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Land Park News

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Casa Garden announced Feb. 1 permanent closure

see page 4

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Remembering Jan Matisco: 1932-2020

Matisco spent nearly 36 years as Kennedy High's registrar

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

The Pocket-Greenhaven community recently lost one of its most cherished residents: Former John F. Kennedy High School registrar Jan Matisco.

Jan, who was a longtime Pocket resident, died at the age of 88 on Dec. 20, 2020.

A significant part of the fabric of the Kennedy High family of students, alumni and staff, Jan spent more than three decades working at this Pocket area high school.

After a decade of employment at John Bidwell Elementary School, Jan was hired to work at Kennedy High in July 1973.

For Jan, she approached her work at Kennedy High as much more than a job.

She gained many friends through her outgoing personality and caring demeanor, which endeared her to students, staff members and others.

Jan's connection to students on and off campus, as well as those who graduated from the school, became something of legend.

When it came to caring for Kennedy High students, both past and present, Jan brought them much joy with her bright smile, gracious attitude and acts of kindness.

Two months prior to Jan's June 30, 2009 retirement from Kennedy High, then-Kennedy High student Kelsie Muramoto told the Pocket News that she was amazed by the kindness of Jan, who was known to tutor students after school with her husband, Joe, and make lunches for students in need.

"My aunt and uncle went to Kennedy and (Jan) sends birthday cards to them every year and they're in their 40s," she said.

As a respected tutor and one who had a general caring approach with Kennedy High students, Jan was endearingly referred to as "grandma" by many of the school's students, Jan told the Pocket News in May 2009. "They call me 'grandma' here (at Kennedy High) and I have a great relationship with the students," she said. "I help the kids out however I can and I don't believe in shaking hands. I give everyone hugs."

Jan mentioned to the Pocket News, in 2009, that although she only had one child – her son Richard Hunt – she actually had many "adopted" children through her work at Kennedy High.

"I actually have many children," she said. "Richard said that if all my 'adopted kids' come home at the same time, I won't have enough room for them."

Shortly before Jan's retirement, Kennedy High Office Technician Silvia Lewis described Jan's dedication to her work. "She is so careful and responsible with her work and even sacrifices her time to come to work on holidays and weekends," said Lewis, who worked in the administration office with Jan. Although Jan's job requirements were only associated with her work as the school's registrar, her dedication to students extended to the school's athletic teams.

Rose Koloamatangi, who was a member of the Kennedy junior varsity girls' basketball team in 2009, also related her appreciation for Jan's support of her team at that time. "She sells tickets at the door and she made and gave cookies to us (at a game), so we would have a good game," she told the Pocket News in 2009. "She's one of the nicest people I've met here so far (at Kennedy High)."

Another former Kennedy basketball player, Leslie Leong, also commented to the Pocket News about Jan in 2009, saying, "She's really bubbly and always saying 'hi' to us and she always brings us surprises." During his senior year in 2009, former boys' varsity basketball team member C.J. Brown referred to Jan as someone who was "just always very friendly with everybody." During her 2009 interview with the Pocket News, Jan praised her parents and teachers, who taught her strong work ethic and respect for others.

"I grew up and worked on my father's farm in Weeping Water, Nebraska (35 miles east of Lin-

see Jan page 3

Here's to a Prosperous New Year!



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Jan:

continued from page 2

coln, Nebraska) and I learned responsibility real quickly," she said. "My parents were very proud about my accomplishments in high school and felt that it was the result of their teachings and the excellent instruction that I received from my teachers." In recognition of Jan and Joe's dedication to Kennedy High, former staff and alumni created the Jan and Joe Matisco Student Athlete Scholarship. On an annual basis, the award is presented to a Kennedy senior who "exhibits dedication to their academics and athletics."

A current candidate for this award must have at least a 3.0 GPA, be a student athlete and be enrolled in college for the fall of 2021. The deadline for this year's candidate applications is April 16.

Joe died at the age of 85 on Aug. 24, 2017, marking the end of his 49 years of marriage to Jan.

In January 2018, Sen. Richard Pan, D-Sacramento, celebrated Joe's life through his Unsung Hero award.

An excerpt from the write-up for Joe's award reads: "(During their many years of dedication to Kennedy High), Jan and Joe worked at the high school, they touched the lives of many students at Kennedy."

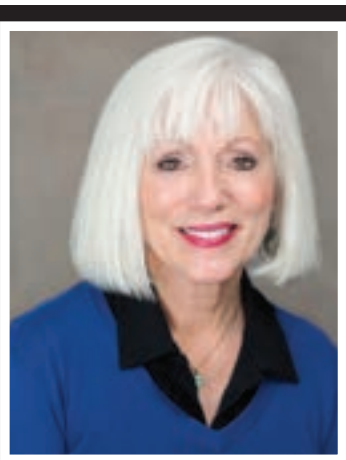


Photo by Lance Armstrong

Kennedy High School registrar Jan Matisco is pictured on the school's campus on May 19, 2009. She officially retired during the following month, after nearly 36 years of service as the school's registrar.

In looking back on her storied career at Kennedy High in 2009, Jan Matisco said that she will always cherish her many fond memories and friendships that she established at this Pocket-Greenhaven area high school. "My memories and friendships associated with families and staff at Kennedy High School are priceless treasures that I will hold onto forever," she said. "I will always be a [Kennedy High] Cougar, because I have green and gold in my veins."

As of press time, Jan's celebration of life had not yet been scheduled. However, her family is hoping to hold a memorial service this spring.



Sue Olson
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LAND PARK

This Land Park cottage has been owned by the original family since 1945. There is a large entry, spacious breakfast room with a charming fireplace and a copper hood, beamed ceiling and stained-glass windows. Original cabinets in kitchen, tiled counters and newer white appliances including a dishwasher, cooktop and built-in oven. The water heater and HVAC were recently replaced. There are new engineered wood floors throughout. The formal living and dining rooms have shutters on windows. Living room has additional fireplace with built-in sconce lighting, plus a single French door to patio and backyard. There are two bedrooms (one larger) with two closets and a large bathroom between these rooms. Large yard with beautiful mature dogwood trees, a two-car garage with a built-in closet. Additional storage building behind garage. **1615 8th Avenue • $605,000**



LAND PARK

Old World Charm is showcased throughout this beautiful Land Park Tudor. Vintage fixtures and hardware, Portuguese tiles, beamed ceilings and random plank floors have been treasured and preserved by the homeowners. Amenities include 3 bedrooms, 3 full bathrooms, 3 fireplaces and a 3-car garage. Both the formal living and dining rooms have beautiful original built-in cabinetry. Spacious kitchen has wood cabinets, tiled counters and built-in appliances. The upstairs study has built-in office cabinetry and a French balcony with a copper awning. The upstairs master bedroom has a spacious walk-in closet with separate water closet and master bath. French doors open up to a large brick patio for outdoor dining with friends. The private yard has a lemon, orange and camellia trees, a fountain, all accented by a vintage city street lamp. Lots of storage in home and garage. A Real Gem! **2761 13th Street**



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Photos courtesy of Casa Garden Restaurant.

Casa Garden announced Feb. 1 permanent closure

By Monica Stark

Tucked back from the hustle and bustle of traffic on Sutterville Road rests a hidden landmark that announced its closure on Feb. 1 – the almost entirely volunteer-run Casa Garden Restaurant.

Picture the scene, on a pre-pandemic Friday morning just a few years ago.

A few working in the garden, watering the beautiful trees and tending to the flowers and fauna as one of the regular, longtime volunteers took a look around inside to see if the dining room was set up for the day before supervising the wait "staff" and telling them what to do. Casa Garden Restaurant has had 250 volunteers, including 60 active ones who have provided a range of tasks, including: gardening, serving, bartending, organizing the pantry, preparing food, and ringing up receipts. All of that is done not just for the weekday lunches, but for special events, like anniversaries, retirement parties, weddings, and memorials.

Forty-six years ago, the Casa Garden was just a fundraising idea from two Sacramento Children's Home board members, yet, with a rubber stamp of approval from the others on the board, the restaurant was designed so that if it failed it could become one of the cottages for the Children's Home.

Far from ever becoming a cottage, the restaurant has raised more than $3 million for the next-door Sacramento Children's Home. Or as one volunteer put it, "That's a lot of lunches."

According to the Casa Garden website, the Los Niños Service League has operated Casa Garden to provide ongoing financial and moral support to the children

see Casa page 5

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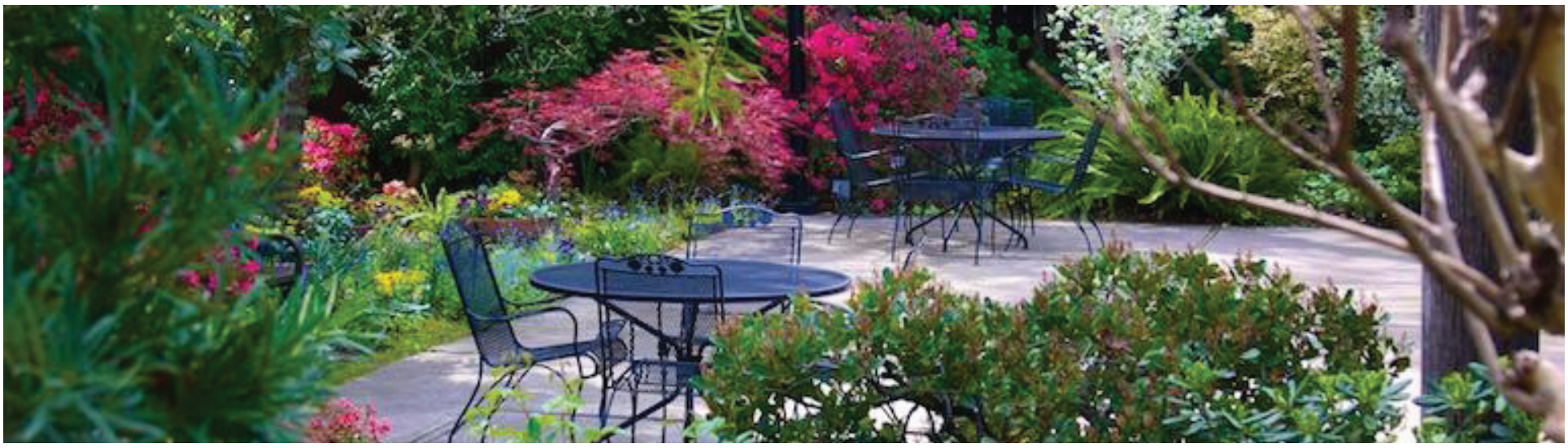
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Casa:

continued from page 4

and families served by the Sacramento Children's Home.

For long-time volunteer Marlene Oehler, Casa became her "home away from home" after retiring in 1994 from the California Department of Fish & Game and then Jones & Stokes Associates, an environmental firm. Whenever there was the occasion to recognize a staff member, she always made a reservation at the Casa. "It was my go-to place."

In the early days, organizing meetings took place inside volunteers' homes.

Over the years, the menu has become more sophisticated and updated, though Casa has been limited in what they can accomplish because they're all volunteers.

One of the big changes since it opened was a weekly menu that started changing every week to give people more of a choice.

A year or two after Casa was opened, the board was approached by a woman who sat on the Children's Home board who asked if she could have her granddaughter's wedding reception at the restaurant, which launched them into doing wedding receptions.

The Children's Home has been at its location since 1905 when all around the premises was beautiful country where the children got to grow their own food and where staff lived. Fast forward, the Children's Home is still fortunate to have this huge piece of acreage in the middle of the city.

Many of the long-time volunteers have been pretty lucky in life and nothing feels better than giving back to children who haven't had a good start. Also, friendships among each other have been lifelong.

"With a membership exceeding 300 within the Los Ninos Service League, I would be remiss not mentioning the greatest friendships developed with more than a handful – friendships that today are still in place. As volunteers, we were a team and when I chaired a wedding, retirement, or other special events, I surrounded myself with volunteers who would execute their assignments to the fullest to make the Casa look good. Together, we accomplished great things to remind the community that the Casa was a great go-to place to plan gatherings," Oehler said. Marlene and late husband Bob Oehler (former owner of George L. Klumpp Chapel of Flowers) have always been supportive of children's programs, so the Casa was a good fit, knowing that gratuities from dining clients would benefit the Home's programs. "My volunteer time wasn't work, but a pleasure having recorded some 22,000-plus hours and not counting all."

Marlene Oehler contributed to this article.

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Troop 259 to hold shred and STEM events on Feb. 6

By Cohen H.

The Elk's #6 and Troop 259 have sponsored a Shred Truck to come on site as a fundraiser for the local boy scout troop. The suggested donation is $10 per plastic grocery bag, or $20 per banker box. Please documents place in trunk of car and we will remove. Use of Square touchless payment is an option.

STEM events will have a variety of engaging opportunities to learn through hands-on experiences.

Troop 259 has done and learned many things since the pandemic started. There have been camping trips, troop meetings and hikes. These things were a combination of in-person and online meetings. At the campout at Brannan Island, the troop went on a 5-mile hike and worked on orienteering. They also worked on our wood cutting and hatchet/ax safety skills. The troop also camped in the rain at Indian Grinding Rock, which was a first-time experience for some of the newer scouts. While there, the troop worked on identifying native plant life and trees. They had an online game night to start winter break, which everyone seemed to enjoy. They played a game called Scribble.io. While the online meetings are fun, the in-person meetings are more educational. There have been a few merit badges worked on, such as First Aid and Personal Fitness.

If you go:

What: Shred event followed by STEM event

When: Feb. 6; shred event from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; STEM event from noon to 4 p.m.

Where: Elks Lodge #6, 6446 Riverside Blvd, Sacramento, 95831

Cohen H. is a scout member of Troop 259.

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Northern California Time of Remembrance virtual event announced

The Northern California Time of Remembrance committee (Japanese American Citizens League chapters of: Florin, Lodi, Placer County, and Sacramento) will host its annual day of remembrance program on Saturday, February 13, from 1 to 3 p.m. Due to social distancing considerations brought on by coronavirus-related restrictions, this year's event will be presented via online access.

"Uncomfortable Conversations: Racism, Equity, and Belonging'" is a departure from previous NCTOR presentations and will consist of a dialogue focusing on contemporary issues revolving around the Japanese American community's relationship with racism, the African American experience, and the intersection of awareness and engagement. Centering on current capricious administrative strategies originating in the White House, the Black Lives Matter movement, as well as cultural shifts in the time of a global pandemic, this year's program will address the dynamics of Japanese Americans and social justice through the lens of race, gender, and involvement.

Presenters include Jessie Morris, Jr. a bi-racial Sacramento County public defender; Emily Akpan, a multi-racial Yonsei social organizer for Tsuru for Solidarity in New York City, and Mia Yamamoto a sansei transgender private attorney in Los Angeles. Janice Luszczak, President of Sacramento Chapter JACL will serve as master of ceremony, and Andy Noguchi, Co-President, Florin Chapter JACL will serve as program moderator.

There will be no charge for this year's program, however donations will be accepted. Details on event registration and internet access of this virtual program will be made available on the NCTOR (www.NCTOR.org) website. For further information go to the www.NCTOR.org. For questions, contact Nancy Whiteside at 916-508-6587 or (nwhitesi@hotmail.com) or 916-427-2841.

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Faces and Places: Sacramento YMCA Food Drive & Volunteer Event for MLK National Day of Service

Photos by Stephen Crowley

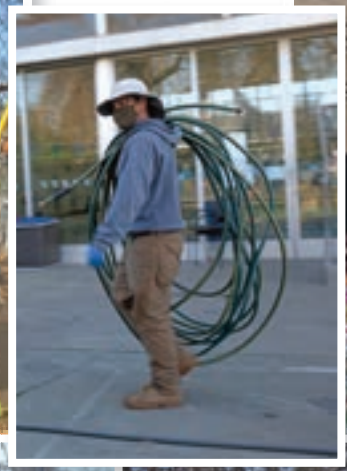
The Sacrament YMCA held a Food Drive and Volunteer Event to Honor the Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. on National Day of Service. Volunteer projects included site spruce up, and phone bank to check in on isolated seniors.

The Martin Luther King Jr. holiday on January 18, 2021, was the 26th anniversary of the day of service that celebrates the Civil Rights leader's life and legacy. Observed each year on the third Monday in January as "a day on, not a day off," MLK Day is the only federal holiday designated as a National Day of Service to encourage all Americans to volunteer to improve their communities.

Food donations to the YMCA were distributed to the families of children receiving free lunches through the YMCA during school closures.

Other volunteer projects that day included a a site fix-it and cleanup of Sacramento Central YMCA (tools volunteers could bring with them: work gloves, rakes, leaf bags, hammers, mallets, shovels, trowels). The Sacramento Central YMCA has been closed due to State Guidelines since November of 2020 with the exception of hosting blood drives. There was also a phone banking station to check in on the wellbeing of isolated seniors who are sheltering in place.

















Call for 2021 Essay Contest Entries—$1,000 Scholarship

Operation Recognition Essay Contest Sponsored by SAFE Credit Union

The Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) is now accepting submissions for an essay contest designed to honor local military veterans. The winning high school student will receive a $1,000 college scholarship, courtesy of SAFE Credit Union.

The essay contest takes place in conjunction with Operation Recognition, a program of the Sacramento County Board of Education. Since 2001, the Board has honored the contributions of local veterans who left high school to serve in the U.S. military during World War II, the Korean War, or the Vietnam War. Qualifying veterans can receive their high school diplomas, along with qualifying Japanese American citizens forced to leave high school due to WW II internment.

500-Word Essay Contest

Contestants must be high school juniors or seniors currently attending public high schools in Sacramento County. The completed essay, along with a cover letter, must be received by April 19, 2021. To receive the scholarship, the winning entrant must attend the virtual Board meeting at 6:30 p.m. on May 18, 2021 to read his or her essay, and join in honoring diploma recipients.

Specifics

The 2021 theme is "Why We Must Appreciate America's Veterans."

Essays should be 400–500 words long, typed, and double-spaced. (Titles and footnotes do not contribute to the word count.)

A cover letter should be attached containing student name, home address, phone number, e-mail address, name of high school, and one paragraph summarizing college and career goals.

A positive approach is recommended when expressing viewpoints.

No pictures or images should be included.

Judging Criteria

Essays will be judged on how well the student understood, developed, and presented the theme. Scores will be based equally on knowledge of the theme, structure/spelling/grammar, theme development, and clarity of ideas.

Mailing Address

Operation Recognition Scholarship Contest
SCOE Communications Office
P.O. Box 269003
Sacramento, CA 95826-9003

Entries must be received by April 19, 2021. No electronic submissions will be accepted and contestants may only enter once. For questions, e-mail Tim Herrera, SCOE Communications Director.

Los Rios Colleges to Offer $735,000 in Student Scholarships



The Los Rios colleges - American River College, Cosumnes River College, Folsom Lake College and Sacramento City College - are offering $735,000 in scholarships to students in 2021, with the application period opening January 15.

There are over 480 different scholarships offered, with each one focused on a specific major, program of study or subject area. Students have until March 5 to apply for the scholarships.

"The impact of a scholarship on a Los Rios student's life is transformational," said Los Rios Chancellor Brian King. "Scholarships allow students to take more units, work fewer hours, focus on school and complete their goals in less time. They also ensure groceries on the table and help to pay the rent. It is an investment in their plans and their futures."

Although community colleges provide the best value in higher education, the costs of books, supplies and transportation are still substantial. Estimated books, fees and tuition are $2,500 per year for a full-time student, and the cost of attendance for a low-income independent student is $19,821. Even for students who receive all the financial aid available to them, they still have $6,674 in unmet need.

"The majority of our students are low-income and eligible for less financial aid than students attending four-year institutions. Due to the high cost of living in the Sacramento region, most students work 20 to 40 hours per week just to make ends meet," King noted. "Scholarships bring higher education into the reach of students for whom an education might not otherwise be attainable."

Many scholarships were established by generous donors who want to support students. This philanthropic support has a great impact on countless students each year.

Students should visit losrios.academicworks.com/ to learn more about scholarship opportunities and apply.

Full Plates/Full Hearts: 2021 Pledge-a-thon and Silent Auction set for SSIP Food Closet







Last year, 2020, saw the SSIP Food Closet providing for over 105,324 individuals, representing 27,010 households in our community, an increase of 135% from 2019.

Generous donors, volunteers, community non-profit grants, and a very hard-working, part-time staff of 3, led by Manager Simon Yeh, enabled the Food Closet to meet the growing needs of the community it serves.

Join us for the first ever virtual Food Closet gala, Full Plates, Full Hearts, on March 11 from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. This will be a one-hour online celebration, pledge-a-thon and silent auction. It will showcase messages from Food Closet clients, volunteers, staff and others. It will feature a virtual tour of Food Closet operations and a slide show of interfaith partners, business sponsors, grocery partners and others. An annual Volunteer award will be presented. The success of this event will be critical to the ongoing ability of the Food Closet to meet the needs of families who will come to us for food in 2021. Please plan to attend by going to our website www.ssipfoodcloset.org and following the links to donate or to bid for auction items.

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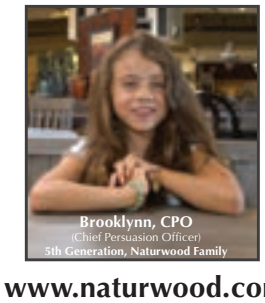
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