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The Kitchen Table Serves All *Local Shop is Centerpiece for Foodie Fans*



Judy Raglan holds a sign at the Land Park store.

Story and photos by Kristina Rogers

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A delightful neon sign and retro-kitchen display say “Welcome to

the Kitchen Table” at the East Sacramento store on 810 Alhambra Blvd. The owner, Susan O’Brien, was busy bringing in products from her car, speaking with staff, and putting the

finishing touches on displays. For someone who appears so in charge, it may be surprising to know this is her first experience as a shop owner. “I was a psychologist

and decided it was time to leave, but I couldn't really retire. We still had kids at home.” She smiles, “My husband encouraged me to get another job, but when I

Continued on Page 2



Julie Van Houten is the new St. Francis Catholic High School assistant principal. Photo by Bill Smith Photography

New Asst. Principal Named at St. Francis

St. Francis Catholic High School News Release

EAST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - St. Francis Catholic High School is proud to announce Julie Van Houten as its new assistant principal.

Van Houten, who holds a Master of Arts in education, is a member of the executive staff and has been serving as the social studies department chair for the past two years. She will assume her new role effective July 1.

“St. Francis is an amazing school that needs to be celebrated,” said Van Houten. “As a current teacher and parent of a St. Francis student, I have a strong understanding of the academic, social and emotional needs of the key stakeholders: students, families and teachers.”

“I am excited about the opportunity to continue working and collaborating in an environment where I can contribute to the quality of an all-girls faith-based education,” she said.

Van Houten started in the Elk Grove Unified School District in 2001 and joined St. Francis Catholic High School in 2016 as a social studies teacher, including AP U.S. history and AP government and politics.

Van Houten is also an adjunct professor at Sacramento State University where she teaches aspiring multiple subject and social science teachers.

“We are excited to have Julie take on this position of leadership at St. Francis,” said Principal Elias Mendoza. “Her time as a faculty representative on our executive staff, her innovative approach to curriculum and instructional delivery, and her passion for the mission of St. Francis make her the perfect choice.”

Volunteer for Capital Airshow



A California Capital Airshow volunteer guides a budding aviation enthusiast through one of the Airshow's interactive exhibits. Photo courtesy of California Capital Airshow

California Capital Airshow News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - California Capital Airshow, presented by Sacramento County in partnership with the City of Rancho Cordova, invites community members to sign up as airshow volunteers for the 2024 Airshow.

This year's Airshow at Mather Airport on July 13 and 14 features aerial performances by Italian Jet Team Frecce Tricolori and the United States Air Force Thunderbirds Jet

Demonstration Team.

More than 1,000 community members make up the corps of volunteers that help bring the California Capital Airshow to life each year. The Airshow is looking for adults, age 18 and older, to volunteer.

“Airshow volunteers play a vital role in supporting California Capital Airshow's mission to inspire the next generation through the wonder of flight,” said Darcy Brewer, executive director of the California Capital Airshow. “Their efforts make a huge impact for our nonprofit and they

get to build a sense of community while enjoying the behind-the-scenes excitement of producing a truly spectacular event.”

Volunteers will be fed and provided with water throughout the day, in addition to receiving a commemorative “Airshow Crew” T-shirt, the opportunity to make new friends, and the Airshow team's deepest gratitude for supporting this nonprofit event.

Those interested are encouraged to complete volunteer registration at californiacapitalairshow.com/become-a-volunteer. ★



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The Kitchen Table Serves All

Continued from Page 1

decided to do this, he was surprised.”

As anyone knows, owning a business is not a nine-to-five endeavor. But O’Brien envisioned a kitchen boutique focused on carefully curated cooking tools and community gatherings. It was a niche area she didn’t see represented. She entered the 2017 Calling All Dreamers competition, produced by the Downtown Sacramento Partnership and became a finalist. “I didn’t win, but the learning and support I got through that process encouraged me to move forward independently.”

The Kitchen Table opened in the Fall of 2017, and since then, it has grown into two locations: Land Park and East Sacramento. The East Sac location just moved into a bigger space last March. “This site is three times as big as the old one, which means we can do so much more here,” says O’Brien. And she is filling it up fast with eclectic kitchen bowls, high-end cookware, and locally sourced foods and décor.

The Land Park shop at 2665 Riverside Blvd. has been gaining attention since its grand opening in April 2023. The focal point for that store is a giant farm table, the epicenter for seasonal displays of wonderment. I spoke to employee Judy Raglan, who cheerfully walked me around the store. My head was on a swivel, absorbing the whimsical English crockery and eye-catching serving ware. She pointed to a shelf stocked with bright kitchen gadgets, and giggles: “We call these the tools you didn’t know



The new, larger East Sacramento store is at 810 Alhambra Blvd.

you needed until you saw them!”

However, for serious cooks, the most impressive items are found in products like the Smithie Ironware collection. Hand-forged cookware from North Charleston, South Carolina, The Kitchen Table is the only carrier in the Sacramento region. There are also beautiful saucepans and pots from Netherton Foundry, made in Shropshire, Britain (O’Brien’s husband is a Brit, and they toured the foundry themselves). This is “heritage piece” cookware meant to be used and passed down through the family. If you struggle to find the perfect high-end gift for the cook who has everything, this may be the item they’ll brag about to their foodie friends.

But honestly, even if you don’t know how to boil water, the store is incredibly fun. There’s unique neighborhood home decor, Land Park and East Sac



Smithie cookware sits with special salts and sauces.

pillows, baby gifts, dog gear, and an assortment of local art. Holidays bring new decorations and retro tchotchkes to freshen up the home. They also keep a regular supply of seasonal specialties. Mocktails are trending; visitors can find a nice array of alcohol-free organic elixirs, cocktail mixers, and recipe books. Glampers will see next level smores supplies and



Owner Susan O’Brien stands at the welcoming display at the East Sacramento shop.



A menu of upcoming events is at the entrance of the Land Park Kitchen Table.

barbecue sauces for their summer adventures.

Both shops have their own personalities, which are reflected in the different types of events. The Land Park location is focused on craft nights like calligraphy and succulent arrangements. Once the kitchen space is completed, the East Sacramento store will focus on cooking demonstrations and classes. And

both stores offer knife sharpening days, usually on the third Thursday of the month.

Since O’Brien’s is a woman-owned shop, she believes in spreading the love. She works with SacVendorConnect to host pop-ups in her parking lots. Local family businesses offer goods such as spices, baked treats, hand-made cutting boards, and

home-grown pickled green beans.

O’Brien is proactive about hosting fundraisers and book drives for Wellspring Women’s Center, a local organization supporting women and children in crises (www.wellspringwomen.org).

The Land Park store also has a bin to donate art supplies. So, if you went on a crafting spree and never got around to those projects, you can do some good and drop them off.

At a time when some local businesses struggle to keep their doors open, the Kitchen Table has found a place in the hearts of Sacramento locals. It could be attributed to Susan O’Brien’s gift of using food as her love language. She said, “I’ve always enjoyed bringing people around the table to eat good food and reconnect.” And her guest list continues to grow.

To learn more, visit kitchentablesac.com. ★

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Students Illustrate the 1950s

MPG Staff

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - Mira Loma High School's fourth annual Pleasantville event was a rockin' good time!

On May 17, Mira Loma High School was transformed into a 1950s time capsule called Pleasantville, the annual culminating history project where 11th and 12th-grade students demonstrate the culture, innovations and historical events from 60-plus years ago through interactive presentations.

Nearly 700 visitors attended the Pleasantville morning event this year, including ninth- and 10th-graders, parents and community members.

Students were fully immersed in this time period, acting as key historical figures, according to San Juan Unified School District communication specialist Elysse Fresquez.

Two-hundred students presented their class projects about the historical events

and cultural innovations of this era in a variety of ways, including through interactive booths, scripted skits, and musical and dance performances.

Widespread historic events such as the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, the space race and the birth of rock'n'roll were creatively showcased throughout Pleasantville.

Local Sacramento history was also highlighted, including Fairytale Town's opening day and the founding of the KCRA 3 news station in 1955. The Mira Loma Alumni Association organized a classic car show in front of the school.

"Congratulations to the students for hosting another successful Pleasantville event," said a San Juan Unified social media post.

Mira Loma High School, part of the San Juan Unified School District, has an enrollment of 1,700 students from Carmichael and Arden Arcade. ★



Eleventh-graders talk about the role of the United States Army in the 1950s. Photos courtesy of San Juan Unified School District



This classic car show, organized by Mira Loma Alumni Association, reminded Pleasantville attendees of a prior era.



Eleventh-graders present a skit about the typical life of a suburban family in the 1950s.



The Mira Loma High School choir performs "Blue Moon."



Students staff a booth surrounding Fairytale Town's opening day in Sacramento.

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Searching for Faith Isn’t for the Faint of Heart

I’m still on a Baltic Sea cruise this week with Holland America. It’s been good sailing, but I carry motion sickness medication just in case.

I wonder if that medication would have helped me some years ago when I went to my doctor hoping for a simple steroid shot for the bursitis in my shoulder.

(Stop me if I’ve told you this story before because I think I may have.)

As the nurse smeared the injection site with disinfectant and placed a surgical drape over my shoulder, it was clear that this wasn’t going to be a plain old shot.

To mask my anxiety, I started cracking jokes.

“Will this steroid buff me up and help me play amazing baseball?” I asked.

The doctor seemed unamused as she began reciting the list of things that could possibly go



Spiritual Care
BY NORRIS BURKES

wrong. It was simple things such as nerve damage, infections and twitching.

“Don’t worry,” she said as I eyed the door, “we’ve never had a problem.”

Easy for her to say. She was on the giving end of the three-inch needle.

“Do you mind if I sing a hymn?” I asked.

“No, go right ahead,” she said.

I began to hum, “Shall We Gather at the River?” but her glare suggested that I change that tune.

A few moments later, as she began the deep injection, I had a news flash. To be more precise, a hot

flash. “Simple” quickly became complicated. “I think I’m going to faint,” I said. It felt like severe motion sickness.

“Lie down,” the doctor advised, “and don’t forget to breathe.”

Breathing wasn’t my problem at that moment; it was my hearing that felt impaired. I’ve always heard that hearing was the last thing to go before you die.

Then came a muffled question from the nursing assistant. “Do you feel your heart beating faster?”

“I don’t think so,” I whined as I felt her offering her hand. I’d always heard that in a near-death experience, someone will take your hand and walk you through a tunnel toward the light.

“Your pulse is slowing a bit, but don’t worry,” the doctor reported, “I think you’re having a vagal

Breathing wasn’t my problem at that moment; it was my hearing that felt impaired.

response.” “What’s a vagal response?” I asked.

I didn’t hear an immediate answer, so I persisted.

“Is that some kind of anaphylactic shock?”

I wanted her to know I knew some medical lingo. Anaphylactic shock is a life-threatening condition where blood pressure becomes too low to sustain life.

I wondered if it might be the kind of thing that often precipitates near-death experiences.

“Lord,” I silently prayed, “if this is going to be a near-death deal, please send me back before my column deadline.”

I was imagining the headline: “Chaplain Reports Existence of

God After Near-death Experience.”

It was definitely Pulitzer-Prize stuff; but as I thought about it, I wasn’t sure I was ready for an exclusive with the Holy. So, I nodded to the doctor and pronounced, “We’re done here.”

Nevertheless, I did learn a few things.

First, I learned that sometimes the best evidence we have of God’s existence is the warm hand of another. Thankfully, this means that God will always have a pulse, even when I don’t.

Second, I think maybe sometimes we need to allow God to find us through the kindness of others. I was looking for God down that tunnel and, while I didn’t see God,

I did see someone who showed compassion.

In other words, God showed up and she was wearing scrubs.

The third thing I learned is the definition of a “vagal response.”

“A vagal response,” my doctor explained as she called me back from the proverbial tunnel of white light, “is pretty much like fainting.”

“We’ll have to try this next week. I’ll get you a prescription for Xanax for your anxiety.”

Wow. I guess searching for faith isn’t for the faint of heart.

Headline: “Chaplain faints again, misses deadline.”

Send comments to 10556 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. Email comment@thechaplain.net or message at (843) 608-9715. Read previous columns or order books at www.thechaplain.net. ★

Smoot’s Landscaping Bringing Beauty to Homes for 40 Years

By Annie Kerr

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Scott Smoot is no stranger to revitalization. His company, Smoot’s Landscaping, has been in business for more than 40 years and Smoot has acquired a long list of accomplishments.

Since its beginning, Smoot’s Landscaping has been refurbishing homes, taking the customer’s vision and adding touches of elegance in the East Sacramento, Curtis Park, and Land Park areas, but also extends to greater Sacramento.

Smoot’s Landscaping is a well-renowned business and has been recognized in area publications, as well as Street of Dreams and Garden Tours of East Sacramento.

How did this success come to be? Smoot’s friendly and down-to-earth nature could be a contributing factor.

Smoot has been perfecting his skills since he was very young.



A customer’s yard gets revamped by adding stone pathways.

“I’ve been doing landscaping ever since I was a kid,” Smoot said. “I started out by mowing lawns to installing plants for clients, then I put myself through school and was doing landscaping in the summer.”

After putting himself through school, Smoot began his landscaping business, which has been his passion ever since.

Smoot said he is considering a boutique landscaper because a big component

of his business is catering toward the very specific ideas and requests of his customers.

“I try to make it a natural environment mostly to keep down the maintenance factor. Many people do not know how to maintain gardens, so we do gardens that require little or no upkeep,” Smoot said. “Lately, we’ve been doing a lot of drip irrigation because of water restrictions.”



Pictured here is a patio bursting with color and class by Smoot’s Landscaping.

Smoot’s Landscaping services include landscape designs, yard and garden renovation, water features, stone and concrete patio and walkway installations, drip and sprinkler irrigation systems, exterior lighting, and consultations/free estimates.

“Our landscape projects include traditional to modern-contemporary looks to a very natural vibe, depending on the home and client,” Smoot said.

For more about Smoot Landscaping, visit smoot-landscaping.com or call Smoot at 916-454-1300. ★



Scott Smoot, owner of Smoot’s Landscaping. Photos courtesy of Scott Smoot



An example of Smoot’s work is detailed in this photo.

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Music on the Green is June 28

The band Four Barrel is set to play Music on the Green from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, June 28 at William Land Golf Course.
For details go to: www.williamlandgc.com

Trucks & Such in Garcia Bend Park

This family fun event is hosted by District 7 Councilmember Rick Jennings from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. June 21 and Aug. 16 in Garcia Bend Park.

District 7 Sponsors Music in the Park

Music, food trucks and fun! Sponsored by District 7 Councilmember Rick Jennings.

June 28, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Jazz in the Park @William Land Park “Panhandle”

June 30, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Music in the Park @William Curtis Park

July 12, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Jazz in July @Marriott Park

July 19, 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Jazz in July @Garcia Bend Park

July 26, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. @Belle Cooledge Park

July 28, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Music in the Park @Curtis Park

August 25, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.: Music in the Park @Curtis Park

Elk’s Lodge Calendar of Events

Farmer’s Market, 9 am-1 pm every Saturday.

Elk’s Lodge Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday.

Bring your friends and family; \$15 tax included. Best deal in town. Made to order Omelets or eggs any way you want. Bacon, sausage, potatoes, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, waffles, coffee large parties should call for reservations.

Guests are VERY welcome!

Water Aerobics, Monday 10 am, Wednesday 2 pm, Friday 10 am

Yoga, Monday 12 pm, Wednesday 3:30 pm. Lodge members free.

Martial Arts, Monday 5 pm

Pickleball, Mon & Wed 9 am-12 pm, Thu 4:30-7:30 pm, Sun 4-7 pm

To sign up or confirm schedule, join playtimescheduler.com

Improv Night, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6-8 pm

Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 pm

See above and elks6.net for weekly menu.

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Thursday 7 pm

Saturday 7:30 pm

Friday Happy Hour, Friday 4-7 pm

Line Dancing, 2nd and 4th Fridays

Friends of Sutter’s Fort Discounted Admission Rates

– Friends of Sutter’s Fort, in partnership with Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park, is proud to present a series of

family-friendly events and activations this fall highlighted by holiday themed movies, an all-ages concert, and adventurous self-guided evening tours by flashlight or lantern light.

For those interested in visiting inside Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park (that is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily), all Fort admission fees will be waived for the duration of a major roof replacement and seismic stabilization project that is currently underway. For more information, please visit www.suttersfort.org.

Sacramento Area Museums Showcase Region’s Roots All Year Long

The Greater Sacramento region is rich with popular museums and destinations that offer diverse and enriching experiences for individuals, families, residents, and visitors alike.

For more about activities offered by Sacramento area museums, “like” them on Facebook, follow them on Instagram and Twitter @SacMuseums or visit www.SacMuseums.org.

Volunteers Honored with DOVIA Awards

By **Ornella Rossi**

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The nonprofit Directors of Volunteers in Agencies (DOVIA) honored 23 volunteers from communities throughout Sacramento County and Yolo County at its awards ceremony on May 16.

Since its inception in 1978, DOVIA Sacramento has played a crucial role in connecting professional volunteer managers and leaders. It serves as a hub for exchanging ideas and resources among those who oversee volunteers in different organizations. Additionally, it collaborates with various groups to raise awareness about the importance of volunteering in the community. By fostering communications between member agencies, institutions, and the public, it aims to create a more supportive environment for volunteerism to thrive.

“We are committed to honoring exceptional people in our community and training volunteer program managers from a variety of local service-organizations,” said DOVIA board member Twyla Teitzel.

DOVIA has a variety of agency members ranging from hospices to food banks and local government organizations. It covers Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, Yuba, El Dorado and Placer counties.

The May 16 reception held at the Girls Scout Heart of California office honored the 23 nominees and winners of the Youth Volunteer of the Year, the Individual Volunteer of

Patty Estopinal, center, winner of the Individual Volunteer of the Year accepts her award alongside Miss Sacramento County, Helen Dang, left, and Miss Capitol City, Nicole Vicks.
Photos by Bill Taylor

the Year and Volunteer Manager of the Year awards.

“The DOVIA executive board focuses on executing events such as this awards ceremony,” said communication chair Jacqueline Ramirez. “Volunteer events broaden the awareness of volunteerism and the critical role volunteers play in helping meet local needs required for the community to function at its best.”

Among the nominees, seven volunteers were nominated for Youth Volunteer of the Year, 13 were nominated for Individual Volunteer of the Year and three volunteer coordinators were nominated for Volunteer Manager of the Year. The evaluation was conducted by a panel of three judges: Barbara Fitzwater, retired volunteer manager at Kaiser Permanente; Tiffany Maese, volunteer coordinator at the Sacramento County Sheriff’s Office; and Janice Wagaman, formerly associated with the Front Street Animal Shelter.

The Margaret Einspahr Youth Volunteer of the Year award acknowledges

a youth volunteer under age 21 who has shown exceptional dedication to community service, having contributed a minimum of 25 hours of service between January and December 2023. Recipients of this award receive a \$500 scholarship funded by the Margaret Einspahr Memorial Fund to honor Margaret Einspahr’s legacy as a dedicated leader in the field of volunteerism.

The 2024 winner of the Youth Volunteer award was Riya Janardhan, a high school junior, nominated by WEAVE, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting safe and healthy relationships and support survivors of sexual assault, domestic violence, and sex trafficking in Sacramento. Janardhan was nominated for her dedication to advocating for women’s rights and gender equality.

“Being a girl myself and having to experience different stereotypes, I don’t want to have to experience this at such a young age,” Janardhan said. “It’s something I strive to want to fix.”

Other nominees for this position included Kevin

Riya Janardhan, center, Youth volunteer of the Year, accepts her awards alongside Miss Sacramento County, Helen Dang, left, and Miss Capitol City, Nicole Vicks.

Leach, nominated by Meristem in Fair Oaks; Kai Nakaoka, nominated by Scouting America in Sacramento; Maximum Truong, nominated by the Sacramento Tree Foundation; and Kristy Yu, Flynn Ng, and Cara Taylor, nominated by the Sacramento Public Library

The Individual Volunteer of the Year award is presented to a volunteer over age 21, who has dedicated a minimum of 25 hours of service. The award recipient receives a \$100 award for their organization.

The winner for this year’s award was Patricia Estopinal, nominated by Court Appointed Special Advocates Sacramento (CASA), an organization focused on ensuring support for children in the foster care system through volunteer advocates.

“This award means so much because for the past 14 years being able to have a relationship with foster youth, to have a relationship where you know that you’re the one constant, no matter what is going on in their lives, it’s just such a meaningful relationship,” Estopinal said.

The nominees for

the positions included Beatriz Bueno and Jane Shapiro, nominated by the Sacramento Medical Serve Corps in McClellan; Anne Marie Christian, Daisey Maldonado and Karina Villanueva, nominated by Dignity Health Methodist Hospital in Sacramento; Mary Kay Edson, nominated by the Sacramento Public Library; Ron Hills, nominated by Vitalant in Mather; Marissa Honey-Plate, nominated by the Miss Sacramento County Scholarship Organization in Antelope; Rodney Horton, nominated by the American River Parkway Foundation in Carmichael; Nicky Smolter, nominated by the Lavender Library in Sacramento; Matthew Tran, nominated by the Sacramento Tree Foundation in Folsom; and Kristy Venrick Mardon, nominated by Only Sunshine Sanctuary in Fair Oaks.

Volunteer Manager of the Year honors a volunteer manager who demonstrated outstanding leadership and dedication to supporting volunteers. The winner received a \$100 award for their organization, along with a

one-year complimentary DOVIA Sacramento organization membership.

The 2024 winner was Marlene von Friederichs-Fitzwater nominated for her work with Joshua’s House and Health Communication Research Institute in Yolo County.

She has spent the past decade building Joshuas House, a hospice facility for terminally-ill homeless individuals. Von Friederichs-Fitzwater has raised \$2.5 million and created a volunteer organization to provide high-quality care.

Other nominations included Marissa Honey-Plata nominated by Miss Sacramento County Scholarship Organization and Justin Rubio with Sacramento Tree Foundation.

During the ceremony, several guest speakers talked about the importance of volunteering and the work they have done. Lynn Pesely, winner of the 2023 DOVIA Volunteer Manager award, talked about her work with the Sacramento Medical Reserve Corps. Helen Dang, Miss Sacramento County, and Nicole Vicks, Miss Capitol City, winners of the Miss Sacramento County Scholarship program, mentioned their work with advocacy and action for the houseless and Stomp Out Bullying respectively.

“One second, one minute, one action can change someone’s life,” Dang said. “All it takes is one good deed to build the foundation of lasting change.”

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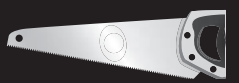
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Field Day a Celebration for Ham Radio Enthusiasts

Governor Appoints Three to Superior Court Bench

Friends & Amateur Radio Communications Enthusiasts News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Ham radio operators from the Friends & Amateur Radio Communications Enthusiasts in the Sacramento County area will participate in a national amateur radio exercise from 11 a.m. Saturday, June 22 to 12:59 p.m. on Sunday, June 23.

Hams set up temporary transmitting stations in public places to showcase the science, skill and service of amateur radio. It is an exciting opportunity to learn, connect and demonstrate the capabilities of this hobby. Use the Field Day Locator at www.arrl.org/field-day-locator to find a site near you and join the celebration. The Friends & Amateur Radio Communications Enthusiasts group will set

up operations in Diamond Springs.

Hams from throughout North America ordinarily participate in Field Day by establishing temporary ham radio stations in public locations to demonstrate their skill and service. Their use of radio signals, which reach beyond borders, bring people together while providing essential communication in the service of communities. Field Day highlights ham radio's ability to work reliably under any conditions from almost any location and create an independent, wireless communications network.

Hams from the Sacramento, El Dorado and Placer County area will also use radio stations set up in their homes or take to their backyards and other locations to operate individually or with their families. Many hams have portable radio communication capability that includes alternative energy

sources such as generators, solar panels and batteries to power their equipment.

Hams have a long history of serving our communities when storms or other disasters damage critical communication infrastructure, including cell towers.

Ham radio functions are completely independent of the internet and phone systems and a station can be set up almost anywhere in minutes.

Hams can quickly raise a wire antenna in a tree or on a mast, connect it to a radio and power source, and communicate effectively with others.

For more information, contact the California Department of Technology Radio Association (N6CDT) at najarzadeh@stateofca.gov or visit the Amateur Radio Club (KF6NNM) Friends & Amateur Radio Communications Enthusiasts page at www.kf6nnm.net. ★

Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Gov. Gavin Newsom recently announced the appointment of three judges to the Sacramento Superior Court bench.

Jaya Badiga, of Sacramento County, has served as a Commissioner at the Sacramento Superior Court since 2022. She was a Sole Practitioner from 2018 to 2022. She served as an Attorney at the California Department of Health Care Services in 2020 and at California Governor's Office of Emergency Services in 2018.

Badiga was Managing Attorney at WEAVE Inc. from 2013 to 2018 and Attorney Advisor at Galaxy Architects & Infrastructure from 2010 to 2013. She served as Staff Counsel at the California Employment Development Department

from 2009 to 2010.

Badiga earned a Juris Doctor degree from the Santa Clara University School of Law and a Master of Arts degree in International Relations and International Communications from Boston University. She fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Robert S. Lapham.

Amy Holliday, of Sacramento County, was elected in March 2024 to fill a vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Allen H. Sumner. The Governor's interim appointment allows her to immediately assume the position she would otherwise begin in January 2025.

Since January 2020, Holliday has served as Assistant Chief Deputy managing prosecutors in the Central Operations Bureau and use of Forensic Investigative Genetic Genealogy to solve and prosecute cases. She has

prosecuted several cold cases including People of the State of California v. Joseph James DeAngelo (the East Area Rapist/Golden State Killer).

Holliday earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law.

Allison Zuvela, of Sacramento County, has served as a Retired Annuitant Deputy Public Defender at the Yolo County Public Defender's Office since 2023 and served in several positions there from 2003 to 2021, including Chief Deputy Public Defender and Assistant Chief Deputy Public Defender. She served as a Deputy Public Defender in the Tulare County Public Defender's Office from 1995 to 2003.

Zuvela earned a Juris Doctor degree from California Western School of Law. She fills the vacancy created by the retirement of Judge Sharon A. Lueras. ★

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Alice Astafan Shares Her Story

Retired Major General Highlights Achievements (and Challenges) in New Memoir

By Annie Kerr

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Being the first female two-star general in the Air Force Reserves is only one of 85-year-old trailblazer Alice Astafan’s many accomplishments. She was also a CEO, worked at the Pentagon, was personally appointed by former Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and is now a published author.

But that’s merely scratching the surface. Astafan’s memoir, “Lady Leader Leaves Lasting Legacy,” takes the reader through a detailed journey of her extraordinary life, leaving inspiration and courage along the way.

Messenger Publishing Group had a recent conversation with Astafan at her Carmichael home. Tucked away in a peaceful neighborhood, the Astafan house is warm and inviting. Astafan is quick-witted, energetic and wildly interesting. “Why do newspaper people care so much about my age?” she laughed when asked.

A longtime Carmichael resident, Astafan hails from a farm in rural Alabama, which is obvious when her honey-sweet Southern accent comes out. Born Nora Alice Davidson, she spent her childhood among eight other siblings (seven also served in the military), helping with farmwork and living off the land.

Dreaming of a bigger life, she later put herself through the University of Alabama by working various jobs on campus. There she studied biology and chemistry. “Roll Tide!” she said at one point of the newspaper interview, alluding to the Alabama slang.

Astafan was first inspired to serve her country when she attended a movie theater at age 19. She saw a cutout of a woman dressed in an Air Force uniform, advertising women’s enrollment



Alice Astafan stands as one woman general, among the many male generals. Photo courtesy of Alice Astafan

in Officer Training School. This piqued her interest, so she joined the Air Force in 1960, where she would become very successful. Little did she know that she would go on to make history as the first female two-star general in the Air Force Reserves. To clarify, a two-star general is nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate.

Being one of the only women among thousands of men in the Air Force, it would be safe to assume there was some disadvantage due to the time period. However, Astafan was sure to point out, she didn’t face much sexism or prejudice in the military, and if anything, the men she worked with were protective and supportive of her. Astafan reminisced that they recognized her work ethic and loyalty and gave her the promotions she deserved.

“Throughout my career, I had 42 male supervisors and they all treated me with great respect,” she said.

Astafan’s military career lasted 38 years, taking her throughout the world. Her duties included developing and finalizing logistics plans, inventorying war readiness material, coordinating and planning support for aircraft and hundreds of personnel, and much more.

From Thailand to Austria to England to Africa, she

traveled near and far, eventually landing at Tinker Air Force Base in Oklahoma City in 1965, where she met her future husband, Peter Astafan, a civilian employee. The pair married in a small ceremony in 1968.

“He was perfect,” Astafan said. “He didn’t have a jealous bone in his body.”

When Peter was assigned to Fort McClellan in 1973, he and Astafan moved to Carmichael. Shortly after their move, the Astafans welcomed a baby boy named Patrick. He would be their only child. To juggle motherhood and her booming career, Astafan stepped down from her 13-year stint of active duty and joined the Air Force Reserves. This gave her more ability to care for Patrick and still do the job she loved. Impressing all her supervisors, it was only a few years later in 1988 when she was named a general and received her first star.

What made Astafan so successful? She said it was all about following the Air Force mission, being a team player and working to the best of her ability. Her grit and determination were recognized and she proved herself capable every single time she was promoted.

While continuing her successful career, the

unimaginable happened when Patrick was diagnosed with leukemia in 1992. While Patrick was fighting leukemia, Astafan somehow kept rising up the military ladder, traveling and working in logistics at the Pentagon, officially receiving her second star in 1993, while also supporting her son.

Unfortunately, Patrick lost his hard-fought battle in 1994 at age 20, which turned Astafan’s world upside down.

“He was a jewel, he really was,” Astafan said. Patrick’s legacy has since been honored with a scholarship fund in his name at both Oklahoma Christian University and California State University, Sacramento (CSUS), which has helped fund nearly 200 students’ education.

Then in 2021, Peter died from retrograde amnesia, which was another unimaginable loss.

“We had been married for 53 years, four months, and nine days. My life will never be the same,” Astafan wrote in her memoir.

When asked how she kept going after losing both her husband and son, Astafan points to sky, referring to God. She honors both Patrick and Peter in her memoir’s Chapter 15, “My Soulmate and My Angel – Love is the



Dressed in her red, white, and blue, Alice Astafan poses proudly with her book in her office. Photo by Annie Kerr

Greatest Blessing of All”.

After retiring from the Air Force in 1998, Astafan immediately dove into a new role as the CEO of the Federal Technology Center, which works with state, federal, and local government contracts. She stayed in that role for 10 years. In addition, she was appointed by former Gov. Schwarzenegger to serve as the chairperson on the California Veterans Board. She served on 20 boards of directors with no compensation, wrote and gave 100 speeches across the country, was the grand marshal of the Sacramento and Elk Grove Veteran’s Day parades, and even got her master’s in both early childhood education and international affairs from California State University at Sacramento.

Astafan hopes her passion for this country will inspire American youth to serve their country, chase their dreams and believe in themselves.

“Quite frankly, the country needs women to serve,” Astafan said. “We need good honest people to serve our nation so our way of life can forever be safe and in place. Why do so many people want to come to America? Think

about it.”

She provides words of wisdom to young people: “You do not have to be born with a silver spoon in your mouth. You can dream big, set goals, work honestly and diligently, and become most anything in America. Also, it is not what happens to you along the way, it is how you handle those things. Life is short; it is like a drop of dew on a blade of grass; in the morning it is there but it is soon over. Make your time on this Earth count for something!”

There is so much more to her story. Astafan has lived what can only be described as a remarkable life and has changed the lives of others, as well. Devoted to every role she has had, whether it was picking cotton on her childhood farm, being a wife and mother, a mentor, a CEO or a two-star general, Astafan has lived a life full of hard work, selflessness, patriotism and integrity.

Leaving no stone unturned, Astafan’s book is filled to the brim with her past speeches, every article written about her and a vast array of photos. It is now available to purchase on her website (aliceastafan.com) or on Amazon. ★

New Ballot Measure Restricts Spending by Health Care Providers

California Secretary of State News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D. announced that an initiative became eligible for the Nov. 5 General Election ballot on May 21.

To become eligible for the ballot, the initiative needed 546,651 valid petition signatures, which is equal to five percent of the total votes cast for governor in the November 2022

General Election.

A measure can become eligible via random sampling of petition signatures if the sampling projects that the number of valid signatures is greater than 110 percent of the required number. The initiative needed at least 601,317 projected valid signatures to become eligible by random sampling, and it exceeded that threshold.

On June 27, the Secretary of State will certify the initiative as

qualified for the Nov. 5 General Election ballot, unless it is withdrawn by the proponent prior to certification pursuant to Elections Code section 9604(b).

The Attorney General's official title and summary of the measure is as follows:

Restricts spending by health care providers meeting specified criteria. Initiative statute. Requires certain health care providers to spend 98% of

revenues from the federal discount prescription drug program on direct patient care. Applies only to health care providers that: spent over \$100,000,000 in any ten-year period on anything other than direct patient care; and operated multifamily housing with over 500 high-severity health and safety violations. Penalizes noncompliance by revoking health care licenses and tax-exempt status. Permanently authorizes state to negotiate

Medi-Cal drug prices on statewide basis. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local governments: Increased costs to state government, potentially up to the millions of dollars annually, to review entities’ compliance with the measure and enforce the measure’s provisions. These costs would be paid for by fees created under the measure. Uncertain fiscal impacts to

state and local government health programs, depending on how the affected entities respond to the measure’s requirements. (23-0021A1.)

The Secretary of State’s tracking number for this measure is 1963 and the Attorney General's tracking number is 23-0021A1.

For more information about how an initiative qualifies for the ballot, visit sos.ca.gov/elections/ballot-measures/how-qualify-initiative. ★



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Honoring General Bud Anderson

Aerospace Museum of California News Release

MCCELLAN, CA (MPG) - On May 17 at 5:29 p.m., World War II Triple Ace Brigadier General Clarence E "Bud" Anderson passed away in his home peacefully in his sleep, surrounded by his family. He was 102.

Brigadier General Anderson, a true American hero, achieved more than 16 victories in aerial combat during World War II while flying his P-51 Mustang, Old Crow. Throughout his distinguished military career, Anderson flew three different models of the P-51 Mustang, all proudly bearing the name and paint

scheme of "Old Crow." The Aerospace Museum of California "extends heartfelt condolences for the passing of this remarkable U.S. Air Force pilot. His bravery and dedication to our country's freedom will forever be honored and remembered at the Aerospace Museum of California.

Our world is a better place because of him and the incredible legacy that he leaves behind. Always a kind gentleman and a true friend of the museum, Bud graciously signed autographs, answered any questions, and offered a firm handshake accompanied by his warm Anderson smile. He generously shared his incredible



A young Bud Anderson is happy to serve his country.

stories and personal artifacts with the public and his contributions have enriched our understanding of history and inspired countless individuals.

A hero, legend, fighter ace, role model, and American icon, may he forever fly in blue skies. General Bud, you will always be remembered."

Learn all about his legacy and more at <https://toflyandfight.com/>.



Bud Anderson stands in front of his beloved Old Crow plane. Photos courtesy of the Aerospace Museum of California

toflyandfight.com/.

Honor General Bud with a donation to the Brigadier General Bud Anderson STEM Education Fund. Triple Ace General Bud

Anderson has made many incredible contributions to aviation, and he will continue to inspire future generations to explore STEM careers. His love

and passion for education are at the heart of the museum's mission to "honor the past and inspire the future through STEM education." ★

Service Salutes Heroes

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - Carmichael's Vietnam Monument was recently central to Memorial Day commemorations. Flags, flowers, and memories were shared by more than 100 visitors.

US Army Brigadier General Don Currier (retired) gave the address. "The vast amount of this country's success has come because of sacrifices made so we could have our freedoms," considered Currier. "This great nation did not happen in a day; it took more than 200 years -- and the blood and toil of those who came before us.

"Heroes aren't found in sports arenas or movies,"



Carmichael Scouts raise flags for Memorial Day observances.

he continued. "They're found on battlefields. We all benefit from these heroes, and from the pain shouldered by their families."

Reverend Kathleen Marie gave the invocation. The La Sierra High graduate is sister to Thomas Pigg, one of 15 Vietnam war dead commemorated

by the steel monument. "My brother's death greatly affected our family," she recalled. "Though (most of the family) is gone now, they went bearing the pain of his loss."

A first-known monument to Vietnam War losses in California, Carmichael's memorial stands in Koobs Nature Area. Dedicated in



Veterans and supporters gather for a Memorial Day service at the Vietnam Monument, Carmichael. The edifice commemorates La Sierra High School alumni who died in Vietnam.

1972, it honors La Sierra High School alumni who fell in the long conflict.

Those commemorated are Robert D. Anderson, Mark W. Burchard, Robert S. Byrnes, Jerry Cowser, Kenneth R. Escott, Gary

R. Field, Herbert Frenzell, Frank Thornburg, Ralph Guarienti, Larry H. Morford, Thomas C. Pigg, Randall B. Rainville, Kim Richins, Jeffry Tharaldson and Robert A. Willis.

Koobs Nature Area is

located at 5325 Engle Rd, Carmichael. Access is available first Saturdays monthly, March through October. For information go to Koobs Nature Area's Facebook page. ★

Four-Legged Seasonal Help Brought in To Fight Flooding

Sacramento County Department of Water Resources News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Department of Water Resources (DWR) is continuing its annual eco-friendly program to combat overgrowth in detention basins to prevent the potential for flooding in the unincorporated parts of the County. Starting on May 21, Billy Goat Gruff and hundreds of his hungriest friends will converge on five separate locations over the next five weeks to help reduce the flood threat from overgrown grass and weeds.

Most of the County's flood prevention efforts occur during the spring and summer months before the rains fall again. Left unattended overgrowth could block water flow from heavy rains, resulting in street flooding. This is the twelfth year these contractors have been utilized as an effective force to ensure the creeks and

detention basins are clear for the upcoming storm season. This year, 300 goats and sheep will be casually dining as they rotate through five different locations.

The areas chosen for the contractor's dining experience will include Arcade Creek at Evergreen Estates: Winding Way at Auburn Blvd – 4.4 Acres, Arcade Creek at Kenneth Avenue: N/O Burl Way – 3.4 Acres, Arcade Creek at White Fir Way: E/O Garfield Ave – 2 Acres, Ottoman Hills Detention Basin: Main Avenue at Wiltshire Way – .7 Acres, and Strawberry Creek at Calvine Road: East & West of Auberry Drive – 7.7 Acres.

Residents near the projects received postcards letting them know about the cost-effective approach to flood prevention work. An onsite herder and trained dogs accompany the dining party 24-hours a day to ensure they are cared for, kept on task, don't wander off, and offer Thousand Island or Blue Cheese, if requested. ★

County Caps Initial Water Development Fees

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Water Agency Board of Directors approved a new cap on Initial Water Development Fee Payments required at the Improvement Plan approval stage of the development process. The Development Fee Program pays for water infrastructure projects within the county's Zone 40 area.

The fees are paid by developers and have been set at \$21,399 per home being built. The Sacramento County Water Agency collects the fee during the development

process. The initial payment is 15% of the total fee, with the remainder collected when the building permit is issued.

Zone 40 was formed nearly 40 years ago as a capital development fund. The funds help build new water systems and ensure there is an adequate water supply for development within Zone 40.

Changing this Sacramento County Water Agency section, known as Title 4, allows the water agency discretion to cap the initial payment of 15% to a maximum of \$200,000 per subdivision. Capping the fee will reduce one of the larger upfront costs typically financed by

developers and help bring down the cost of building homes.

The cap can be removed during an annual review if Sacramento County Water Agency finds a potential reduction in cash flow. Less money would impact the water agency's ability to plan, design and construct new water supply facilities needed within Zone 40 for future development.

Sacramento County Water Agency has partnered with the Building Industry Association on these changes with a mutual goal of removing the barriers to building cost-effective housing in Sacramento County. ★



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Disabled Veteran Gets ‘Best Buddy’

Story and photos
by Susan Maxwell
Skinner

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - A four-legged friend has quadrupled happiness for a Mather veteran with PTSD syndrome. Former US Navy electrician Dennis Deutscher (55) recently took delivery of a service-puppy-in-training, golden retriever Lily.

“It’s one of the brighter experiences of my life,” says Deutscher. “For me and Lily, the sky is blue and the sky’s the limit.”

The adoption was made possible by a recent “Ride For Reason” fundraiser for the Carmichael-based Higher Purpose Foundation. Fronted by Tesla rock band singer Jeff Keith, the nonprofit organization sponsored a 400-rider motorbike convoy from Folsom to Roseville.

Although the event collided with a rainstorm, Keith and friends hung tough and raised \$24,000. Proceeds will help youth in foster programs and have provided Deutscher with a golden-coated companion.

The veteran and pup introduction brought tears to many eyes. At All Stage Canine Development in Citrus Heights, the 12-week-old golden retriever jumped from a trainer’s arms, bounced past a dozen onlookers and claimed her future master.

“How did she know it was me?” marveled the vet. “It was like someone sprayed me with some magic dust. She was



Lincoln-based RRUFF Healing Heroes sponsors present a check contributing \$5,000 toward the cost of service dog Lily’s training at All Stages Canine Development in Citrus Heights.

excited and kissing me. I could help but tear up.”

Deutscher’s military career ended in 1992. The aviation electrician serviced F 18 Fighters during Operation Desert Storm. At 19 years old, he was devastated by a 1989 explosion on board the supercarrier USS America.

“I was right by the explosion,” he recalled. “Two of my friends died. My PTSD came mostly from then. I fought things I’d seen, also the stress of long wartime hours. In my generation, we hid our feelings. I didn’t know I had PTSD ’til a couple of years ago. It cost me jobs and ruined relationships. Substance abuse was the only way I could calm my brain.”

After his troubled years and a spell of homelessness, Deutscher is now drug-free and lives in Veterans Village, Mather, where he’s at last being



Veteran Dennis Deutscher, kneeling in the center, and pup, Lily, are joined by service dog sponsors Al Gonzalez, RRUFF Healing Heroes; Higher Purpose Foundation supporter Teri O’Sullivan; Foundation President Whitney Webb; Vicki Curtis, RRUFF Healing Heroes, All Stage Canine Development owner Miranda Viani; and Yvette Kroesing, Creme Brulee Goldens.

treated for his emotional injuries.

“Lily is a game-changer,” he said of his new friend. “I had dogs growing up. I knew a service dog would brighten

my days and be a huge support for me.”

Lily has not disappointed.

“She’s so good,”

Deutscher said. “She sleeps by me and doesn’t



It’s love at first sight. Veteran Dennis Deutscher meets his new friend, golden retriever Lily.

move ’til I wake up. Then she puts her arms on my shoulders and kisses me to say good morning.

“From the moment I met her, it’s been awesome,” he said. “I feel my anxiety level has changed. She makes me calm. We go on walks and if people talk to her, she’ll give them a few seconds, then come right back to me. She never leaves my side. she’s my best buddy.”

A Tesla fan since high school in Lodi, Deutscher connected with the Higher Purpose Foundation, a cause his rockstar hero Keith supports, during the motorbike ride fundraiser.

Explained Foundation President Whitney Webb, a Carmichael resident: “We’d decided to use some of our funds for a dog for a veteran. When I met Dennis, we talked and both ended up in tears. I knew right away he was meant to receive this gift.”

Bred by Crème Brulee Goldens, Sacramento, the dog’s initial food, veterinary costs and training are covered by the gift. RRUFF Healing Heroes, a Lincoln-based agency that sponsors service dog training for disabled veterans, also contributed \$5,000 to training costs.

“I don’t see how Lily could be better than she already is,” Deutscher said. “But we’ll learn skills together. If it makes her a better dog, it’ll make me a better person.

“I’d wanted a service dog for some time. Because of the cost, it just wasn’t possible. Everyone involved in this gift has shown me love and compassion,” Deutscher said. “It’s truly a God thing that they found me and gave me this fantastic companion.”

Learn about the Higher Purpose Foundation at www.higherpurposefoundation.org. ★

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