sacramento area to celebrate the region's entrepreneurial spirit.

This year's event will focus on exploring the transformative impact of AI (artificial intelligence) in business, healthcare,

education, transportation and beyond.

A panel of AI and business experts will examine the broader societal impacts of AI, while highlighting the vast opportunities it presents. Attendees will learn how leveraging AI can drive innovation, sustainability and inclusivity, shaping a more equitable and prosperous future for everyone.

Small business resource booths and opportunities to network will be available before and after the formal program.

"BizX is just one of several events held during Capital Region Small Business Week, offering a platform to connect our small businesses with local resources," said Sacramento County Economic Development Director Crystal Bethke.

"We are pleased to celebrate the vital role our small businesses play in fostering thriving communities and fueling the economic prosperity in Sacramento County," Bethke said.

Entrepreneurs, small businesses and industry

professionals are invited to register for the events below at capitalregion-smallbusinessweek.org/schedule.

Day 1, Monday, April 29 is Small Business Procurement Summit from 3 to 4:30 p.m. at The Lounge at Frequency Coworking, 3249 Quality Drive, Rancho Cordova. Small Business Week Resource Expo and Kickoff is from 4:30 p.m. to 7 p.m., also at The Lounge at Frequency Coworking in Rancho Cordova.

Day 2, Tuesday, April 30 is Exporting and Importing for Small Businesses online from noon to 1:30 p.m. The SBDC (Small Business Development Center) Capital Summit is from 2 to 5 p.m. at the Mahany Fitness Center, 1545 Pleasant Grove Blvd., Roseville.

Day 3, Wednesday, May 1, is 1 Million Cups Sacramento from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the Carlsen Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 6000 J St. Library 1520, Sacramento.

The Mentor Sprint

is from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Carlsen Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship, 6000 J St. Library 1520, Sacramento. The Webinar: Resources for Your Small Business is from 1 to 2 p.m.

The BizX Presents: Leveraging AI Technologies to Stay Ahead of the Curve is from 3 to 6 p.m. at The Sofia, 2700 Capitol Ave., Sacramento.

Day 4, Thursday, May 2, is BBB Sacramento Women's Conference from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Frequency Coworking, 3249 Quality Drive, Rancho Cordova.

The May Marketplace Small Business Pop-Up Fair is from 4 to 7 p.m. at The Lounge at Frequency Coworking in Rancho Cordova.

Day 5, Friday, May 3, is the SBA Small Business Awards Luncheon and Expo from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Double Tree by Hilton, 2001 Point W Way, Sacramento.

For more information, visit capitalregionsmallbusinessweek.org. ★

New Home Sales Stay Strong in March

North State Building Industry Association News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - New homes continued to be popular for prospective homebuyers in the greater Sacramento region in March, the North State Building Industry Association said April 10.

Association members reported selling 604 new homes in March. While that total trailed both February of this year and March of 2023, both of those months had five weeks while there were only four weeks during this March. On a weekly basis, March sales were virtually identical to February and 8% above March 2023.

Building Industry Association President and CEO Tim Murphy attributed the continued strong sales to the advantages that new homes have over existing homes and the continued reduction in the supply of existing homes on the market.

"New homes are built for today's lifestyles and

are far more energy-efficient than most existing homes, which can mean a big savings on energy costs," Murphy said. "And while the number of existing homes for sale remains much lower than normal, there are 193 new-home communities currently active, giving buyers a wide choice of styles and locations."

But, Murphy added, state and local policymakers should do more to reduce the fees and red tape that keep production well below demand and costs higher than they should be.

"It still takes far longer than it should to get all the approvals builders need to actually begin construction, and government fees averaging around \$100,000 per home in our region drive up the cost of a new home significantly," Murphy said. "The only way to solve the state and local housing crisis is to consistently build enough homes so that supply and demand will be in balance for the first time in decades." ★

SAFE Grants \$15,000 to Program Dedicated to Preventing Falls

SAFE Credit Union News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - A \$15,000 community grant awarded by SAFE Credit Union is aiding many residents in the Sacramento region to live safer and fuller lives.

The credit union recently awarded the funds to Rebuilding Together Sacramento's Safe at Home program dedicated to preventing seniors and those with disabilities from experiencing falls at home. The program's volunteers and staff build and install free safety improvements to the homes of qualifying area residents including ramps, railings and grab bars.

"We have an aging population in the Sacramento area that are finding it harder and harder to do the things they love. Much of that is because they can't get in and out of their homes safely," says Rebuilding Together Sacramento Executive

Director Bonnie Patterson. "Donors like SAFE Credit Union allow us to help more and more people. We are very, very thankful to have received this grant."

In 2023, Safe at Home volunteers and staff helped 623 area individuals in 400 homes in El Dorado, Sacramento, San Joaquin counties and in West Sacramento.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, one in four older adults over 65 experienced a fall in 2020 – equating to an average of 3 million subsequent visits to emergency rooms each year. The CDC also reports that at least one out of five falls can cause serious injuries resulting in adverse quality of life situations for patients, including difficulty getting around, doing everyday activities, and living independently.

"SAFE Credit Union has a long history of helping improve the health of residents through philanthropy in the communities we serve," says SAFE Credit



Safe at Home construction volunteers Stan Jones and Dan Ward meet at Rebuilding Together Sacramento's Workshop before going on a job.

Union Vice President of Community Relations and Financial Education Rebecca Delmundo. "This grant exemplifies that, and we are so glad to have been able to support such a time-tested nonprofit."

Founded in 1991, Rebuilding Together Sacramento works to fill the need and enhance affordable housing for older adults and those with disabilities. Along with its Safe at Home program, the nonprofit works with partners to revitalize



Safe at Home volunteers Dan Ward, of Carmichael, and Stan Jones, of the Greenhaven/Pocket area, install a handrail for a Sacramento resident in need of safer step way. Photos courtesy of SAFE Credit Union

neighborhoods and reduce energy costs for seniors, as well as works individually with families and children through their programs in addition to seniors and those with disabilities.

"If you go in and install a handrail or a grab bar, a lot of times the folks are just so grateful and so thankful and are just delightful people," says Safe at Home volunteer Dan Ward of Carmichael. "It's good just helping folks out."

Volunteer Stan Jones of the Greenhaven-Pocket

area says he has put in hundreds of grab bars in the 12 years he's worked as a volunteer. "The clients are very grateful for the help that they receive, and our work prevents falls," Jones says.

Rebuilding Together Sacramento's grant was one of two grants selected by a public vote to receive \$15,000. Foster Youth Education Fund also received a \$15,000 grant for its program supporting former foster youth in the Sacramento region with

financial scholarships, as well as laptops for students enrolling or attending a college, university or trade school.

SAFE provides grant funding in four cycles each year, including financial literacy. For more information on the latest cycle's focus and application, visit: safecu.org/community-impact/funding.

To learn more or to volunteer, please visit: rebuildingtogethersacramento.org/. ★

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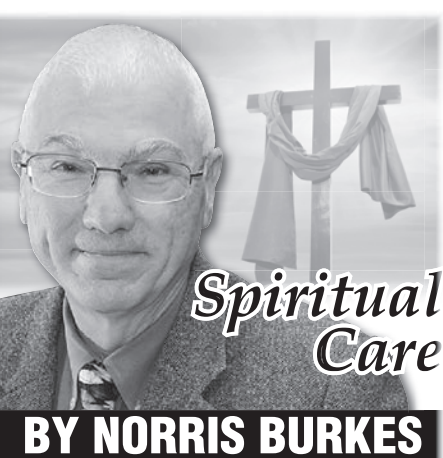


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Wrong Pants, Chaplain



Whenever I meet fellow veterans, we'll often engage in some good-natured ribbing. I set up the first joke by announcing that I'm an Air Force vet, which inevitably invokes the response, "Oh, you mean you're a 'Chair Force' vet."

I understand that nickname because Air Force members occupy a lot of chairs doing heavily technical work in places like the Space Force and Cyber Command.

I first met those seat-techies in 1994 while on my first active-duty assignment at Onizuka Air Force Station in Sunnyvale, Calif.

Declassified that same year, Onizuka was dubbed the "Blue Cube" because of its shape, color and lack of windows. Outside the cube sat three parabolic dish antennas that the chair jockeys in blue jumpsuits used for "flying" military

satellites.

A few miles away, I sat in a chair in our chapel offices on Moffett Field, a Navy base acquired by the Air Force that same year. My workday often included planning worship, counseling and meeting with our staff.

In these days before 9/11, chaplains, like most military officers, wore a simple uniform of sky-blue shirt and dark-blue Poly/Wool pants that resemble blue Dockers. We called the ensemble our "Blues." Add the rank, name tag and a Protestant cross, and I became an instant chaplain.

It was the same uniform I'd worn for monthly weekend duty as a USAF Reservist, so I quickly mastered the routine for daily wear. We had no one inspecting us for proper haircuts, uniforms or shoe shining. We were all friends and "trusted professionals."

With a 7:30 a.m. daily start, I'd often suit up in my darkened bedroom on summer mornings, leaving the exhausted mother of our four children asleep.

Early one morning I decided to bypass office work to make a few visits around the cube. I walked through classified work areas introducing myself and giving an encouraging word. I returned to the office before lunch with a feeling that I had done

some good chaplain-type work.

"Good," that is until I was greeted by Janet, our chapel manager and Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge (NCOIC).

Janet was a law-and-order manager, good with regulations and policies. She had a sharp eye for detail that helped her chaplains stay sharp, too.

I knew something was up when she asked, "What are you wearing today, Chaplain?"

Her question sent me inspecting my shirt for uneaten breakfast.

"Look farther down," she said.

Forget the friendly "Chair Force." I was beginning to feel like a recruit standing before his drill instructor.

Finally, unable to hold her snicker, she said, "Those can't be your uniform pants." "Why?" I asked, still staring at my well-creased blue pants.

"They look more like Levi Dockers® than official Air Force Blues."

Suddenly I was the picture of patriotism – a red face on a white man wearing blue pants.

She was right. In my haste to dress in my darkened room, I'd donned my Levi's Ultimate Chino Straight Fit instead of my Air Force Poly/Wool pants.

There's no telling how many airmen on my morning rounds noticed Dockers on their new chaplain. But just like the people in Hans Christian Andersen's fable, "The Emperor's New Clothes," they'd said nothing.

But the sergeant, like the little boy of the story, was the only one brave enough to call out her proud chaplain for his "nakedness."

I tried minimizing my mistake with the adage, "No one's perfect. We all put our pants on one leg at a time."

"Still," she said, "Perhaps chaplains ought to heed the Jesus protocol and 'Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect'" (Matthew 5:48).

But, but ... I stammered as she reloaded.

"And I think even Jesus might tell you that perfection begins with first choosing the right pants."

And with that, I returned home to change pants. My argument no longer had a leg to stand on.

Email comment@thechaplain.net or voicemail at (843) 608-9715 or 10556 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. Order my book "Tell It To the Chaplain" by sending \$20 to same address or online at www.thechaplain.net. ★

Owner of Wilton Horse Farm Convicted of Rape

By Gail Bullen
River Valley Times Reporter

WILTON, CA (MPG) - Victor Valenzuela, a 67-year-old Wilton resident, has been found guilty of sexually assaulting a woman he employed at his horse farm in October 2022, according to an April 4 news release from the Sacramento County District Attorney Office.

Valenzuela could face up to 20 years in

state prison following his conviction by a jury on charges of forcible rape, forcible penetration with a foreign object, and attempted sodomy by force with aggravating factors. His sentencing is scheduled to take place in Sacramento Superior Court on May 2.

The news release said Valenzuela had hired the victim to work at both his horse farm and residence on Hobday Road. On her first day, he made several

inappropriate comments. When the victim asked to go home, Valenzuela told her he wanted to be with her and directed her toward the bedroom.

Although the victim told Valenzuela she didn't want to be with him and just wanted to do her job, according to the news release, Valenzuela assaulted her in the bedroom until she was able to run to the bathroom.

Upon leaving, the victim requested

payment for her work that day. Valenzuela gave her \$200, saying it was for her "services." Immediately after leaving the ranch, the victim reported the assault to the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office, turning over the \$200 as evidence.

Detectives arrested Valenzuela on Dec. 9, 2022, according to a Sheriff's Office new release. The prosecutor was Deputy District Attorney Kelly Clark, of the Adult Sexual Assault Prosecution Unit. ★

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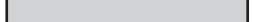
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GOLF SCORES

Great Conditions For Charm And Putt

By Nancy Clevenger

RANCHO MURIETA (MPG) - A warm spring day graced the Rancho Murieta Country Club (RMCC) Niners golf group's recent monthly tournament, Charm and Putt. The Rancho Murieta Country Club greens and fairways were in pristine condition as the women competed for the lowest score for nine holes of golf and the fewest putts.

After the socially competitive round of golf, the women dined in the Terrace Lounge for a plated luncheon, while Captain Pamela O'Hern led the monthly meeting. During this meeting, details of the upcoming Rancho Murieta Country Club Niner Invitational Golf Event were discussed. The Invitational will be held April 25 with a full field of 144 golfers. The theme for this year's invitational is Margaritas and Mulligans, headed by Chair Cathy Niley.

The Charm and Putt competition winners were announced by tournament Co-Chair Patty Harris. Scoring a net 33 was Denice Murck-Kilgour. Murck-Kilgour's score was aided by the fact that she sank only 14 putts. Niner Mary Carroll also sank only 14 putts to tie in the monthly competition.

Most improved golfer for the month of March was announced by Chair Barbara Armstrong. Pamela O'Hern's handicap fell to 24.2, with an



Mary Carroll. Photos courtesy of Rancho Murieta Country Club Niners

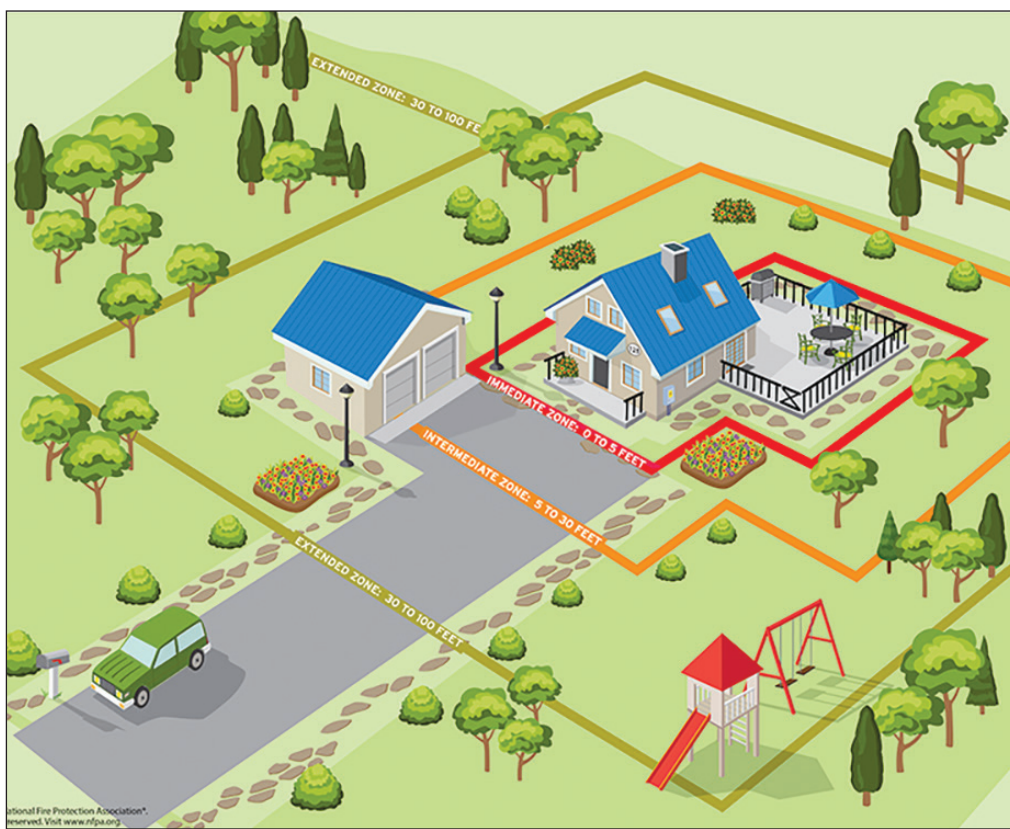


Denice Murck-Kilgour

improved 1.1. Scores for all golfers continue to improve as the course conditions improve with the fabulous spring weather.

Also, new members were welcomed into the group. Audrey Langstroth joined and was able to play in the Charm and Putt for the first time, being welcomed with open arms.

This group plays each week with a once-a-month tournament and fun play days sprinkled in as well. All women golfers who are members of Rancho Murieta Country Club may join by contacting captain O'Hern (plohern@sbc-global.net) or by calling or texting 209-598-1160. ★



Educational materials, such as this Firewise USA poster, can be had for the asking when neighbors celebrate Wildfire Community Preparedness Day on May 4 in Rancho Murieta. Image courtesy of the National Fire Protection Agency

Wildfire Preparedness Event May 4 Aims to Review Risks

Rancho Murieta Regional Fire Safe Council New Release

RANCHO MURIETA (MPG) - The Rancho Murieta Regional Fire Safe Council will host a public education event, the National Fire Protection Agency's Wildfire Community Preparedness Day, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. May 4.

The regionally relevant educational event will be held in the Rancho Murieta Bel Air parking lot in front of the Tractor Supply store.

Wildfire Community Preparedness Day provides science-based steps that residents can take to reduce or remove potential fire hazards from a home and its immediate surroundings – known as the “home ignition zone” – to help

protect from embers and radiant heat from wildfires.

Typical activities might include simple, low-cost home improvement projects such as clearing dead leaves, debris and pine needles from roofs and gutters; keeping lawns and native grasses mowed to a height of four inches; or removing anything stored underneath decks or porches that could burn.

Fire Safe Council member Karen Hoberg, owner/broker of Rancho Murieta Homes & Land, Inc., is the event coordinator. The event seeks to further educate residents about the ever-present wildfire risk to homes and humans as the NFPA, Sacramento County Fire Safe Council Coalition and the Rancho Murieta Regional Fire

Safe Council continue to address the issue.

These groups, in coordination with local stakeholders, including the Rancho Murieta Association, Cal Fire, Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District (Sac Metro) and the Sacramento County Office of Emergency Services (Sac OES), work to minimize and mitigate the threat of wildland fire destruction to the region.

Education and conversation as well as handout materials will highlight the efforts ongoing to safeguard regional public safety from wildfire and flood along with efforts to ensure the fastest and least fallible means of emergency evacuation in the event it were requested by an incident commander.

Come out and discuss the use of Cal Fire's roughly \$4.5 million grant to mitigate fuels and fire danger in the region as well as enhance our local treasure, the Deer Creek Hills Conservancy, with funds for native species tree planting as well as oak woodland restoration.

There will be a raffle for Grab and Go Emergency Preparedness Backpacks as well as handout materials and great local representatives to discuss your concerns with.

Other participating organizations will be SOLOS, Sacramento County Regional Parks, Metro Fire, Sac OES, Sacramento County Fire Safe Council, RMA and Rancho Murieta Regional Fire Safe Council. ★

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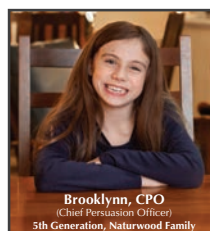


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