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Photos by Lance Armstrong

Fort Sutter Lions Club members and guests celebrate the club's 90th anniversary with a pioneer dinner at Sutter's Fort on June 24.

Fort Sutter Lions Club celebrates 90th anniversary

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
lance@valcomnews.com



Fort Sutter Lions Club President Lee Hobbs and club member Andy Thielen hold up a banner celebrating the 100th anniversary of Lions Club International.

Members of the Fort Sutter Lions Club are celebrating a special milestone in their organization's long history in the capital city, as the club recently turned 90 years old.

In officially recognizing that anniversary on June 24, Lions from different areas gathered together for a pioneer dinner at a very fitting location for such an event: Sutter's Fort.

Prior to the dinner, which benefitted the Friends of Sutter's Fort and Lions' causes, representatives of the fort provided a special salute to the club with a non-canonball firing of a cannon.

The Fort Sutter Lions Club represents a very rich part of the Lions Club International, which is currently celebrating the 100th anniversary of its founding. And Lions clubs collectively make up the largest service organization in the world.

In tribute to the Fort Sutter Lions Club, several Lions commented on the club and its rich history.

Andy Thielen, a member of the Fort Sutter club, shared details about this club's service.

"A lot of the activities that (the club) did were geared toward the blind and visually impaired, but now our club has veered off and helps underprivileged kids with backpacks for schools, helps Boy Scouts," he said. "Any other kind of organization that needs our help, we're willing to do that. We do the Walk 4 Literacy for the Sacramento (Public) Library Foundation, and (assist other organizations)."

Thielen's work with the club has included running in a marathon with blind athletes to provide them with guidance.

Thielen, who is among the younger members of the club, said that he joined the club in 1994. And he noted that he was recruited to help save the club from its then-potential future extinction.

"My grandfather invited me to join the club, because all the members were 70-plus years old, and they knew if they didn't get younger members, the club was going to die off," he said. "Some other younger members joined and that's what kept the club up until the present."

Thielen stressed that it is important for the club to continue adding new members.

"We have about 23 members," he said. "Obviously, the more members we have, the more work we can do, and the easier it is for all of us (to continue)."

Thielen also expressed his appreciation for the club's history.

"It's great to have the history of our club and be able to look back and see all that they've achieved," he said. "And it's good to be a part of an organization that's been so productive in Sacramento."

Bob Farmer, an 84-year-old Pocket area resident who joined the Fort Sutter club about

See Lions, page 6

City dissolves H Street flag program, Tahoe Park goes rogue

By PAT LYNCH
pat@valcomnews.com



H Street traffic is, in the words of neighbor Janet Maira, a real and increasing danger worsened by the City's dissolution of a joint neighborhood-city flag program. Maira, president of the East Sacramento Preservation Neighborhood Association, says that since 2011 the city permitted her organization to sponsor a pedestrian flag crosswalk program at 33rd and H, in front of the iconic McKinley Park Rose Garden. "We were frustrated when the city terminated the program. But we were plagued with flag theft and found it impossible to re-supply almost daily. What the neighborhood needs is a permanent flashing-light crossing to protect people. Some officials have said pedestrians can use the traffic light one block away. However, dozens of teenagers surge across this street every day, including the Sutter Middle School track team. They don't walk a block to the light."

Sutter principal, Cristin Tahara-Martin has also expressed concern. Will Green, former president and co-founder of ESPN met with Tahara-Martin at the end of the school year. "She expressed serious concern about the crossing and supports efforts to improve safety for students," Green, a retired physician, declared. "Teenagers are impulsive and this street, without lights or flags will always be a danger."

The H Street flag project, spearheaded by Green, was modeled on a successful Hawaiian project that posted holders filled with bright orange flags on each side of the street. Pedestrians picked a flag, waved it at drivers to get their attention and make them pause, crossed the street and placed the flag in the other holder. "It wasn't a perfect solution by any means," Maira said, but it got drivers' to focus and stop, and helped kids and others cross the street in relative safety."

Though the City terminated the H Street flag project, it instituted pedestrian crossings on J, an equally trafficked street, but one that has a number of restaurants and other businesses. "It almost seems that pedestrian safety on business thoroughfares is more of a priority," Maira stated. "What we really need, everywhere, are more traffic lights and a reduced speed limit that is strongly enforced."

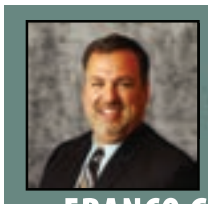
Green said of the terminated H Street project, "I remain seriously concerned about the safety of that crossing for middle school kids from Sutter and Sacred Heart, and especially worried about toddlers from Tiny Tot Town."

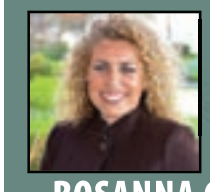
Not every neighborhood worked in tandem with the city. Isaac Gonzalez of Tahoe Park instituted a flag program on his own. "I believe in empowerment and I'm always inspired by people who take responsibility to improve safety in neighborhoods. It's great to work with the City but we should not surrender our entire fate to government. Its wonderful to see people follow whatever their passion is and help clean streets or help an elderly neighbor."

Gonzalez created multiple flag crossings on Broadway. He was dismayed by how drivers blew through the crosswalks or even passed him on the right when he paused for a pedestrian. "I identified marked crosswalks that were not four way crosses, that already had signage and painted lines. I didn't tell the city but I put my name and phone number on the flags. "Gonzalez is convinced that the flags make a difference. "The orange flags stick out like a sore thumb and remind people to slow down."

The Broadway flags program had problems similar to the East Sac program. "All my installations and flags have disappeared except for the stations at 62nd and Broadway. It's possible the design needs improvement, or maybe they succumbed to the elements. I'm working on a better design and hope to have them reinstalled by the end of summer."

While applauding Gonzales for his independent action, Maira repeated that every neighborhood needs a reduced and sternly enforced speed limit. "We don't want a tragedy, especially a preventable one."


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Some neighbors object to subdivision proposal in Elhmhurst

A request to subdivide approximately 2.23 acres into 43 parcels for the construction of 41 townhomes in the Elmhurst neighborhood has some questioning whether their area is the best fit. A poll posted on Nextdoor by an Elhmhurst neighbor asked if they would want townhomes or single family homes developed on that lot. Out of 164 that voted, 137 (83.5 percent) voted for single family homes. They main points of discussion are that it doesn't fit the neighborhood, vs. we need more housing.

Does Sacramento need more housing? That's the question on so many people's minds today with the housing crisis, but to some like critic Catherine Hernandez, looking at listings in Sacramento in general like Natomas, Elk Grove, Sunrise/Douglass areas, there are new developments and plenty of existing houses on the market to choose from. "What the developer is proposing fits more in those neighborhoods as opposed to our historic neighborhood. What residents like about our existing historic neighborhood is that it feels like a small family friendly neighborhood, with unique architecture, and does not have high density housing. High density housing is more fitting in Midtown, where I see plenty of high density housing being constructed or planned. Yes, right now it is a sellers market in general, but if there are limited houses available in premier neighborhoods, that shouldn't justify building high density infill housing to make the most profit without consideration to the ideals of a neighborhood. We are not opposed to developing the lot with more housing, we just want the new development to fit the existing neighborhood."

Hernandez stated neighbors worked with the Evergreen Development Company in 2015, when they originally proposed 23 single family homes. "They took our comments and suggestions into consideration and incorporated them into their final design. It ended up being a great result of team work between residents and the developer in hopes of achieving a well received plan for the lot. Fast forward to 2017 and all of that work has been scrapped for this high density option. We are open to working with the developer again to hopefully achieve a project that is complimentary to the neighborhood," she said.

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Sticky Business: Burly Beverages Opens Doors on the Boulevard

By LAURA I. WINN

Ring the bell outside the doors of Burly Beverages at 2014 Del Paso Boulevard and the burly, bearded owner himself may show you into his art-deco styled gift shoppe and tasting room. In one corner of the store sits a fridge packed with 80 different bottles of soda from a variety of brands, some founded in the late 1800s. There's all the traditional flavors plus combos begging to be tried: chocolate-covered maple-smoked bacon, butterscotch root beer, lime mint and honey lemonade, to name a few. Then there's the gift portion of the shop: growlers, novelty ice trays, shakers and locally-sourced artisan snacks. But the main attraction is the old-timey shrubs: syrups made with real ingredients (grown within 50 miles whenever applicable) like freshly peeled and chopped ginger, lime, orange and pineapple, roots, bark, vanilla, molasses, Turbinado sugar and apple-cider vinegar.

Sit down at the bar and that same mustachioed owner will mix one of his syrups with house-made craft seltzer water, so you can have a taste before you buy a bottle to add to your own fizzy water or alcohol of choice at home. Each 16-ounce bottle he sells makes 16 to 20 sodas or up to 32 cocktails. From ginger beer to pineapple-nutmeg, these Burly Beverages are reminiscent of the medical elixirs doctors and carnival barkers of the Old West sold to cure what ails you. But the man behind the beverages, 38-year-old Gabriel Aiello, is no snake-oil salesman. He's not promising to aid an ailment (that would be an FDA no-no), but he is offering a healthier alternative to soda, one that better maintains its vitamins and minerals and doesn't come with a sugar crash.

For Aiello, creating a healthier product and effecting change is at the heart of what he does. Serendipitously, it's thanks to his service of others that he finds himself opening the doors to his much buzzed-about business.

Long before Aiello was the Burly Beverage man, he worked for Progressive Employment Concepts, "job carving" or dividing traditional jobs into smaller tasks for disabled adults. One client, a non-verbal Autistic man named Dave, wasn't equipped for the tasks available, but he wanted to make and sell his own salsa. Aiello helped Dave through the process of growing the ingredients, packaging the salsa and selling it at the Orangevale Farmer's Market. That first-hand experience sparked an interest that eventually led him to a job with Sun & Soil Cold Press Juice Company.

From there, Aiello began experimenting with his own syrup recipes at home, but he needed a bigger space to mix and bottle. His small crew, including his father Patrick, hustled in and out of commercial kitchens with never enough hours to meet the demand for his popular elixirs like his original ginger beer and root beer syrups. Boiling sugar to make syrups from simple, real ingredients is messy work, and they were spending about half their time just on prep and clean-up. "Soda business is sticky business," Aiello explains.

With his Burly Beverages now carried at Coin-Op Game Room, Corti Brothers, Selland's and the Golden 1 Center, Aiello was ready for his own space. He was thinking Midtown or Downtown. Rick Eaton, the director of Sierra Service Project, a nonprofit youth organization where Aiello volunteers, had another idea: The space down the road on Del Paso Boulevard had everything Aiello needed.

At first, "It felt too good to be true," Aiello says. But after moving into the space in November and opening the doors in May, "It's been fantastic. It's far better than I could have ever imagined."

Wednesday through Sunday from 11 a.m to 6 p.m., the shop is open to the public for gifts, drinks and cool treats. You can pair any of the 80-plus sodas or syrups with ice cream or dairy-free gelato for a true old-fashioned float. The freezer is stocked with cold, creamy flavors from locally-owned Devil May Care and Conscious Creamery.

Most days you'll find Aiello inside. You might also catch his dad fulfilling orders in the back or filling in wherever needed. "He's a jack-of-all trades," Aiello says of Papa Burly. Citing the "retired" elder Aiello's unmatched work ethic, he adds, "Working with him has caused me to admire him even more."

Some might say the same of the younger Aiello man. Not only does he spend around 65 to 70 hours a week on Burly Beverages, he also cooks for the once-a-month Meatless Mondays at Old Ironsides, plays guitar in Drop Dead Red, is an on-call dog washer for Splash Hound and continues his volunteer work.

Juggling everything while running a thriving business would be an accomplishment for anyone, but it's especially meaningful to Aiello given he was the young kid who was "in detention or suspended every other day."

As a child, Aiello struggled because of ADHD and sensory defensiveness. He couldn't stand for others to touch him, and he hated the sensation of certain foods and fabrics. He didn't know how to communicate his needs to other children, so when they touched, he would respond violently. After years of therapy, Aiello learned how to adapt and manage his conditions without the use of medication.

Now with his thriving business – he has made more in the first four months of 2017 than he ever has in one whole year in his life – he is proud of what that means to his parents. "I think it's been good for both of my parents to see that I've found something in my life that works for me as a person who has these specific disabilities that have held me back – or I've allowed to hold me back – my whole life." He adds, "I never thought I'd be doing anything like this."

And although Aiello claims, "I'm flying by the seat of my pants and making it up as I go along," he already has plans for when his production needs outgrow his current space. But for now, he invites the public to check out his storefront, try a healthier soda or float, and remember "everything in moderation."



Photo by Aaron Stewart

Gabe Aiello, owner of Burly Beverages

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Lions:

Continued from page 2

30 years ago, also spoke highly about this local organization.

"It was worth the effort, it's great fellowship, it's a wonderful opportunity to do things for other people without it impacting your job or your lifestyle," he said. "I recommend it for anybody who has any interest in society at all."

As an international club, the Lions Club has members throughout the world.

And participating in the Fort Sutter club's event was Kandern, Germany resident Peter Völker, who said that he primarily traveled to America to attend the Fort Sutter club's event.

"My home club is celebrating its diamond jubilee – that is 60 years," he said. "And 90 years for a club to survive is a very great moment. I thought, 'Let me be a part of the celebration.' Lions Club International is 100, but an individual club living for 90 years and celebrating, it's a privilege for us and an honor for us to visit (this event)."

As for the club's beginnings, it was founded as the Lions Club of Oak Park, which was chartered on Feb. 11, 1927. The club received its current name 12 years later as a move to reflect the club's geographic appeal.

The club, which held its first official meeting on Feb. 25, 1927, was organized by a small group of Oak Park businessmen who first met at Muddox Hall at 35th Street and 5th Avenue. And the original annual dues of the club were $12.50, with a $5 initiation fee.

Led by its first president, Charles E. Chatfield, the club regularly met for weekly luncheons and entertainment.

The club's meetings featured guest speakers and among the earliest of those speakers were City Manager Harrison C. Bottorff, the Rev. Martindale Woods of the Oak Park Methodist Church, and Hilliard Welch of the California Savings and Trust Co.

An early special event of the club was its Duck Dinner at the Eagles Hall at 2950 35th St. on Dec. 13, 1928.

That same year, the Oak Park Lions began sponsoring Boy Scout Troop 35 with a monthly donation of $5, plus an annual Christmas party for the boys.

During the Depression, the club lost some members and struggled to acquire funding. And the club opted to save money by holding meetings at McClatchy Park, and it was aided by opportunities presented by Bill Glackin, who joined the club in April 1927.

Glackin, who served as manager of the California Theatre at 2931 35th St. in Oak Park and eventually ran the Alhambra Theatre at 1101 Alhambra Blvd., presented theater parties, in which club members sold tickets and retained 50 percent of the funds collected.

It was also during that era when club members were fined $1 each time they uttered the word, Depression.

During the 1930s, the club's meeting places included Dunlap's catering and eating establishment on 4th Avenue, off Stockton Boulevard, near the fairgrounds, and Julius Restaurant at 301 J St.

The 1930s also included the club's assistance of undernourished schoolchildren and the Red Cross flood relief, promotion of improved street lighting and participation in Oak Park's annual 4th of July parade.

The club's now defunct ladies' auxiliary was chartered on April 3, 1946.

Around that time, upon the invitation of club member, Mayor George Klumpp, the club's first barbecue was held at "Klumpp's Ranch," which was located in the area of Del Rio Road and Normandy Lane in South Land Park.

In the mid-1940s, the club meetings were relocated from Julius' Restaurant to the Rosemount Grill's then-new location at 3145 Folsom Blvd. in East Sacramento.

The club celebrated its 25th anniversary at Danisio's Italian Supper Club – on Auburn Boulevard, between Sacramento and Roseville – on Feb. 11, 1952. And its 35th anniversary was held in the Rodeo Room of the El Rancho Hotel in West Sacramento on March 8, 1962.

The club relocated its regular meetings from the Rosemount Grill to the Mansion Inn at 16th and H streets in late 1966.

In 1969, the club raised $674 through fireworks sales and $370 for their White Cane Days to provide white canes for the blind.

During the following decade, the club began operating the Northern California Lions Sight Association's Glaucomobile, which offered free eye tests for glaucoma and acuity.

A celebration of the club's 50th anniversary was held with more than 200 members and their guests at North Ridge Country Club in Fair Oaks on Feb. 11, 1977. South Land Park resident Howard Emick was the club's president at that time.

Club fundraisers in the 1980s included Dime-and-a-Prayer collections for the City of Hope cancer research hospital, Wednesday Night Bingo, crab feeds and rummage sales.

The club, which was then led by its president, Ray Thielen II, held its 60th anniversary at the Northridge Country Club on Feb. 13, 1987. The master of ceremonies was past President Yubi Separovich.

A later fundraiser sponsored by the club includes the Summerfest family picnic, a benefit for the St. Francis Home for Children.

This local Lions club has also presented Student of the Month awards.

In reflecting upon the history of the Fort Sutter Lions Club, Kevin Pokrajac, the club's treasurer, expressed his desire that the organization can continue for many more decades.

"To be part of a club that's been around for 90 years is an honor," he said. "Hopefully we'll be around for another 90 years and more. We've got to keep it going."

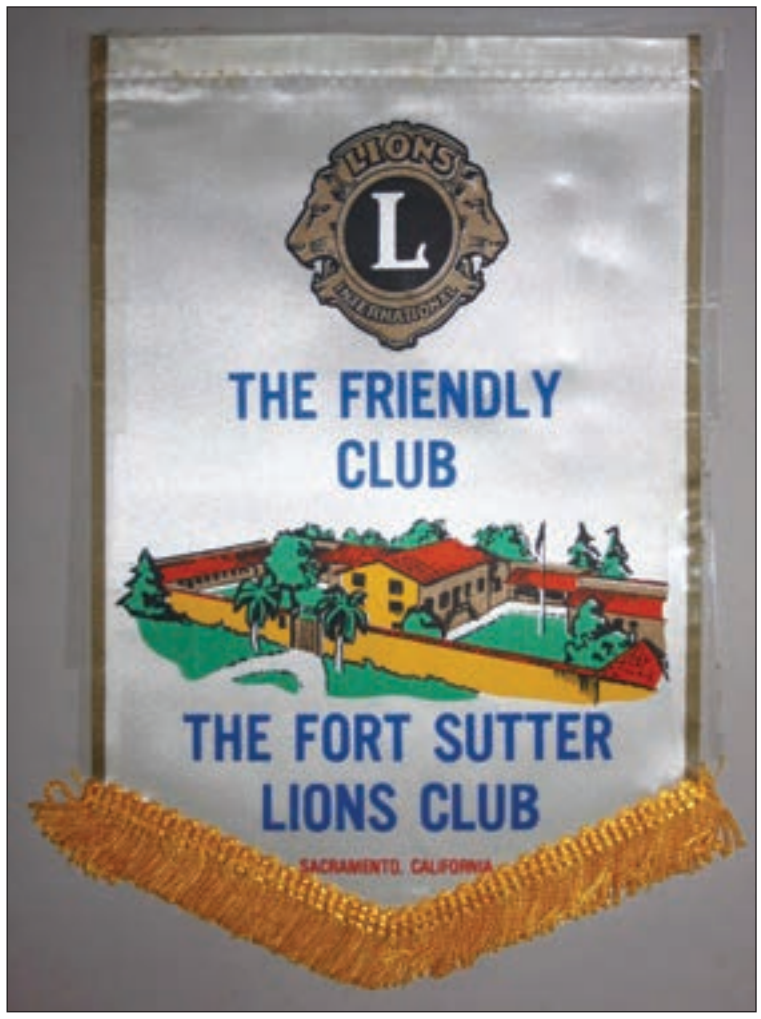


Photo by Lance Armstrong

This vintage piece of memorabilia recognizes the Fort Sutter Lions Club as "the friendly club."



Photo courtesy of Fort Sutter Lions Club

The club celebrated its 25th anniversary at Danisio's Italian Supper Club – on Auburn Boulevard, between Sacramento and Roseville – on Feb. 11, 1952.



Not your typical ballet

Capital Dance Project returns to The Crest with fresh programs

By LAURA I. WINN

Bean bags and toys for the audience one night and a hip hop artist on stage the next are not what you'd typically find at the ballet, but the August 25, 26 and 27 ballets at The Crest Theatre will not be your typical performances with your typical audiences. In partnership with the Sacramento Kings and the Kings Foundation, Capital Dance Project will present A Sensory-Friendly Performance on Friday, August 25 for families with special needs children, such as those with Autism. The following two days showcase the return of Behind the Barre: Made in Sacramento. Dancers will debut nine pieces created in collaboration with Sacramento artists, including painters, photographers and musicians.

For Friday's ballet, the bean bags and toys come into play in a planned safe space – a designated area children can retreat to if they need a break from the performance. If the music is too loud or overwhelming, children can slip on headphones and continue to enjoy the dancing in quiet from their seats. The idea is to make the theater welcoming to those who might not feel welcome at a live performance due to audience members who might shush them or sounds that might upset them, explained Alexandra Cunningham, co-founder of Capital Dance Project.

"It's important to us to be inclusive. Our job as artists is to make art accessible," said Cunningham.

That accessibility is part of CDP's mission to uplift the Sacramento community through performing arts – a mission established when the 2015 Sacramento Ballet season was cut short by three weeks and the dancers needed a way to pay rent. According to dancer and choreographer Christopher Nachtrab, the dancers had long talked about starting their own collective. The layoff "lit a fire under us and forced and us to put our money where our mouth is."

The dancers banded together, and Capital Dance Project, an independent, collaborative dancer-run company, took off at allegro speed. From marketing to managing and from costuming to choreographing, the dancers do it all. The collaborative effort allows dancers to showcase their many talents while also developing skills that will open doors for them when dance careers end "way down the line when our bodies are no longer willing," explained Nachtrab.

With sold out shows the last two years, the success of the CDP has been "surprising and amazing" Nachtrab said. This year the project had an open call for collaborative artists. About 30 Sacramento artists submitted applications and 10 submissions, including that of hip hop artist Paul Willis, were chosen.

Willis, whose rap and spoken word focus on empathy and adversity, said he wanted to be a part of Behind the Barre to raise the level of performance in the city while using hip hop as an educational tool. "I'm excited about bringing together these two art forms that are typically on opposite ends of the spectrum," he said. "The stereotypes or stigmas about ballet is that it is in the fine arts category and marketed to audiences that don't look like me or aren't representative of my community. I see this as an opportunity to build bridges and build up communities and relationships."

Willis has teamed up with dancer and choreographer Julia Feldman to create a 10-minute piece with music from his latest album, "The Guardian." Willis and Feldman's piece is part of an eclectic program that includes music from Jazz artist Harley White, Jr, world music group Sambandha and violinist Andy Tan with cellist Alison Sharkey. Visual artists, such as Sunya Whitelight and Raphael Delgado, will set the stage with lighting, props and backdrops.

"This is not your typical ballet," Cunningham stated. "This is not *The Nutcracker*. This is not S*wan Lake*. We're exploring different kinds of movement in a way that is edgy and fresh."

"We are taking away the stigma or stereotype of ballet and arts in general. Come to the show and you'll be surprised by what you see," added Nachtrab.

While Capital Dance Project currently operates as a summer program, the dancers hope to expand it in the future and possibly offer classes to special needs children. "We don't know where it goes from here, but we are going to push it to the next level and keep going forward, trying something new each and every time," Nachtrab said.

Tickets for A Sensory-Friendly Performance August 25 at 7 p.m. and Behind the Barre August 26 at 7 p.m. and August 27 at 2 p.m. are available at capitaldanceproject.org.







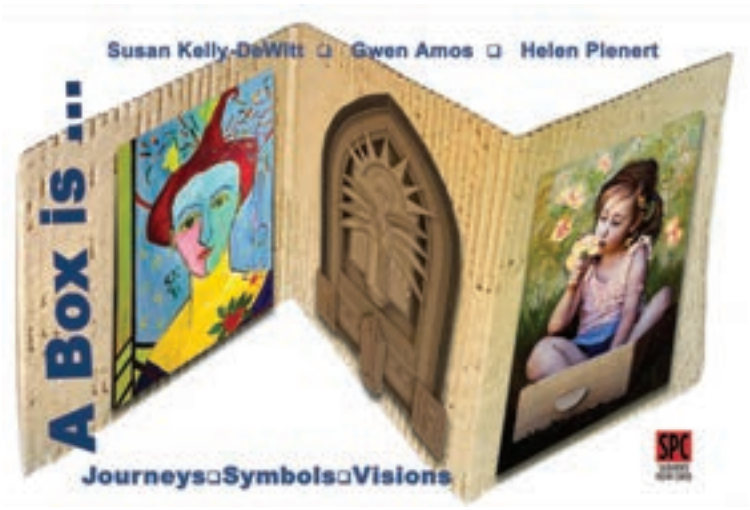
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FreeFall Stage presents James Forsythe's Screwtape

Based on one of C.S. Lewis's most well-known novels, James Forsythe's Screwtape is about a mid-level satanic bureaucrat, Screwtape, who is training a young demon, Wormwood, to lure his first soul, Mike Green (aka "The Patient"), into their "Father Below's" pit. Mike has very recently become acquainted with Christianity, but is still ignorant of its meaning and authority, a fact which Wormwood and Screwtape take advantage of as they attempt to get him back to his old ways of life. The demons seek to trip Mike up by way of his overprotective mother, a new boss, a demon possessed co-worker, as well as a new love interest, who comes with her own temptress. All sorts of Hell breaks loose as the demons do anything and everything to pop their patient into the pit. Showtimes are Aug. 4- 20, Thursdays, Fridays, Saturdays at 7 p.m. and Sunday at 4 p.m. Tickets available at www.FreeFallStage.com (not available through Chautauqua ticketing)

All shows are held at the Chautauqua Playhouse, located at 5325 Engle Road, No. 110, Carmichael. For more information, call 489-7529.

Sacramento Poetry Center Gallery presents A Box Is… featuring local women artists



The public is invited to attend a special showing at SPC Gallery featuring three local artists who have each dedicated their lives to the arts – Susan Kelly-DeWitt, Gwen Amos, and Helen Plenert.

The Second Saturday art reception for "A Box Is…", will feature 36 new pieces of art based on a box on Saturday, Aug. 12 from 5 to 8 p.m.

Susan Kelly-DeWitt: Susan interpreted "outside the box" as using non-art materials (mementos, artifacts, etc) she had collected, re-purposing and sometimes incorporating her poetry-self with her visual art-self, which she rarely does.

Gwen Amos: Loosely based in the tradition of the Mexican Retablo, the "Corrugation of the Madonna" series is about exploring how to use ordinary, everyday material – corrugated cardboard in a less than expected way.

Helen Plenert: Using just paper, cardboard, and paint, Helen, jumped from her comfort zone and has created a series of mixed media pieces that reflect societies perceptions and how children imagine themselves.

The Sacramento Poetry Center and Gallery's mission is to promote and advance the practice and application of poetry, the literary arts, and visual arts in our community, to enliven and extend the cultural boundaries of Sacramento's literary arena by creating and maintaining forums for local writers; to support and empower emerging and established poets, and artists to bring the best practitioners of the craft into the community. The gallery is used to showcase the visual arts.

For more information about the art show "A Box Is…", call Helen Plenert at 599-2608 or email Helen@hplenert.com

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Door to Door

with PAT LYNCH

Day One. Off to the Fair. I'm not lugging a clunky purse but instead wear a light backpack-sack thing. We head directly to the Counties Building where the jams, jellies and other home-made products are being judged. The Marmaladies, K. D. Profitt and Barbara Ruona, are up again, and there they are, sitting in the front row of a bank of wooden benches. The judges sit behind a kitchen counter under bright lights. Genial Michael Marks from Good Day Sacramento strolls to and fro with a microphone and announces that verdicts will be rendered throughout the day. This year another woman sits with the Marmaladies. She is Linda Hayward. Could she be a Marmalady groupie? We find seats near them. Now the Marmaladies have three groupies.

Marmalady Ruona gestures toward a judge on the far left. "Did you see?" she says. "She tasted something and made a face." News that a tasting judge 'made a face' travels fast. This judge, thankfully, is not assessing the marmalades.

The tension here is pretty real. Ruona and Profitt sit up straight, like A students, and Profitt takes notes when the judges make comments. But the judges are still along way from the Marmaladies' entries, so we head out for a stroll.

We've never been to the fair this early. It's cool and so far no swarms of gawkers pour through doors; the people here seem purposeful. We amble around and take things in. We pause to stare at a bride who rises from an Amador County grave, then descends into it. When she rises she is lit by different pastel lights. This psychedelic, dead, rising, Amador bride is a ghost, of course, and her apparition, accompanied by a whirring sound, is arresting if not terribly haunting.

I pause to read the Cal Expo Code of Conduct and prohibitions. Along with the usual--no weapons, no booze, no drugs—is "No sitting or placing feet on table tops, spitting and littering." I'm personally glad to see the spitting prohibition, having once worked in a place where outlaw teenage spitters could not be stopped. "We're in a spit free zone," I say to my companion." No answer. I look up. She's gone, but suddenly there are people everywhere, big crowds strolling and murmuring. It had happened so fast.

I see her wandering down another aisle, so I find a chair and watch the parade of fairgoers. It's hard to pinpoint the demographic in this area. My guess is that people who cook, and their friends, families, and judges are generally the benign, do-gooder sort. They look it. They hug each other, congratulate each other, pose with prizes, take pictures, laugh. Maybe there are seamy soap-operatic dramas going on backstage, but out here all is nurture.

Back to the Marmaladies. Still no verdicts, and we may not know the results until much later today or even tomorrow. Marks interviews the jam judge who is articulate and personable, even though she did make that face.

We follow our noses to the famed and delicious cinnamon buns.

Day Two. This time we head in at 6 pm, hoping for an evening breeze. I'm wearing a Fitbit so the trudging will be recorded. We enter by way of a humungous outdoor food court, a neon glitter-maze of things you're not supposed to eat. We spot several people carrying large, square, football-sized blocks with French-fries and onions attached somehow to the top and sides. Or maybe the thing is French fries all the way through. Maybe in future fairs people will be able to eat blocks of fries in the cardiology tent and have their arteries rerouted *while they eat*.

We find space at a table under a vast awning. We ask people how they like the fair so far. "I enjoy it," a woman says. "I come every year. I love the exhibits." I tell her about the Amador bride. A woman at a table across from us listens, then says to a boy about eight, "Would you like to see a dead lady go up and down?" The boy nods and grins. Another woman says she comes "for the music." What about fair food? we ask. "Love it," says a teenager who aims a shiny pizza slice at his open mouth while his girlfriend picks daintily at the olives. A man wearing overalls says he comes for the art and photography. "My kids come for the rides, and I come for the magic show," another woman says. It's fun chatting with people while eating our little chicken nuggetish things, and drinking lemonaide. "The fair beats cooking," says a man with a block of fries.

None of the people we talk to have experienced or witnessed violence at the fair, but most say they stay away from the adult midway. "Too many kids and weirdos," a woman says. Kids and weirdos, two of our personal faves, but we nod as though we share her antipathies.

It's still somewhat warm so we head into one of the big exhibits. Good sized crowds gather at most booths. But an Islam booth, operated by two pleasant looking men, has no visitors. We walk over. "How are you doing? Are people treating you well?" my companion asks. They say, yes, beam smiles on us. So I ask, a bit grumpily, "Are most branches of Islam oppressive to women?" They say no, then hand me a pamphlet. One man says that a few people are strict and observe every ancient rule to the letter. But most adapt it to their modern lives and social customs. "In that way we're like every religion," he says. I walk away with a paperback Quran in the backpack.

It's cooler outside now and we head toward the animals. It must be goat day because we see nothing but goats. At first it's disappointing, but then a goat lets us pet it and licks my finger. We bond instantly with this affectionate goat. We notice something in another pen: a goat with no ears. Most goats seem to have perky or floppy ears, but this poor thing has nothing but odd, small whitish bumps where its ears should be. We now see several others in the same state. Is this some kind of goat abuse? Then we see the sign: "*No, we did NOT cut off the goat's ears. They were born that way.*"

We finally find some cows with huge, thundering udders, but that's it for the livestock. We'll come back another night to look for pigs and bulls.

Our feet hurt, but onward. We've got to see if the Marmaladies won any ribbons. On the way we pause to buy earrings and watch a family sit in luxury recliners. We pass a fortune teller, a union booth with a great Rosie the Riveter cut-out, and a chocolate candy booth that tempts you to lurk in reverence. Then we come to the Wall of Glory. This is a glassed-in display of the winning jams and marmalades, the best of the best. And there it is: a jar labeled Marmaladies, a big blue ribbon on it. There's a red ribbon second prize Marmalady win also, and then we find the third, another blue ribbon. Three entries, three ribbons. The Marmaladies rule.

We head out. It's dark now and a fluttery, welcome breeze seems to have reinvigorated everybody. We head to the Monorail to tour the fair from its height, take pictures,

See Door-to-Door, page 11



Door-to-Door:

Continued from page 10

wave at the people below. But the ticket woman says there'll be a half hour wait. Can we buy tickets and come back in half an hour? No, because the people who are waiting will take all the seats. We do not come from the gene pool of people who can stand around for half an hour, chatting patiently with strangers. Well, I do, but jolly, superficial babble wearies my companion, so we leave.

We plod along. Our feet ache. I check the Fitbit. 12,200 steps. That's about seven miles. No wonder our feet are swollen pods of pain. Then we see them—the miracles. They are four machine-chairs. You sit down, put your feet on the raised foot areas, drop in a quarter, and your feet are jiggled mechanically. This is the best ride of the fair. Throbbing, arthritic, sore and battered feet are massaged by machinery: good-bye pain, hello numbness. When it's over we are able to walk away but we can't feel our feet. Nice. Why don't shopping malls have these magical machines?

Day Three. Even though we all carry cell phone cameras there are still big lines at the photo booths. We wonder at this. Maybe it's because its fun to pile on each other and make faces behind the curtain. And fun to wait for the results to pop out.

Today we go through the kid's midway, and enter a cacophony of pleading, screeching, laughing. Dads push strollers and Moms eye the older kids who are on rides. The lines seem long now, this second to last day of the fair. We come to the end of the midway. Few kids here, but lots of teens and adults. We go to a booth where you aim a stream of water that pops a balloon. I win a stuffed fish. The ticket cost five dollars and the fish is probably worth just that, but still, a win is a win.

We note lots of elaborate tattoos on people but can't tell if they're real or temporary. We head into one of the buildings. Today we want to eat inside. We split a teriyaki chicken bowl and a soda. It's not the evil and delicious garlic fries we really crave, but it will do. We chat with a woman (by now you know that I do the chatting) who says she loves the fair, is taking teacher certificate classes, has recovered from a heart ailment, prays every day and read Nancy Drew books as a girl. She's a pleasant person who asks questions as well as offers up information. It's always striking how much people will tell strangers.

But enough about people. The pigs are here. We head over. It feels warmer than the last time, but discomforts are forgotten when we look down upon a gigantic mass of pinkness with cloven hooves. Even the pig's nose is pink. This one is a prize- winner, lying down, and who can blame it? We hope that since it seems to have a bunch of awards, it may not become pork chops. Maybe they'll keep it for breeding and then let it loll to death. I heard somewhere that pigs are smarter than dogs, crows and horses, so I try to stare into its eyes, looking for sapience. But all I see is fatigue.

We see two alpaca being led around, angora sheep, long-haired and curly, other sheep covered in blankets. Why cover them in this heat? Somebody speculates that they are going to be shown soon and their owners want to keep them clean.

We head back to a cool building. The booth vendors are pretty aggressive now that the fair is closing tomorrow. "Ma'am, try our product," one shouts as we pass. "It's better than heroin." I turn to laugh and he says, "See? She knows."

I buy popcorn from another vendor. She's young and looks stunned. "You seem exhausted," I say.

"Oh, I am." Her face comes alive and she seems glad to talk. She's been working since ten this morning. It's 9 pm now. Business has not been thriving. "These last couple of years haven't been good at all," she says. We consider this: maybe it's the heat; maybe they should have the fair in cooler weather. Maybe they should offer different entertainment, different inducements. I wish her well.

We leave, and drive to the berm of Ethan Avenue by the new Century Complex. We get out of the car. We're still all about the fair. We wait quietly in the dark and then the first loud pop, and the night sparkles. It's a marvelous display and at the end multiple splashes of brilliance are flung across the sky like jewels.

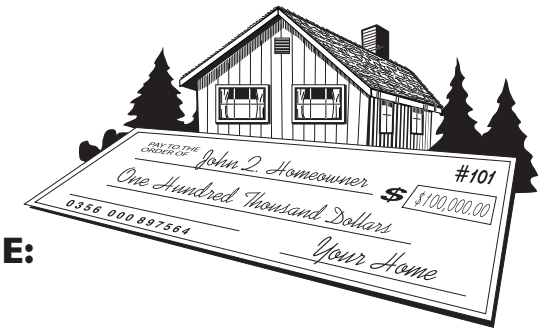
No one's near, but we stand there in the dark, clapping.



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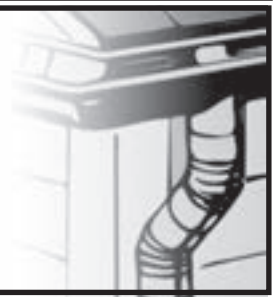
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Check out the Home Improvement Guide Call Melissa at 429-9901 for ad rates.

RESERVE YOUR SPACE IN THE CLASSIFIEDS!

Farm and Flavor: Tomatoes

By KERIN GOULD



At last, after weird weather delays, we reach the season of standing in the garden and sampling tomatoes right off the clean, astringent-scented plants that dye our skin chartreuse. Try it barefoot, touching the earth, eyes closed. Banish the winter of picked-green, gas-ripened, crunchy disappointments. Each tomato variety now packs a unique, sweet-acid balance, full of vibrant solar energy. Purple, pear-shaped Indigo Rose is sassy, while Black Cherry is practically savory, and the dense Italian varietal bursts with classic flavor that causes a flashback to childhood sandwiches eaten at picnic table by the lake. Some, like the tangy sungolds, rarely make it into the kitchen. I've been picking for a half hour, but my bowl is practically empty.

If you hate tomatoes, apply this scenario to plums, peaches or berries. But the bliss is genuine, exquisitely simple, and every cell in your body knows it is real, powerful food.

Lately, we live in a culture that devours the unreal, "alternative facts", baseless opinions, and attention-hungry exaggerations. Politics aside, if you are trying to verify health food information, this environment boggles the mind. Rare Siberian frisée kale will save your life!!!! All protein diet reduces fat and cures cancer!!! You've been eating tofu all wrong!!! The excessive exclamation points and sensational claims are dizzying. And the more serious our health issues, the more these dubious promises make us vulnerable. How do we know what is REAL?

First, who is your information source? Are they qualified experts or just selling you an exclusive and expensive new formula? Do they cite legitimate research? I'm not in the laboratory observing how anthocyanins and lycopene affect cancer cells, but when several researchers find cancer-fighting value in tomatoes, then I respectfully trust it is useful info.

Not all confirmation comes from a laboratory. Traditional Chinese Medicine, Ayurveda, and Traditional Indigenous Knowledge incorporate thousands of years of trial and error. In the ancient cities of Mexico such as Tenochtitlán, healers prescribed remedies with the condition that the patient had to report whether it worked. Results were recorded in Codices (that the Spanish tried to burn as witchcraft.) This is empirical study, science, not lore.

Many health-supporting foods that are tried and true traditions hold real value. Grandma eats nopal cactus for diabetes. Sounds weird. But probably her abuelita told her, because Mexican people have used this for centuries to counter the colonists' diet. Does this guarantee it will work for you? Of course not. But it has worked for generations.

We must also consider the risk of harm, even though whole foods retain nature's buffers to mitigate side effects. For example, grapefruit can conflict with some medications. Red grapes and red wine have wonderful nutrients, but if you have diabetes, they aren't really your friends. This is where it's a good idea to ask your doctor and/or pharmacist.

My hope is that, when you come across super-foods and trendy diets, you suspend belief or disbelief and research them. Listen to your common sense and your body's responses. Let's be open to information that can help, enjoy the optimism boost from finding new options to try, but let's also keep it as real as summer tomatoes.

What's in season in Sacramento: green beans, beets, corn, cucumbers, grapes, melons, okra, peppers, plums and pluots, squashes, and tomatoes.

Speaking of "tried and true" and keeping it real, I have THE gazpacho recipe from a friend from Seville in southern Spain, a flamboyant artist who is deeply attached to his hometown's festivals, arts and food. He was adamant about the ingredients and the order of things required to make it authentic. NO "inventing" other "new and improved" versions or vegetarian Gazpacho, because it already is. The important thing, according to Nazario, is to add white stuff, green stuff, then red stuff. So I've been faithfully following his instructions for the last 25 years, because, well, why mess with a classic from a land with sweltering summers? (Of course, you can adjust garlic, onion and vinegar amounts to your preferred taste.) It's hard to improve on something simple and real, refreshing and energizing, that can awaken a heat-stifled appetite and doesn't heat up the kitchen.

Gazpacho

1 thick slice of day-old French bread, torn into chunks (folks with diabetes or gluten intolerance can skip this)
1-5 cloves garlic
1/4 cup minced onion
1/4 teaspoon salt
4 cups cold water
1 cucumber, peeled and finely chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1/4 cup olive oil
8 large tomatoes - peeled, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup wine vinegar

Instructions:

Put the bread, garlic, onion and salt in a blender and add a bit of water to wet the bread. Pulse the mixture so it chops, not too fine.

Add the cucumber, green pepper and olive oil. Pulse again.

Add tomatoes, and finally vinegar. Blend to desired consistency.

Adjust water, vinegar and salt to taste.

For more easy, tasty, healthy recipes, go to producewithapurpose.wordpress.com



DO YOU HAVE A STORY?

Tell it to us.

e-mail Monica: editor@valcomnews.com

What's happening East Sacramento?

FRIDAY, AUG. 4

MISSION IMAGINATION: Are you ready to take the imagination challenge? Visitors will issue challenges, such as building a fort, putting on a puppet show, or making a gigantic ball of tape. Visitors will use building skills to create items in challenges, then imagination to make them come to life! Part of the Summer Reading by Design series. 3 to 5 p.m., 601 Alhambra Blvd.

SCREEN ON THE GREEN FEATURING THE LEGO BATMAN MOVIE: Movie starts at sundown at Glenn Hall Park, 5415 Sandburg Drive, Sacramento, CA 95819.

FRIDAY, AUG. 11

KENN ADAMS ADVENTURE THEATER: McKinley Library hosts a space adventure in this fun, interactive show! With Kenn Adams' Adventure Theater, the audience is the star of the show, making sound effects, performing the roles, acting as scenery, and even deciding what comes next; 3:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.; 601 Alhambra Blvd.

SATURDAY, AUG. 12

DRAGONS AND DAMSELS: What's the difference between a dragonfly and a damselfly? Which dragonflies feed on aerial plankton (and what is aerial plankton)? Who will be the first to catch a dragonfly this year? Friends of the Riverbanks invite you to join them at 9:30 a.m. for one of their favorite events: Dragons & Damsels with Greg Kareofelas. The 9:30 a.m. meeting will give the insects time to warm up, but early enough to beat the heat. Greg will bring some live animals for you to see and even touch (and then release). This is a fabulous event for children of all ages, and their parents too. Nets will be provided so you can go on an Odonata hunt—it's not easy to catch these speedy creatures. Meet at the Sutter's Landing parking lot for a short presentation with live insects. Then we'll go down to the river to see what is hanging out this year.

SATURDAY, AUG. 19

2nd ANNUAL END OF SUMMER SWIM & ICE CREAM SOCIAL AT GLENN HALL PARK: Come to Glenn Hall Park Pool to meet and socialize with your neighbors, while enjoying complimentary swimming and free ice cream from Burrs Ice Cream from 5 to 7 p.m. There will be lifeguards present to watch over the swimmers and lots and lots of fun to be had by all! Bring your noodles and floaties so you can bob around. This is a great opportunity to meet up with old friends, make new ones and have a blast before school starts and summer ends. This fun event is brought to you by Rich & Tina Wilks, Nicole Pate and Shelley & Rex Hescock of Better Homes and Gardens Real Estate & The RPNA. PLEASE RSVP to attend this event. Nicole Pate - (916) 802-4697 or Shelley Hescock- (916)214-0591; email response to RiverParkEvent@Gmail.Com

SUNDAY, SEPT. 17

RIVER CITY PORCHFEST 2017: River City PorchFest 2017 invites you to join them from noon to 6 p.m. in the streets of Sacramento for a day of free music and fun. Hosted by the neighbors of Colonial Heights, Tahoe Park, and Oak Park, River City PorchFest 2017 is honored to be jamming in three of the area's most respected neighborhoods. Proceeds for this event will benefit local music programs in the Colonial Heights, Tahoe Park, and Oak Park area. The goal is to put musical interest and instruments in the hands of children who might not otherwise have the opportunity. Organizers "feel that music, along with the other performing arts are key to a healthy and growing local community. If you would like to get involved with River City PorchFest 2017 as a volunteer or have an idea to make (the) event better, please email rivercityporchfest@gmail.com."

ONGOING

MCKINLEY PARK FOOD TRUCK MANIA: SactoMoFo and Sacramento City Councilman Jeff Harris present Food Truck Mania from 5 to 8 p.m. at McKinley Park, 601 Alhambra Blvd. every second Friday of the month. The beer garden benefits Friends of Front Street Shelter.

TAHOE PARK FOOD TRUCK MANIA: SactoMoFo, Councilman Eric Guerra, Sacramento County Supervisor Phil Serna and the Tahoe Park Neighborhood Association present Tahoe Park Food Truck Mania from 5 to 8 p.m. every fourth Friday of the month. The beer garden benefits Friends of Front Street Shelter.

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.

TRAINS, PLANES AND AUTOS TAKE AT FE GALLERY IN JUNE AND JULY: Fe Gallery's "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" opens June 10 with an Artist Reception from 6 to 9 p.m. The show will feature art works by Jim Marxen, vibrant acrylics; Camilo Valencia, dust bowl vibe; Kevin Wilhite, vintage inspired; and the artistic team of Garrett Winiecke and Sean Bailey sculptures of reclaimed metals. There will be a blacksmith demonstration at about 7 p.m. The show runs through Aug. 3. Fe Gallery is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Fe Gallery is located at 1100 65th St.

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION IS SEEKING LOCAL HOST FAMILIES FOR HIGH SCHOOL EXCHANGE STUDENTS: ASSE International Student Exchange Programs (ASSE), in cooperation with your community high school, is looking for local families to host boys and girls between the ages of 15 to 18 from a variety of countries: Norway, Denmark, Spain, Italy, Japan, to name a few. ASSE students are enthusiastic and excited to experience American culture while they practice their English. They also love to share their own culture and language with their host families. Host families welcome these students into their family, not as a guest, but as a family member, giving everyone involved a rich cultural experience. The exchange students have pocket money for personal expenses and full health, accident and liability insurance. ASSE students are selected based on academics and personality, and host families can choose their student from a wide variety of backgrounds, countries and personal interests. To become an ASSE Host Family or to find out how to become involved with ASSE in your community, please call the ASSE Western Regional Office at 1-800-733-2773 or go to www.host.asse.com to begin your host family application. Students are eager to learn about their American host family, so begin the process of welcoming your new son or daughter today!

KNITTING CIRCLE AT MCKINLEY LIBRARY – Any adult interested in knitting — even an absolute beginner — is invited to join. Participants can learn to knit, or get help on current projects and advice from expert knitters. Don't forget to bring your knitting needles and yarn. Wednesdays from 10 a.m. to 12 noon at McKinley Library, 601 Alhambra Blvd, Sacramento.

TEEN SPACE AT MCKINLEY LIBRARY – Looking for something fun to do after school? Need a place where you're free to hang out with your friends and have a snack? Come to the McKinley Library Teen Space, Wednesdays from 3p.m. to 4:30 p.m. at McKinley Library, 601 Alhambra Blvd, Sacramento.

DO YOU HAVE AN UPCOMING OR MONTHLY EVENT?
Let us know.
e-mail Monica:
editor@valcomnews.com

Best Bets



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