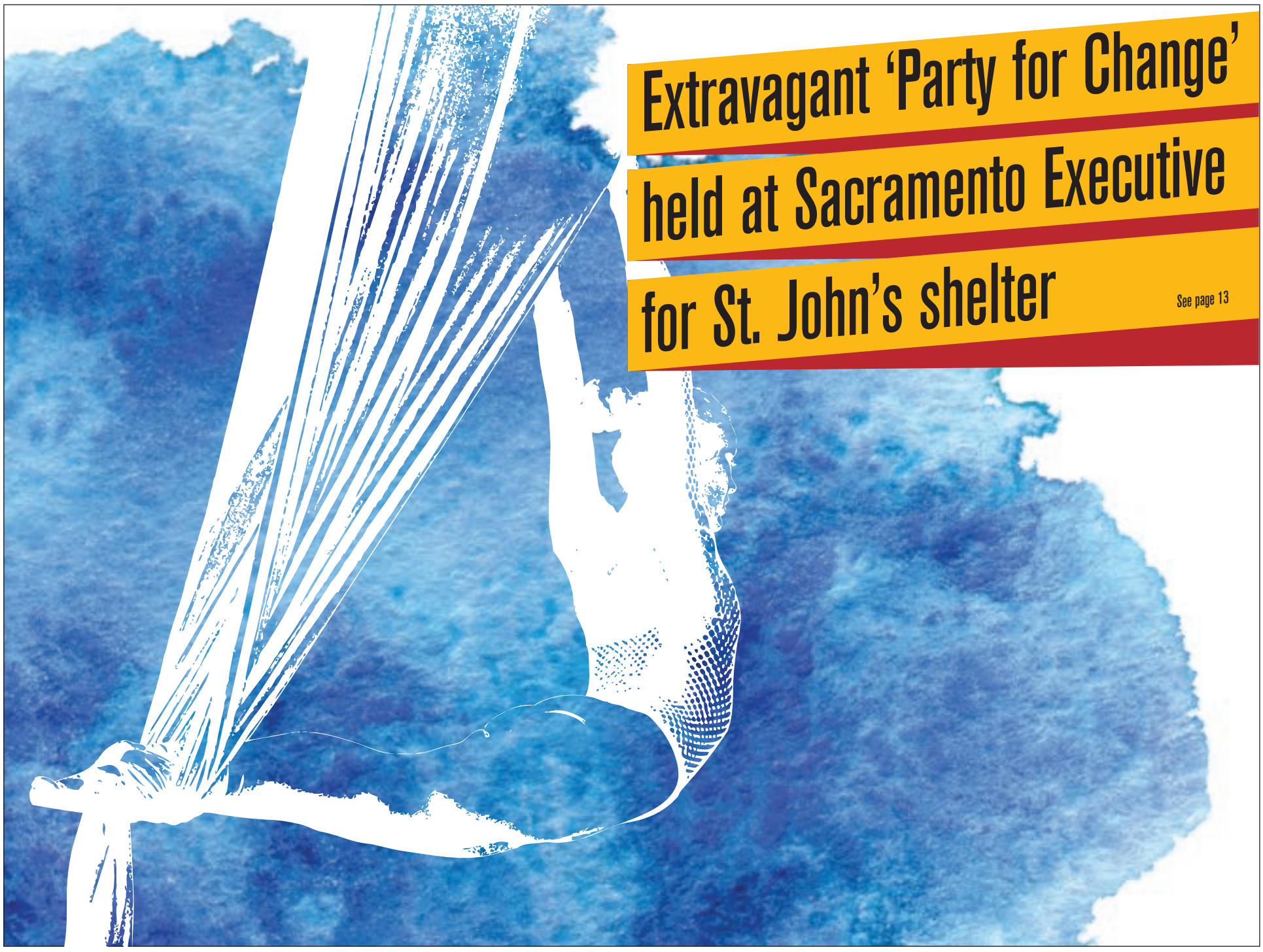
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Extravagant 'Party for Change' held at Sacramento Executive for St. John's shelter

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Photo by Bruce Clarke

From left to right - Hermaraminione (Kailey Diggs), Robin Hood (Allison Bento Murphy), Merlinohornian (Anthony Arellano) and Sherry Hotter (Mia Matista).

City Theatre presents Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts — A British Panto

City Theatre's popular presentation of British Pantos returns with Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts. In what has quickly become a holiday tradition for City Theatre, this uproarious, family-friendly theatrical extravaganza will be performed in the Auditorium at Sacramento City College. Join Dame Ingrid and her canine assistance, Serious Bark, in the Forest of Frogwarts and Robin Hood's latest battle against the bad, bad Sheriff of Pantoland. Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts plays through Sunday, Dec. 10. Evening performances are at the new time of 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and matinees remain at 2 p.m. on Sundays, with added Saturday matinees on November 25 and Dec. 9 at 2 p.m. Performances will be held in the Auditorium of the Performing Arts Center on campus at Sacramento City College, at 3835 Freeport Blvd.

Ticket prices are $18 general admission, $15 for seniors, SARTA members, veteran/military and persons with disabilities and $10 for students with IDs and children over 6 years old. Season subscriptions and Group rates are available. All details and tickets are available online at citytheatre.net.

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McClatchy High School opened new athletic field

Photos by STEPHEN CROWLEY



A ribbon cutting ceremony held on Monday, Nov. 6 kicked off the opening of the new $4.5 million athletic field and all-weather surface track at C.K. McClatchy High School. With renovations starting back in June, the project was finally completed on Nov. 1.

"We were never was really sure this day was going to come but I knew all of us working together were really going to make this happen. The community came together really strongly. The student voice we absolutely heard," said Jay Hansen, president of the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Trustees.

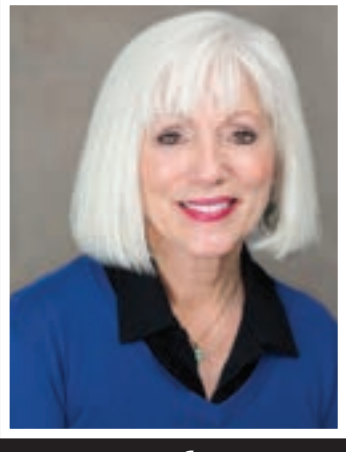
The more than 80-year-old institution, McClatchy High School is the largest school in the district with nearly 40,000 graduates.

This is something that McClatchy students, parents, and teachers have been waiting for for so long, student body president Zachary Neff said.

This past summer, the SCUSD board approved more than $4.5 million in funding to make the much-needed improvements. The project was made possible thanks to Measures Q & R. The measures help local schools make upgrades and renovations that are very much needed. Many of our neighborhood schools are 50 years old and need significant updating. The measures are necessary to maintaining the quality of our local schools. The ribbon cutting ceremony officially kicked off the opening of the new synthetic field and track. On Thursday, Nov. 16, the school board approved a similar field to replaced the dated one at Hiram Johnson High School.







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This home sits high on a hill with a retaining wall around a perimeter garden. Great room concept with lovely kitchen cabinets, counters and appliances. Living room with fireplace, updated bathrooms, basement and pool. Bedrooms open to the backyard and pool. Bring your ideas for finishing touches.

4121 Moss Drive $675,000



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Work underway for spider web play structure at Fairytale Town

"Giving Tuesday" event to raise money for Anansi the Spider

At Fairytale Town, staff is preparing for a friendly new spider to move in – the famed arachnid Anansi the Spider will be coming to life this winter in the form of a new play set.

Inspired by the popular West African folk tales, Anansi's Web features three climbing webs and four animal sculptures from different Anansi tales: a turtle, a leopard, a tiger, and a monkey, along with a sculpture of Anansi himself. The new playset was designed with older children (ages 7 to 10) in mind as well as little ones.

Anansi's Web is the creation of artist Garr Ugalde. Work has begun in his studio, and later this year we will prepare our site for Anansi's permanent home. Once funding is secured, the new playset is scheduled to be open for play by next spring.

This transformational project has a budget of $200,000. Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission has awarded us a $100,000 matching grant for the project, and Fairytale Town is soliciting help to raise the $100,000 match.

"We are grateful for your support and patronage of Fairytale Town and hope you'll consider supporting us again on #GivingTuesday—a global day of giving—on November 28. It's easy to participate! Simply visit fairytaletown.org to make a donation. If you don't want to wait, you can make your contribution towards the new playset now. We hope you will join us to create Anansi's Web—and make a lasting contribution that directly impacts children and families in our region," stated Kathy Fleming, Executive Director at Fairytale Town.

Fairytale Town is located at 3901 Land Park Drive. For more information, call 808-7462 or visit fairytaletown.org.



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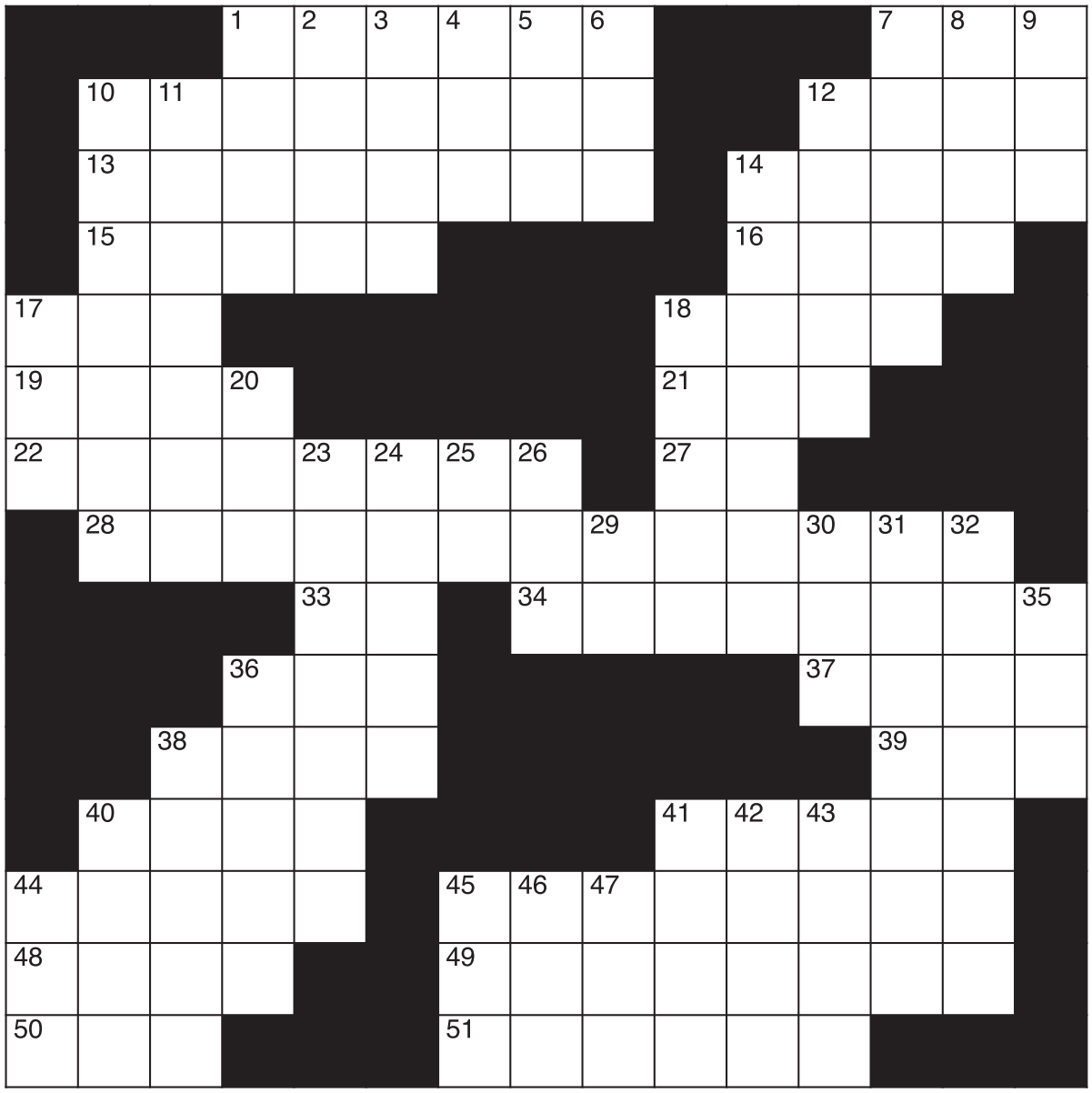
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CLUES ACROSS

1. Holds candles
7. In possession of
10. Rodents
12. Type of cofactor (Brit. sp.)
13. Hard candy on a stick
14. Animal of the weasel family
15. Things that should not be overlooked
16. "Silence" author
17. Dried, split lentils
18. People native to Ghana
19. Barros and Gasteyer are two
21. British thermal unit
22. Large oblong hall
27. Ethnic group in Asia
28. Holiday decoration
33. Milliliter
34. Open
36. Health physics concept (abbr.)
37. Tantric meditation
38. Where golf games begin
39. Birth swine
40. Rip
41. Remove
44. Puts together in time
45. Rotary engines
48. Skeletal structure
49. Member of a labor organization
50. Japanese classical theater
51. Undergarments

CLUES DOWN

1. "Snake Tales" cartoonist
2. Religious group
3. Singer Redding
4. __ and tuck
5. Head honcho
6. Second sight
7. Composer
8. About aviation
9. Senior officer
10. Forecasts weather
11. Seasoned Hungarian soup
12. Town in Hesse, Germany
14. Thought to derive from meteorites
17. Hit lightly
18. Seemingly bottomless chasm
20. Title of respect
23. Warms up
24. Man and Wight are two
25. Type of scan
26. Atomic mass unit
29. Article
30. Incriminate
31. Passes by
32. Most nerve-inducing
35. David Alan Grier sitcom
36. Achieve
38. Freshwater fish
40. Beginner
41. Dark brown or black
42. A newlywed wears one
43. DiFranco and Vardanyan are two
44. Diego, Francisco, Anselmo
45. Ancient Egyptian King
46. Old name (abbr.)
47. Brazilian city (slang)

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Civil Rights musical: Local filmmaker's documentary on Sacramento Hyers Sisters aired on PBS

By LAURA I. WINN

Sacramento's own Hyers Sisters are the civil rights and musical theater pioneers most people have never heard of. But thanks to local filmmaker Susheel Bibbs, the story of these African American sisters and their history-changing musical works of the late 1800s has been retold in the award-winning documentary, "Voices for Freedom: The Hyers Sisters' Legacy," aired Friday, Nov. 17 at 4 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 19 at 6:30 p.m. on PBS.

The Hyers Sisters, Anna and Emma, were young opera singers who at only 9 and 11 years of age debuted at Sacramento's Metropolitan Theater in 1867. Heralded for their talent, they toured the United States in 1871 and then had plans to perform in Europe when as Bibbs tells it, "all Hell broke loose" after President Rutherford B. Hayes pulled troops out of the south and African Americans became disenfranchised and subjected to violence and lynchings by the Night Riders and other groups. The Hyers Sisters, children of the 1860s civil rights movement, felt they couldn't leave their country and instead had to act. In response, they created the first American musicals, humanizing African Americans to white audiences through "stories of dignity, hopes and dreams," says Bibbs.

During this tumultuous time, the Hyers Sisters used humor to poke fun at negative stereotypes and "as a testament to their bravery" were the first to have an integrated cast. "They wanted to showcase how African Americans had real stories of real people, not cartoons of minstrels. They showed how they wanted the American dream like anyone else," explains Bibbs.

Bibbs, an accomplished opera singer in her own right, learned of the Hyers Sisters story while on tour in 2009. For the next seven years, Bibbs immersed herself in research, reading American musical theater history books, interviewing descendants still living in Sacramento, tracing genealogy records and visiting the gravesites at the Sacramento City Cemetery.

In "Voices for Freedom," Bibbs draws from that research to bring the story and the music of the Hyers Sisters to life with help from internationally-acclaimed mezzo soprano Tichina Vaughn and hip-hop narrator WolfHawk-Jaguar, among others. Bibbs says she chose a hip hop artist for one of the narrators to make the connection to the negative issues that continue to face African Americans today. "I wanted to show a very positive way of addressing these issues from this current vantage point."

Noting how music connects people, Bibbs adds that spirituals, like the ones sung in the Hyers Sisters' drama "Out of Bondage," have an especially effective way of uplifting and inspiring everyone, regardless of color. "When people get caught up in that music, they could steel themselves against the dogs after them. They help transcend problems. I call them spirit songs because they raise the spirits of all people."



It's that musical connection that Bibbs says she hopes draws a wider audience to the film in comparison to her last documentary, "Meet Mary Pleasant: Mother of Civil Rights in California," which also aired on PBS and screened at The Cannes Film Festival. In addition to the PBS broadcasts, "Voices for Freedom" is showing at film festivals across the country and recently won the 2017 Grand Festival Award at the Berkeley Video Film Festival.

Arts in River Park founder Brenda Jew Waters, a financial sponsor of the film, hosted a viewing party in her home for the PBS debut on November 15. Waters backed "Voices for Freedom" because she says she was intrigued by the story and believes in the talent and passion of Bibbs and her proven record of success.

For information on hosting a viewing party, buying the DVD or attending a film festival screening, visit thehyerssisters.com.

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Sacramento resident Frank Wong recalls his service in World War II, more

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
lance@valcomnews.com

As the most recent edition of Sacramento's annual Veterans Day Parade moved along Capitol Mall toward the state Capitol last Saturday, Nov. 11, among the participants was World War II veteran and Pocket resident Frank Wong.

While riding as a passenger in a 1952 Rolls Royce, Frank received recognition for his service from spectators who lined the street of an area he remembers all the way back to his days of growing up in the capital city.

It was not far from that area, as well as in Oak Park, where his father, Gon Lip, operated restaurants.

Following the parade, the Pocket News caught up with Frank, who said that his father's last restaurant had a military connection.

"The last (restaurant) was in Oak Park," he said. "He bought out a Chinese fellow who was going into the service."

In regard to the area around the old M Street – now Capitol Mall – Frank Wong said, "I knew the whole area. (The parade) went right by our old (long-since-demolished) Chinese school. And the redevelopment (in that area more than a half-century ago) wiped out all of the Nissei (Japanese) town. I used to go by there and buy fish for dinner."

Frank, who had four siblings, graduated from Sacramento High School in 1943. And with his country involved in World War II, it was not long before he joined the Army Medical Corp.

Frank said that he never went overseas during his time in the service.

"After basic training, I was assigned to a general hospital in Walla Walla, Washington," he said. "And they sent me to medical school in Denver, Colo. (at) Fitzsimons [Army] Hospital, where I trained to be a laboratory technician."

On a historical side note, that facility was named after Lt. William T. Fitzsimons, who was the first American casualty in World War I.

Frank said that he kept very busy working in all four sections of the hospital, where he remained for at least two years.

One of those sections was the psychiatric ward, he recalled.

"The soldiers went under the influence of a lot of shelling and all that, and they (experienced mental trauma)," he said. "They got shelled and that affected them quite a bit. But that wasn't my main job. I worked in the lab."

Eventually, Frank concluded his service working in Campo, Calif. and Marysville.

In recalling that time of his life, Frank said, "They were training the black soldiers infantry down there (in Campo) – the black soldiers on horses. They were part of the Negro contingent. They were closing that (camp) up when I got there in 1946.

"We were down there about four months. And they closed up the camp and sent me up to Marysville, and I was (honorably) discharged on May 2, 1946. So, I served 34 months in the medical corps."

Although Frank's brother, Poy, was older than him, he did not join the military until 1948.

"My brother got a job in defense in LA after high school, so he avoided the draft for a while. He finally thought, he better go in, so he volunteered to go in the service. He was in (the Army) for about a year a half. He served and went overseas."

Frank, who is 93 years old, commented on the fact that he is one of the relatively few surviving American World War II veterans.

"I don't think there are too many left anymore," he said with a saddened tone to his voice.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, about 558,000 of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II are currently living.

Frank mentioned that upon his return to civilian life, he returned to Sacramento and attended Sacramento College – today's Sacramento City College – for a semester before heading to Los Angeles. But he would again return to the capital city.

From 1951 to 1955, Frank worked at McClellan Air Force Base, first working as a storage auto mechanic and then an apprentice aircraft electrician.

It was also in the first half of the 1950s when Frank married Woodland native Lucy Din, and they had their first child, Vicki.



Pocket resident Frank Wong stands in front of the 1952 Rolls Royce, which he rode in during this year's Veterans Day Parade in downtown Sacramento.

Following his time at McClellan, Frank established his own letter shop business and performed copy work and printing for the Capitol Lions Club, which was established in 1953, with Frank as one of the charter members.

Frank is also a charter member of Gung Ho American Legion Post No. 696, which was formed in 1946. Four years later, he moved to the Pocket and he has continued to reside in the community.

Another significant part of Frank's life was the career he built working for the Sacramento County Assessor's Office. He retired as a senior real estate appraiser after 30 years of service in 1984.

Frank's family has grown significantly throughout the years of his marriage.

In addition to his two sons and two daughters, he also has six grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

After sharing memories of his life for this paper, Frank acknowledged the people who attended Sacramento's Veterans Day Parade this year.

"It was wonderful," he said. "The people really stepped in (and said), 'Thank you for your service.'"

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Local children's book author discusses self image issues in "Brown Boy Brown Boy What Can You Be?"

By JOE PERFECTO

Move over, Christopher Robin. There's a new kid in town, and his name is Matthew. While you're traipsing through the countryside with Pooh Bear and Tigger, Matthew might be out there too, depicting your adventures on canvas, studying wild bee colonies, or perhaps piloting an airliner across the cobalt sky. Someday, anyway.

Like Christopher—the protagonist of A.A. Milne's *Winnie The Pooh* titles—Matthew, the main character of Pocket resident Ameshia Arthur's new "kidlit" picture book *Brown Boy Brown Boy What Can You Be?*, which debuted Oct. 22 on Amazon.com, is based on the author's four-year-old son. The book's 32 pages of concise rhyming text and richly-hued illustrations of Matthew in roles such as artist, chef, oceanographer and pilot are meant to convey to Arthur's little "brown boy"—and all children of color—that it's never too early to think about a career, especially those not typically on their radar, and when considering the possibilities, "*I can*" should be their byword.

After surveying the wide variety of books that feature children of color and focus on assorted livelihoods but finding nothing that suited her needs, Arthur realized that in order to put one into her son's hands, she'd have to write it herself.

Brown Boy's apparently simple subject matter actually incorporates a deeper message. Through the highlighting of such careers against the backdrop of a larger concept—*don't let others define you*—the book touches upon the struggles not only with *self-determinism* but *self-image* with which the target audience contends. While superficially it seeks to counter the constrictive effect mass media's pigeonholing of Blacks into entertainment or sports roles can have on the range of career paths Black children perceive as options, the book is also a response to media's influence on how the general public perceives Black youth—and how they perceive themselves.

"I keep seeing lots of things in media, and it's just a really harsh and tragic portrayal of brown boys," Arthur said. Among many incidents that ultimately inspired the book was the 2014 shooting of Michael Brown in Ferguson, MO. "I saw a little baby face—I saw my son in him—and I wanted my little brown boys to see themselves as something other than a threat, other than a predator…or an entertainer, a basketball player, a comedian; there's nothing *wrong* with *those* things, but they can be *more*. I want them to see the world as an *opportunity* and not as a sad, bleak place."



Ameshia Arthur displays her book at the Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven Library.

While *all* children benefit from encouragement, guidance and perception/skill-building interactive resources such as multiple kinds of reading matter and educational play during their developmentally-critical early years, for children of color, overcoming preconceived notions about their available choices often imposes an additional challenge that critically impacts their chances of future academic and career-related success. In a 2004 paper that focused on successful Black college students, Dr. Marina Barnett of Widener University noted that the students received plenty of encouragement early in their academic pursuits: "Encouragement was expressed in several forms: Motivation and praise during childhood, having books and reading materials around the home, discussion of career choices or choosing toys or books [that] reflect particular career choices...."

To address self-image issues, books with carefully-focused narratives facilitate the parent-child discussion of, for example, difficult topics raised by a number of often fatal clashes between Black males and police such as those involving Michael Brown, Eric Garner and Walter Scott. Publishers such as children's literature specialist Lee & Low offer guidance. A 2013 blog entry at the Lee & Low website referenced the George Zimmerman incident and suggested potential choices: "In light of the recent ver-

See Author, page 9

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Author:

Continued from page 8

dict in the Trayvon Martin case, many parents are wondering, 'What should I tell my children?' Books can serve as an opening into serious discussion on race and social justice issues, build confidence and instill pride in young African American readers, and counter negative messages that children may be absorbing from other media outlets."

Concerning media representations, numerous authors have argued that when entire groups of people appear as stereotypes or not at all, it works to the detriment of all children. Author Zetta Elliott characterized such issues as "matters of life and death," an assertion put into context by a 2013 essay in which children's author/illustrator Christopher Myers wrote: "The plethora of threatening images of young black people has real-life effects. But if people can see us as young dreamers, boys with hopes and doubts and playfulness… perhaps they will feel less inclined to kill us."

Research on television illustrates the impact content can have on young viewers; a 2012 Indiana University study of about 400 children aged 7–12 (235 of which were Black) reported that the frequency with which Black men and boys are criminalized on TV can affect feelings of self-worth, and noted that self-esteem can have significant ramifications for motivation, persistence and academic achievement, particularly among children.

While changes in programming might prove beneficial, substituting books or activities for TV is advocated instead. Dr. Nicole Martins, co-author of the Indiana study, discussed the negative effects excessive viewing has *independent of content*: "Kids are spending so much time with the media that they're not given a chance to explore other things they're good at, that could boost their self-esteem."

Through the very simple message of "I can," titles such as *Brown Boy* can prove useful for helping children of color make positive, informed choices on the way to adulthood, by giving examples of careers and instilling the concept that a broad range of choices are accessible and worth investigating.

In several ways *Brown Boy* represents a departure from the past. The book is a product of the Age of the Internet. Eschewing the traditional, often-complex routes such as major publishing houses (not usually available to non-established authors) or "vanity press" (open to all but potentially very costly), *Brown Boy* is a product of a new model of low-cost personal publishing known as "subsidy publishing," in which works are generated, marketed and delivered digitally through services such as CreateSpace, Amazon's publishing arm—often as "eBooks" for devices such as Kindle. Hard copy books utilize the print-on-demand approach in which copies are produced as orders are received; little or no stock is maintained.

In addition, *Brown Boy* was written by a Black author about a Black protagonist. Traditionally, non-Caucasian children's authors—and characters—have been uncommon, and still are, although their numbers have grown somewhat over the past 15 years. As reported by the University of Wisconsin's Cooperative Children's Book Center, which compiles publishing industry statistics, of 3,400 children's books received by the center in 2016, 93 had African/African American authors and 286 featured African/African American characters. "[W]hat the low numbers for multicultural literature mean," the Center observed, "is that publishing for children and teens has a long way to go before reflecting the rich diversity of perspectives and experiences within and across race and culture."

Social media platforms such as Facebook and Instagram have provided *Brown Boy* a powerful channel for both promotion and buyer feedback; just days after its release, the book was already receiving acclaim. "People are sharing it in different spaces—to their home-school page, to their mommy support groups—and that's where it's getting some momentum," Arthur said. "I've gotten hundreds of 'Likes' so I know it's been seen. People would post, 'Oh, I'm ordering it now,' and then a day or so later some of them post a photo of their child holding the book, or a video of them reading the book to their child. Someone posted a picture of their children who were inspired to color pictures of what they want to be when they grow up."

On the homefront, the book has had the intended effect on Arthur's sons. "In the book, it says 'I can be a scientist who studies bumblebees.' So now my four-year-old, he's telling me, 'I'm gonna be a bee hunter,'" Arthur said. "I said, 'Oh, you want to be a scientist who studies bumblebees?' and he said yeah. And he says, 'I'm gonna go play scientist in the back yard.' And I absolutely love that; *yes*—go play scientist."

Her 7-year-old also got into the authorship act. "He got the stapler and the paper and he drew the pictures, illustrated the cover," Arthur said. "That was another thing—I wanted to set the bar high, I want to lead by example; you can be an author, you can be whatever. You just have to work at it." The topic is Star Wars. "The funny thing is, I'm not sure he's ever seen the movie; *I* haven't."

Arthur had already written a book for him, called *Benjamin the Brave*, about the boy's anxiety over an upcoming visit to the dentist and how he learns to cope with it through the discovery of deep breathing. This title may also someday be available through Amazon; it would feature images by the Ukraine-based artist who illustrated *Brown Boy*.

While *Brown Boy* is not currently at libraries, this could change. "I've been reaching out to libraries and bookstores; I'd love to go in and do a story time," Arthur said. "It would get to more kids."

At bottom, the book is meant to be a source of encouragement for every child. "It's just a small contribution of positivity and love for folks who need it—we *all* need it," Arthur said. "In the last couple of pages it says, 'I can be a role model for brown boys like me'—and there are various shades of brown boys, various ethnicities. If we get scientific, we're *all* brown—we're just various shades of it."

Except possibly from his animal companions in the imaginary world Milne created, the real Christopher Robin didn't get much love or positivity. But through books like *Brown Boy*, perhaps the young Matthews of today, and the world they'll soon inherit, will fare better.

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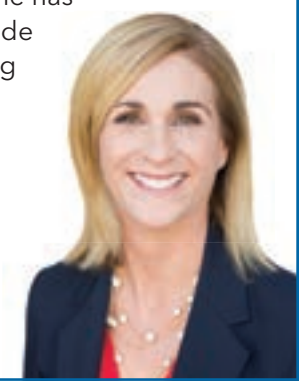
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Garden Party Coffee & Tea announces grand opening in South Hills Shopping Center

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

South Land Park residents Tony and Elizabeth Moseby announced the grand opening of the long-awaited Garden Party Coffee & Tea shop to be held on Saturday, Dec. 2. As this article went to press, a soft opening was in the works for Thursday, Nov. 16.

With 13 different teas ranging from Earl Grey to Dragonwell, as well as healthful herbs and powders and coffee from the shores of Kaui and Seattle, Garden Party Coffee & Tea will also offer items for everyday, "uncomplicated folk", like Elizabeth Moseby herself. All coffees are from fair trade and organic sources whether Honduras, South America, the African Continent, or American territories. Efforts to bring locally roasted coffee have also been made.

The store will welcome folks to gather, stay and unwind. The store will also offer a space for children to shop. Local artists and musicians will be welcome to share their gifts as desired and needed. The store may offer formal tea Sunday events, where grandmas and moms, little girls and little boys, too, depending on the environment, can dress up and enjoy delicate snacks and cups of tea.

After initial plans fell through for opening up a coffee shop in the South Hills Shopping Center last year, Elizabeth explained the concept of a store seemed more appropriate for potential customers. "I searched and inquired but couldn't find a site that was already set up for being a food service business that would serve the South Land Park community the way people described what they wanted to me," she said. Meanwhile, she still felt compelled to find a way for people to have access to quality teas and coffees. Identifying with the theme of the Ricky Nelson song "Garden Party", Elizabeth decided to keep the name of the shop despite changing the concept of the business from a cafe to a store. "It is so appropriate. I just really identify with the Ricky Nelson song and how a person can change and be true to herself," she said.

Perhaps that theme resonates further into the story of Elizabeth's journey to open up the coffee and tea shop. After 22 years in the teaching field, the now retired Pony Express third grade GATE teacher said her own health was declining and she wasn't there enough for her students. Taking an early retirement was a hard decision, she says. "But, it was the right one to pass the torch on to younger and stronger teachers." And all along, in fact ever since she was a child herself, tea drinking held a special place in her life that continued through



out her life. "My older brother introduced me to English breakfast teas when I was a child. He showed me the difference between drinking a tea with lemon and tea with cream. Jasmine tea is still my favorite daytime tea and chamomile is my favorite evening blend. But for summer iced teas, I love a good spice tea," she said.

An ancient and time-honored practice, Elizabeth said over the years she has met many people who are so passionate about this subject and she just loves listening to their stories. Paraphrasing Jewish scribe Ben Sira, she said, "Herbs for health are a blessing from the Lord … a piece of wood can sweeten water. Drinking tea is ancient and time-honored practice. This store fills a basic human need that people share."

Garden Party Coffee & Tea will be located 5972 South Land Park Drive. It's the corner store closest to the street to the east of the post office.

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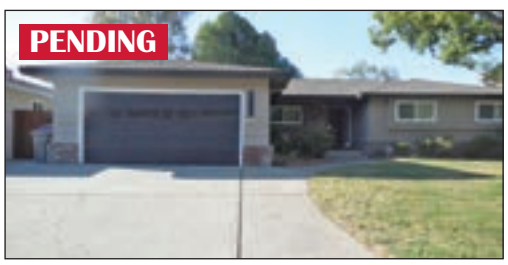
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Sacramento artist installed "Wingding", the Crocker's newest art spot for kids

It's not every day that a major museum invites young visitors to touch and shape its art installations, much less climb on them, but that's exactly what the Crocker Art Museum offers with its newest Art Spot, Wingding. Created by Sacramento artist Sonja White, Wingding beckons children and their caregivers to step inside a giant, wooden, geometric landscape that encourages learning about the basic elements of art through play.

Funded in part by the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and First 5 Sacramento, the Crocker's Art Spots program features immersive installations designed for children age 5 and under and their caregivers. Each Art Spot is created by a different artist or team who has spent up to a year participating in the Crocker's ongoing early childhood program. During that year, the artists and teams have worked collaboratively with Museum staff, early childhood advisors, and with each other to gain a thorough understanding of children's developmental needs as they design and create their installations. A parent and teacher as well as an artist, Sonja White is known for her work with Sacramento Philharmonic and Opera's See the Music, Hear the Art children's program as well as her series of symmetrical sculptures called Resonant Round. As she conceptualized Wingding for the Crocker, White took inspiration from nature and geometry as she created an installation that fills the Crocker's light-filled Weborg gallery.

Wingding, which debuts at the Crocker on November 19, is comprised of sculptures made of hundreds of wooden shapes ranging from one to eight feet across. Children can build, stack, and spin the shapes to create their own 3-D patterns on the walls. When viewed from eye level, the art can be appreciated from one perspective. But White has taken the experience into another dimension, placing mirrors on the ceiling of the Crocker's Weborg gallery, to reveal the new form created overhead. As the children and caregivers design their own patterns and interact with each other, they naturally engage in what White describes as the highest form of creating.

"Children have many different types of learning styles where some are true creators, some are builders, and some are kinetic learners who need to move through something to understand it," says White. "While Wingding is designed to appeal to individual types of learners, it also brings them together as they communicate using the universal language of geometry. I hope children will feel as though they have climbed right into the lap of a sculpture and know that it is made for them."

A rich aesthetic experience, Wingding also creates opportunities for parents and caregivers to connect in new and meaningful ways with their youngsters as they ask them questions, share, and wonder together. Like the Crocker's other Art Spots, there are even elements for babies to enjoy.

"Art museums are for everyone, and works of art like Wingding really help make this point," says Crocker Art Museum Director of Education Stacey Shelnut-Hendrick. "This installation is engaging on so many levels and each visitor, child or adult, will see it differently because each person brings a different experience to it. That's what's wonderful about art!"


Sonja White prepares a section of Wingding in her Sacramento art studio

Having opened Nov. 19, the Wingding exhibit will be up through March 4, 2018. (Another Crocker Art Spot, Tot Land, features the giant sculpture Dreamboat and is currently open and ongoing.)

More information about exhibits and programs at crockerart.org or (916) 808-7000. The Museum is open to the public Tuesday – Sunday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Thursdays, 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. The Museum is closed Mondays, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Day. Every third Sunday of the month is "Pay What You Wish Sunday" sponsored by Western Health Advantage.

Source: Crockerart.org

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Extravagant 'Party for Change' held at Sacramento Executive for St. John's shelter

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com



Photo by Stephen Crowley

Flying through a large hangar at the Sacramento Executive Jet Center, three aerialists thrilled a large audience as about 20 dancers in a sort of "flash-mobesque" fashion entertained at ground level, immersing the crowd from all angles. With excitement in the air and on the floor, guests who were dressed to the nines gathered for the entertainment, surely, but were united in effort to raise money for Saint John's Program for Real Change.

The event, the annual "Party for Change", which this year was held on Nov. 4, raised $460,000 for the program that has changed the lives of more than 30,000 women and children since 1985.

"We are delighted to bring our modern storytelling to the tragic cycle of poverty and homelessness in Sacramento county," said Jacob Gutiérrez-Montoya, the founding artistic director at the Sacramento Contemporary Dance Theatre, whose company's dancers donated their time in service to the women and children at Saint John's. "Through dance, we create a common experience of empowerment, renewal and achievement. We hope to leave everyone feeling the abundance of hope in this one-of-a-kind event, bringing generosity and gratitude together."

Captivating the audience at the onset of the evenings' entertainment, the dancers exited the floor at the end of the first number, leaving the aerialists hanging.

A suspenseful opening for the emcees of the event KVIE's Rob Stewart, host of "Rob on the Road," and KCRA's Kellie DeMarco, that performance was built to entertain and excite the crowd that soon after were in the midst of a live auction with auctioneer David Sobon. Going a mile a minute, raising $10,000 here and there, all of a sudden the mood changed again as the dancers zoned the audience back into the moment. Dressed in all white for the finale, which featured the Mumford and Sons' song "There Will Be Time", the dancers sent an emotional message to the St. John's women, Gutiérrez-Montoya said. "That your life didn't stop here. It's not just starting in a different way... you've made it through and there's time for you to keep living and find the next chapter." Suffice to say, that performance left people in tears.

Founder and director of Rebel Aerial Kat Boston said when SCDT reached out to provide aerial entertainment for the Party of Change it was easy to see why they were so enthusiastic about donating their time. "The program addresses the homelessness in Sacramento in a way that not many others do. I was proud to choreograph a synchronized aerial performance in collaboration with SCDT's opening number to set the tone for a one of a kind event" – one that the "likes of which Sacramento has not seen before," she said. "It is always thrilling to be suspended over your audience. Performing as an aerialist gives you a unique perspective on the flow of a party."

More than just a shelter, Saint John's 12-18 month program combines temporary housing with education, job training with a 96 percent job placement rate, and counseling to permanently escape the cycle of poverty and abuse, moving families experiencing homelessness from dependence to independence, according to a press release. On Oct. 20, Saint John's announced the grand opening of their new facility accommodating an additional 90 homeless women and children daily, 450 annually. However, as of that time, the Saint John's daily waitlist has continued to grow—up from 250 to 430 in the previous three months.

This year's event also featured cuisine by Chef Santana Diaz who has inspired so many, including the women and children in the St. John's program, desserts from Pastry Chef Rod Cuadra, and food and service from Plates Café and Catering team who executed such a wonderful meal for over 600 people. Plates is an employment training program in which women are trained in 17 different restaurant stations and women from the program helped prepare and serve dinner at Party for Change as part of their employment training.

Additionally, this year's event featured music by Las Vegas DJ E-Noc, and an art show featuring creations by Maren Conrad.

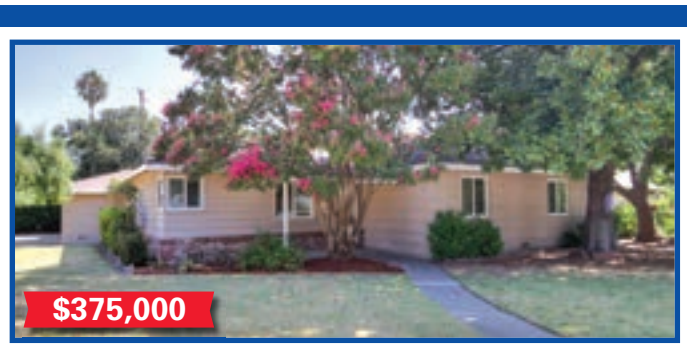
Artist performances include SCDT Dancers Lauren Howell, Laila Wahee, Cameron Lucas Eggers, Samual Fulk, Camryn Young, Kathryn Arellanes, Maggie Maue, Natalie Brumfield, Jordyn Santa-Catalina, Israel Foss, Camille Johnson, Meagan Patterson, Ashton Titus, Baylee Ferrerra, Allie Roe, Grace Taylor, Hannah Bielcik, Brenna Mulligan, Alexis Robards, Leah Feldman, Angela Palumbo, Aleena Palumbo and Madison Hitchcock; Vocalist- Ryan Allan; Rebel Aerial's Monica Padilla, Gabrielle Attisani, and Kat Boston-Lazano; San Francisco's #1 Favorite Magician- Ryan Kane.

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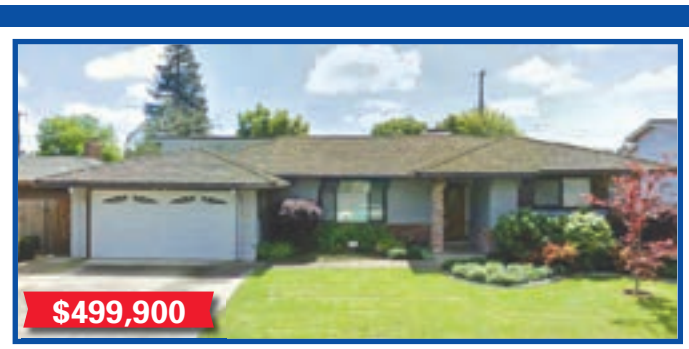
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Words matter: 'grief' applies to the life altering events of the fire storms in Santa Rosa. It also applies to 'feeling blue' and the anxieties of the coming holidays. Regarding this feeling and others, call G. Epstein, M.D. 916 454-3668 at Mercy Plaza, Ste 270, 3939 J Street. Appointments Wednesday afternoon.



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COUNSELING SERVICE

Words Matter. I'm amazed Dr. Boucher didn't shoot Senator Paul. Holidays are anxious times, before you lose it, lash out without thinking, talk to me. I'll listen. G Epstein, MD 916-454-3668

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RESERVE YOUR SPACE IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

Klassy Talkers Toastmasters club to hold community potlucks

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Local real estate agent Michael Nerby came to a point in his life where he wanted to learn and grow on a professional and personal level. With a desire to improve his public speaking and gain confidence around others, Nerby joined the Land Park-based Toastmasters club, the Klassy Talkers, which meets Monday evenings from 7-8:30 p.m. at the Eskaton Monroe Lodge. "Toastmasters has delivered on each of those and more. I've made new friends, stretched myself not only with speaking but also in leadership positions," he said. "Toastmasters has had a monumental change in my life."


Klassy Talker Michael Nerby

Whether you need to give a marriage toast or are required to present in front of your peers at work, Toastmasters, Nerby says, "is a great group of friends that are encouraging, give great feedback and provide a structured place to have fun working on a skill that most people are terrified of."

Upcoming on Mondays, Dec. 4 and Feb. 12, 2018, special holiday-themed potlucks will be incorporated into the club meetings, in much of an open-house style. That's not to say members of the community are not welcome to other meetings. In fact, everyone is welcome to each of the meetings; it's just that the Christmas and Valentine's events promise to include fun agendas and of course great food. Additionally, Nerby says people will "get an opportunity to meet our members and leadership team, and they will even have the chance to speak should they want to."

People do not need to bring anything to these potlucks/open house events. If you do not want to speak you absolutely do not have to, Nerby says. The club has had a few members who have joined who haven't had any roles on the agenda for weeks so they could get comfortable and move at their own pace. "However, should you want to speak there will definitely be opportunity for impromptu speaking in a part of the meeting called 'table topics.' This is where you are given a topic and have 10-15 seconds to think about what you want to say before giving a 1-3 minute speech. This is a great way to work out the speaking skill and get comfortable talking in front of others. We're easygoing people and will support all walks of life in our club."

A diverse bunch, Nerby says Klassy Talkers club members hail from "different ethnicities, backgrounds, and professions. It truly is a great club because of that. You should hear the speeches we have in the club. We learn something new and exciting each week from the speeches members give. People overall are welcoming, friendly, supportive and here to become better."

Looking to grow the 20-member club, Nerby says it's $65 to join, and $65 each month after. Additionally, prospective club members need to expect to spend one to two hours writing and practicing your speeches each week to prepare for the Monday meetings. "The more practice you give a speech the more comfortable you'll be giving it," he says. "We have several members who have been in the club for five-plus years and have many members who are very well-decorated with accomplishments from Toastmasters. So if you're looking for a well-run club, the talent to improve, and safe fun environment to do so, Klassy Talkers is for you."

If you go:

What: December holiday potluck Klassy Talkers Toastmasters open house
When: Monday, Dec. 4 from 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Where: Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento.
More information: Visit klassytalkers.toastmastersclubs.org or email Mike Nerby at mikenerby@gmail.com or by phone at 847-5409.

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What's happening, Land Park?

FRIDAY, NOV. 24

FREE ADMISSION DAY & CANNED FOOD DRIVE AT FAIRYTALE TOWN: Fairytale Town offers FREE admission to visitors who bring in a canned good to donate the day after Thanksgiving from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. All goods collected will be donated to the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, Spirit of Giving Holiday Drive. Enjoy free play inside of Fairytale Town, plus free arts and crafts activities. Puppet Art Theater Company will also be on hand to present a puppet show! Watch a holiday version of Jack and the Beanstalk at 12:30, 1:30 and 2:30 PM in the Children's Theater. Puppet show tickets are $1 for members and $2 for nonmembers. Tickets are available 15 minutes prior to each show time at the Children's Theater doors or at the box office. Not sure what food items to bring for donation on the day after Thanksgiving? The following items are on the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services wish list: Canned fruits, vegetables and beans; Canned meat, tuna and chicken; soup; peanut butter. Please note: Fairytale Town is open weather permitting. If skies are gray, please call us at (916) 808-7462 or check our website to confirm our hours for the day. Adults must be accompanied by children and children must be accompanied by adults in order to gain admittance to the park. 3901 Land Park Drive.

SATURDAY, DEC. 2

FIFTH ANNUAL DANDELION ARTS & CRAFTS SHOW: The Sacramento Senator Lions Club presents this free admission and free parking event at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. All sales profits go to support various community projects. Visit sacramentosenatorlions.org to see how the Sacramento Senator Lions Club serves the community. For event information, email senatorlionsevents@gmail.com

FAITH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHRISTMAS BOUTIQUE: This is an "all hand-made" craft event from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.. All vendor fees are donated to the nonprofit organization, "One Child, One Hen" which provides chickens and an egg laying business source of food and income for families in Kenya.

MONDAY, DEC. 4

TOASTMASTERS HOLIDAY POTLUCK: Brush up on your public speaking skills and bring a dish to share. Prepare a speech to deliver in a safe environment. Free event, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Blvd. For more information, contact mikenerby@gmail.com or call Mike at 847-5409. klassytalkers.toastmastersclubs.org

TUESDAY, DEC. 5

VICTIMS RIGHTS AND SERVICES: Did you know that victims of crime have rights in the California Constitution? Join the Victims of Crime Resource Center to learn about these rights and how to enforce them. Attendees will also get information about the host of free services available to victims of crime in California. Free of charge and pre-registration required. Class will be held Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 11 a.m. to noon at ACC Senior Services, 7334 Park City Drive. For more information, call (916)393-9026 ext 330, www.accsv.orgs.

THURSDAY, DEC. 7

THE UPSIDE OF DOWNSIZING: Anyone who has downsized to a smaller living space will tell you "It is Work!" Choosing what to keep and what to leave behind is only part of the equation in this transition. Whether 36 or 86 years old, there are things to do to make the transition easier. Join me and my special guest who will share a personal look into the Upside of Downsizing. Pre-payment of $3 and pre-registration required. $5 drop-in at the door. Class will be held Thursday, Dec. 7 from 11 a.m. to noon at ACC Senior Services, 7334 Park City Drive. For more information, call (916)393-9026 ext 330, www.accsv.orgs.

SATURDAY, DEC. 9

TEENAGE WASTELAND AT FLUID ESPRESSO BAR: Come to Barrio on December 9th for "Teenage Wasteland"! Arrive 6-9 p.m. for local teen art, entertainment, food, and beverages!

THURSDAY, DEC. 12

IDENTITY THEFT: December is National Identity Theft Prevention and Awareness month. Identity theft, a serious crime that can harm your finances, credit history and reputation, takes time to resolve. Join us for a free workshop to learn how to protect your personal information and avoid being a victim of crime. You will learn how to identify ID theft and take timely action to clear up the problems and minimize the damage. Free of charge and pre-registration required. Class will be held Tuesday, Dec. 12, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. at ACC Senior Services, 7334 Park City Drive. For more information, call (916)393-9026 ext 330, www.accsv.orgs.

MONDAY, FEB. 12

TOASTMASTERS VALENTINE'S DAY POTLUCK: Brush up on your public speaking skills and bring a dish to share. Prepare a speech to deliver in a safe environment. Free event, 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Blvd. For more information, contact mikenerby@gmail.com or call Mike at 847-5409. klassytalkers.toastmastersclubs.org.

ONGOING

AESOP'S FUN FABLES PERFORMANCE AT SCC: Written & Directed by Doug Lawson City Theatre presents Aesop's Fun Fables at noon on Saturdays and Sundays till Dec. 3 at the Sacramento City College Performing Arts Center, Little Theatre (PAC 106). General admission is $5 all performances (children two years and under are free). Opening Day Special: $2.50 (children two years and under are free).

ROBIN HOOD IN THE FOREST OF FROGWARTS: A BRITISH PANTO: City Theatre presents Christine Nicholson's Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts, as directed by Luther Hanson. Show dates are through Dec. 10. Showtimes are 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays; 2 p.m. on Sundays and 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 25 and Saturday, Dec. 9. All performances will be held inside the main auditorium inside the Performing Arts Center at Sacramento City College. Ticket prices are $18 general admission, $15 seniors/SARTA/ADA/Mil, $10 students, and children over 6.

LADIES GOLF CLUB IN LAND PARK: Did you know there is a women's golf club that regularly plays at William Land Park? Women can discover the joys of golf, build new social relationships and get fit the fun way by joining the William Land Women's Golf Club. This 9-hole group meets Thursday mornings. It's open to women of all ages and golf abilities. Questions.... or want more information....please call 916-422-0831 or email gretjen@comcast.net

BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY VIDEO GAMES AND VIDEO GAME SYSTEMS DRIVE: The Belle Cooledge Library is looking for video games and working game systems for our afterschool teen space program for next year. If you have any video games or working game systems that you would like to donate please bring them to the Belle Cooledge Library and we will provide a tax receipt. What is Teen Space? Join other area teens in our community room for our afterschool Teen Space! Hang out, geek out and mess around with friends and snacks! Seriously, what could be better? Teen Space occurs weekdays from 3 - 5 PM (except Thursdays 1:30 - 5 p.m.), is free, and open to teens between the ages of 12 - 18. (During the school year) All Library programs are free and open to the public a library card is not required! Belle Cooledge Library is located at 5600 South Land Park Dive. Library hours are Tuesdays noon to 8 p.m.; Wednesdays and Thursdays 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.; Fridays 1 to 6 p.m. and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

JANE AUSTEN READING GROUP AT ELLA K. MCCLATCHY LIBRARY: This monthly group reads the works of Jane Austen and meets the third Saturday of each month in the Ella K. McClatchy library from 3:30 p.m. to 5 p.m. All Austen fans are welcome. 2112 22nd St.

LAND PARK VOLUNTEER CORPS WORK DAYS: Help the corps with various work projects in William Land Park after a very wet winter.. First Saturdays of the month from 9 a.m. to noon. Meet at the Base Camp located in the picnic grounds directly behind Fairytale Town.

See What's Happening, page 19

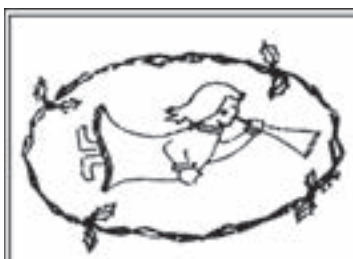
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What's Happening:

Continued from page 18

FAMILY FRIDAYS AT BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY: Spend some family time together this summer at the library with Family Fridays! Each Friday, in the Community Room there will be board games, cards, Wii gaming, arts and crafts, toddler toys, and a reading nook! This is a Summer Reading Challenge: Read by Design event each Friday from 3 to 5 p.m., 5600 South Land Park Drive.

ROTARY CLUB OF SOUTH SACRAMENTO: The friendliest club in Sacramento, the Rotary Club of South Sacramento meets every Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m. at the Casa Garden, 2760 Sutterville Road.

SAC TRANSIT RIDERS UNION WEEKLY MEETING: Interested in democratizing transit and putting the "public" back into "public transit"? Sac TRU's weekly meetings, held every Saturday from 1-3 p.m. addresses these issues. Organize Sacramento, 1714 Broadway, Sacramento, CA 95818

POP-UP BOOK SALE AT BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY: Every first Tuesday of the month from 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., the book sale features books for all ages. Support your local library and pick up some great reads! All proceeds from the sale benefit library programs. The Friends Bookstore will be open regular hours. The sale is held at the entrance to the library. 5600 South Land Park Drive

SUNDAY BREAKFAST BUFFET AT THE ELKS LODGE, NO. 6: From 8:30 to 11 a.m., enjoy eggs, omelets, corn beef hash, bacon or sausage. 6446 Riverside Blvd.

BABY STORYTIME AT BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY –Nursery rhymes, fingerplays, simple stories, and songs designed to encourage a range of early literacy skills. For children up to about 18 months old. Each child must be accompanied by a participating adult. Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m. at Belle Cooledge Library, 5600 South Land Park Drive.

TODDLER STORYTIME BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY– Toddlers ages one to three and their caregivers will enjoy fun songs, stories, and fingerplays. After the storytime, there will be a stay and play group. Thursdays at 9:30 a.m. at Belle Cooledge Library, 5600 South Land Park Drive, Sacramento.

PRESCHOOL STORYTIME AT BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY – Preschoolers ages three and older and their caregivers are invited for fun songs, stories, fingerplays and a play activity. Thursdays at 11 a.m. at Belle Cooledge Library, 5600 South Land Park Drive, Sacramento.

BELLE COOLEDGE LIBRARY PRESENTS SING ALONG WITH MISTER COOPER – Join neighborhood favorite Mister Cooper for 30 minutes of music time and freeze dancing for families. Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. at Belle Cooledge Library, 5600 South Land Park Drive.

FAMILY STORYTIME AT ELLA K. MCCLATCHY LIBRARY – Every Tuesday at 10 a.m. for books, songs, stories and fun. Miss Lindsey and her guitar always make this storytime a fun event. Everyone is welcome to stay for our STEAM stay and play activity of the day. Recommended for ages 0-5. Every Tuesday from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. at Ella K. McClatchy Library, 2112 22nd St., Sacramento.

SOROPTIMIST INTERNATIONAL OF SACRAMENTO SOUTH MEETING: The club welcomes women and girls to the club's lunch meetings on the second and fourth Tuesday of the month from 12:15 to 1:30 p.m. at the Aviators Restaurant, at Executive Airport, 6151 Freeport Blvd.

WEDNESDAY COFFEE AND CONVERSATION GATHERING: Every Wednesday morning from 7 to 10 am., join neighbors at Cafe Latte, 7600 Greenhaven Drive, for conversation and fun. Find the group back near the piano.

Robin Hood:

Continued from page 2

THE BRITISH PANTO TRADITION

Traditionally performed at Christmas for family audiences, British Pantomime (Panto) is now a popular form of theatre, incorporating song, dance, buffoonery, slapstick, in-jokes, audience participation, and mild innuendo. There are a number of traditional story lines, and also a fairly well-defined set of performance conventions. Following an evolution from minor acts between opera in Restoration England, in 1723 a pantomime entitled Harlequin Doctor Faustus became what is often considered the first English pantomime. Panto story lines and scripts typically make no reference to Christmas, and are almost always based on traditional children's stories, where plot lines are adapted for comic or satirical effect. The prince or leading male role is traditionally played by a young woman – the "principal boy" part – and the older woman or "pantomime dame" by a man in drag. The humor is aimed at both adult and child audiences, with innuendos for the adults that won't be picked up by the children, and some humor for the children that just might go over the adults' heads too. Audience participation with the children occurs throughout the show, as they are encouraged to "boo" the villain and "cheer" the hero.

THE PRODUCTION

Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts is being directed by Luther Hanson. The production will feature Vernon Lewis (Dame Ingrid), Matt Malone (Serious Bark), Allison Murphy (Robin Hood), Mia Matista (Sherry Hotter), Kailey Diggs (Hermaraminione) and Anthony Arellano (Merlinohornian). The production team will include Josh Anderson (stage manager), Lori Ann Delappe-Grondin (lighting design), Daniel Paulson (music director), Nicole Sivell (costume design), and Shawn Weinsheink (scenic design).

IF YOU GO:

What: City Theatre presents: Robin Hood in the Forest of Frogwarts: A British Panto
Playwright: Christine Nicholson
Director: Luther Hanson
Where: Performing Arts Center/Auditorium, Sacramento City College, 3835 Freeport Blvd.
When: Now through Dec. 10 with regular performance times as follows: Fridays and Saturdays at 7:30 p.m., Sundays at 2 p.m. Aditional performances will be held Saturdays, Nov. 25 and Dec. 9 at 2 p.m.

TICKET PURCHASES AND PRICES:

Online: citytheatre.net; Box Office: An hour before curtain
General: $18
Seniors, SARTA members, Veteran/Military and Persons with Disabilities: $15
Students with IDs and children over six years old: $10

WHO:

Playwright: Christine Nicholson
Director: Luther Hanson
Musical Director: Daniel Paulson
Costume Design: Nicole Sivell
Scenic Design: Shawn Weinsheink
Lighting Design: Lori Ann Delappe-Grondin
Stage Manager: Josh Anderson
Cast: Anthony Arellano, Alejandro Barrera, Kailey Diggs, Felise Esposito, Olivia Kinslow, May Lee, Vernon Lewis, Matt Malone, Mia Matista, Monica May, August Monce, Allison Murphy, Said Noori, Connor Oshiro, Katie Peters, Jon Ruiz, Arslan Saiid, Tim Sapunor, Caitlyn Shannon, Jessica Smooth, Kristopher Thao, David Valdez, Michel Wendling, and Johnna Wood





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