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Compassion Surging, Wildlife Thriving

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Door to Door

with PAT LYNCH

Covidiocy

Don't those people who protest that we must fully reopen remind you of the Virus itself? You've seen those electron microscope magnified pictures of Covid 19— bunchy in some parts, and stringy in others--kind of purplish-orange? Well, that's what the Open Up Now! crowd looked like. Their cars and trucks, festooned with flags, (some Confederate, some Nazi) made a creepy parade to our state capitol grounds where they practiced freedom of assembly and freedom to spread the killer virus. They rallied in many states. In Michigan they also brought, along with their guns, a noose and swastika emblems to the governor's office and to her private home. A noose.

I am no stranger to protest and have exercised it since the seventies when many thousands assembled to object to the Vietnam War, to march for women's rights, racial justice, and other causes. But I never brought a gun to a march, or a raft of guns with bandoliers, or automatic war weapons, never strutted into a state capitol armed to the teeth with smaller guns and knives jutting stupidly from my pretend combat boots. And a jillionaire cabinet member (today it's Betsy DeVos) never organized and financed any protest in which I participated.

So these are different times. These protesters seem more like a joke about themselves, as though they're unwitting actors in a drama written by a cruel satirist. They're all dressed up for combat, when what they truly want is for the bowling alley to open. They want the bars, the malls, the casinos, the midway, the salon, the barber shop, the massage parlor, the whole carefree circus of social commerce. Staying home all day and watching Fox News or Duck Dynasty reruns is boring.

And truly, we'd all like things to be put magically back the way they were: bustling, fun, social. But now it's not only Covid 19 that intimidates us. It's the Covidiots themselves. Who are they and what is Covidocy?

Here's a little breakdown for you.

Covidiots are, of course, people who practice Covidiocy. The "Co" means they co-operate with the virus. These people ignore scientists and spew unmasked trillions of virus particles upon the innocent, spread the disease and add to the body count.

Covidiousness (often called Cohidiousness). This is lying about the virus, its lethality, origins, treatment, body count, etc. These people resent their better-informed neighbors and leaders. One of them shot a security guard (yes, they bring those big boy guns everywhere). Another berated a shopper for wearing a mask. Another pushed a park ranger into a lake. One of them spat at a bus driver who asked her to wear a mask. There is another word for these particular Cohidious exemplars: asshats.

Covapidity. The Covapid are people who care only, and rather listlessly, for themselves. They don't follow the news, are tanned but otherwise vague, and congregate by the water in oiled clumps. They are not aggressive but are deadly vectors because their asymptomatic Covid 19 is aggressive.

Covid Beach Disorder. This is a fatal desire to lounge on shore with the Covapid.

Covid Bleach Disorder. These are the people who, inspired by the president's medical speculations, think drinking Lysol might cure the disease and clear the lungs.

Covidiquackery. Suggesting Covid 19 can be cured by taking Hydroxychloroquine. You should join a class action suit against Fox News if you tried this and, say, a carrot-shaped growth emerged from your ear.

Covidiocracy. This is the religious institutionalization of Covidiocy. It occurs when prominent big tent TV preachers prattle about the need to prematurely reopen the country and accept the consequent rising death toll. This despite their previously staunch "pro life" positioning. And tis despite grave disagreement from Dr. Fauci and multiple other accredited scientists and medical authorities. Catholic Cardinals Dolan and Burke recently these fundamentalists, another moral choice at odds with professed values. Pro life? Not so much these days. Seems they're "pro life" chiefly when it comes to controlling the reproductive freedom of females.

So that's the opposition. Our governor says, "the overwhelming majority (of Californians)… are doing the right thing." That's true, and we're that majority. We've got Covidia Anxiety and Covidia Fatigue, and we've retreated to save ourselves and protect others. It's not easy and not fun. But we're here, and we mean to survive. So we're following the guidelines, distancing, postponing, having parties on Zoom, staying home. We know what's required. We're not slamming around with guns and Dixie flags, trying to bully nurses, threatening officials, spreading pestilence with our flawed twaddle and our very breath itself.

And we'll be here to vote in November.

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Fighting COVID by Spreading Kindness

By Devin Lavelle

Archbishop Desmond Tutu reminds us, "Our greatest joy is when we seek to do good for others." It's an idea that I really connect with and something that many of our friends and neighbors around the community have taken to.

Everyday around the neighborhood and around social media, we see and hear about awesome things people are doing to help their neighbors in these trying times. Sharing food and toiletries directly or through blessing tables. Drawing messages in chalk around the neighborhood. Attending drive-by birthdays to bring joy to kids they've never met. Countless custom sewn masks gifted around the neighborhood.

It is really incredibly what our neighborhood can do together. It inspires me. It uplifts me. I hope it uplifts you as well. If so, keep on reading and I'll tell you about a few neighbors who have been doing some really great things for their neighbors.

FAMILY BIKE TUNE-UPS

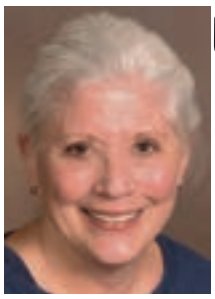
Matt Makofsky, his daughter Blossom and partner Larissa recently spent their morning providing free bike tune-ups at Seymour Park to neighbors. He "got the idea while out riding his bike. He thought it would be nice to help others get out on their bikes and ride on our neighborhood's great trails."

Matt, who worked as a bike tech for years in the Bay Area, did the tune-ups with assistance from Blossom (9). She also "helped by making signs and chalk directions in the park the day of the tune-ups." Larissa "kept everyone organized, posted on Nextdoor, scrounged up cleaning supplies and hand sanitizer and helped put air in the tires during the day." Together they worked on about 2-dozen bikes, address "issues ranged from a safety check to putting a bike entirely back together."

Larissa tells us, "It was inspiring to see people patiently waiting with bikes they wanted to get back on the trails. Afterward we received messages of gratitude for kids able to ride their bikes again and adults that were excited to get out and rode over 10 miles after getting a tune-up. There were many that didn't see the post on Nextdoor until we were done for the day and wanted to take part. We will be doing it again, so keep an eye out on Nextdoor for our post!"

She adds, "We have been working with Blossom on riding her bike for the past year or so. At

see COVID page 4



THIS 'n' THAT

by Carol Bogart

Compassion Surging, Wildlife Thriving

There was some disagreement. Was the baby bird a house sparrow, blackbird or a bluejay? It had fallen from a nest concealed beneath some roof tiles. The West Sac homeowner could hear the other nestlings chirping, she said on social media.

The baby bird, eyes closed, no feathers, in the posted photo, sat hunkered in her hand. The family, she said, has both a cat and dog. It was her first wildlife rescue. "What," she asked, "do I do with this baby bird?"

Some have said the biggest difference between this pandemic and the last one, about 100 years ago, is the Internet, and more specifically, social media. Advice was swift in coming.

Could the finder put it back in the nest? No. No way to reach it. Could she put it close to the nest in hopes the parents still might feed it? No. At-large neighborhood cats or other predators, such as hawks, would likely get it. The suggestion made most often by the commenters: Contact Wildlife Care at McClellan (Wildlife Care Association, 5211 Patrol Rd., McClellan Park, CA 95652).

The finder called and learned that the little bird could be dropped off in the morning. Instructions: Don't feed it. Place it in a dark box. And then, if it survives the night, deliver the little nestling to the well-regarded rescue across the river.

As the drama was unfolding, the finder's children watched intently.

The next morning, the little bird was still alive. The kids' dad drove it to Wildlife Care. When he arrived, he alerted those inside he was there, and then, as instructed, placed the box by the door (social distancing). He didn't learn what variety of bird is family rescued, but did learn that Wildlife Care is inundated in baby birds.

Not surprising. This is wildlife breeding season in California. Trees and bushes (and roof overhangs) have active nests with babies in various stages of development. As of this writing, we've had two wind storms.

An online group effort by empathetic souls pointed this nestling's rescuers in the right direction. In the photo, it was clear the nestling hadn't yet developed feathers, so wasn't fledging (i.e. couldn't fly). Wildlife Care's advice for fledglings is to leave those baby birds where you find them. While they may be at risk from predators, fledglings have watchful parents close at hand. Just as blackbirds will attack a hawk that swoops too close to an active nest, other bird parents, too, may attempt to drive off, say, a cat, giving the fledgling time to fly out of reach.

So, if you should find a fully feathered baby bird – or any other fully developed baby animal – that appears to be an orphan, assume the parents are close by and will protect it.

This little bird, however, would surely have died had not kind people intervened.

Perhaps it's the Stay Home order that has more wildlife-friendly eyes watching for animals in trouble. Throughout our region, nationwide and around the globe, wildlife reportedly is returning to once-native haunts. A cable news program recently showed thousands of endangered sea turtles digging their way out of their buried nests to scurry across a deserted beach to the ocean. More tiny Ridley sea turtles than annual observers had ever seen.

And the air! Fewer planes flying. Fewer vehicles on the road. The air is measurably cleaner! With emissions down around the world, it will be interesting to see what dent, if any, this will make in climate change, but at least for now, nature's thriving.

So that's the good news. The frightening news – besides what the virus can do to you or someone you love – is the lockdown's blow to our economy. Not just ours. If you have cable, watch BBC World News sometimes. The whole planet's suffering.

Prior to the pandemic, I rarely watched TV, least of all, nonstop cable news. But this is historic and we are living it. When the worry, and meanspirited political posturing, gets to be too much, I switch to Big Bang reruns – or simply shift my focus to happy things.

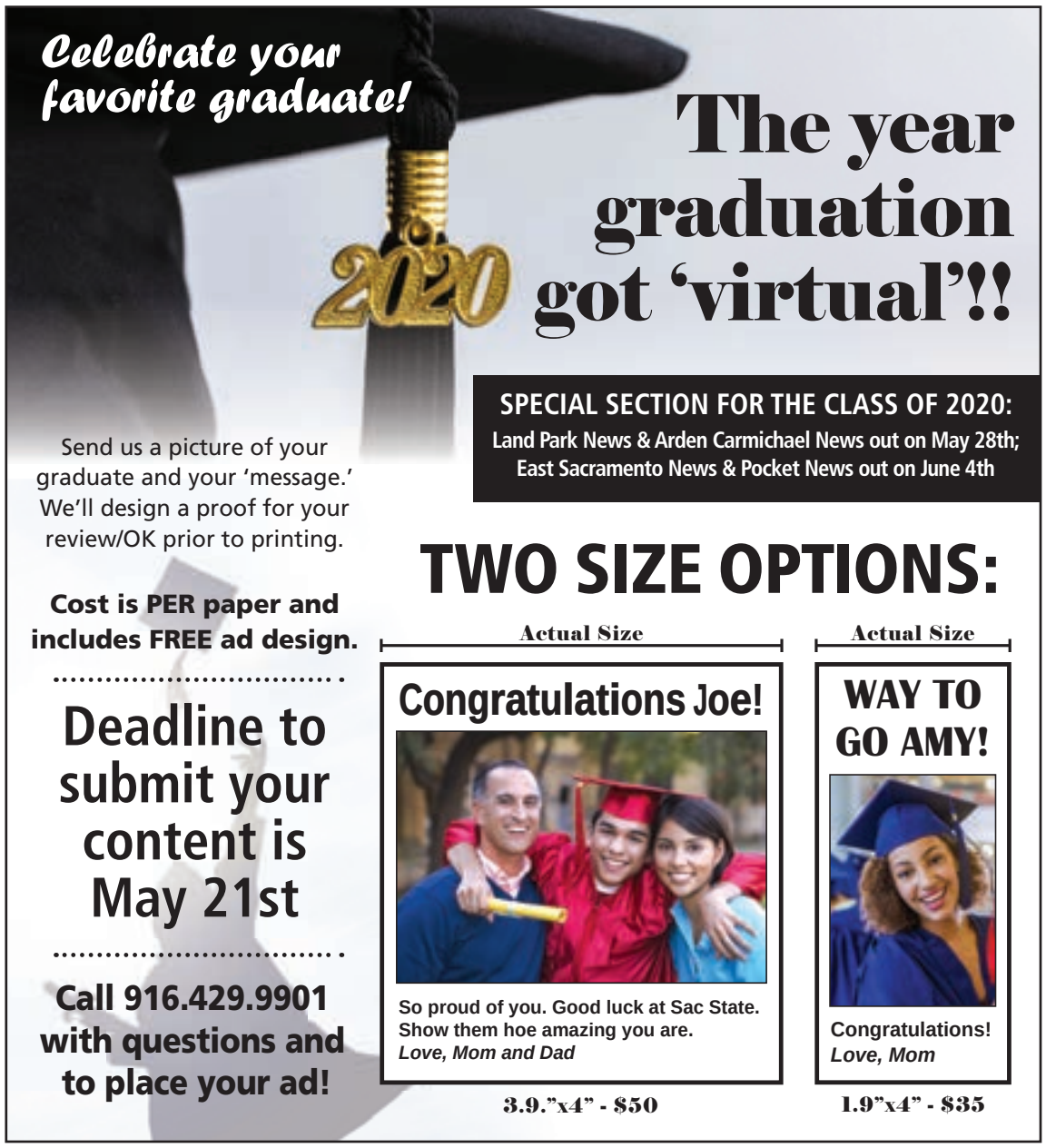
Like the successful rescue of a baby bird.

Need wildlife-related information in a hurry? Wildlife Care Association's Hotline number is 1-(916) 965-9453. Contact Carol Bogart at carol@bogartonline.com.



PHOTO COURTESY OF FWS.GOV/STEVE GIFFORD

Go to https://www.fws.gov/midwest/news/foundbabybird.html for what to do if you find an infant bird or other baby wildlife.



In memoriam: The Mayor Without A City: Willie DaPrato

The American Heritage Dictionary defines the word HERO with three distinct Phrases. ONE: a man celebrated for his bold exploits. Willie ran his own businesses for over fifty years and he was bold enough to run for public office. TWO: A person noted for feats of courage or nobility of purpose.Willie went off to war knowing he might have to battle with his own cousins in Italy and as a business man he always put people before the almighty dollar. THREE: a person noted for special achievement in a particular field. Willie was president of several service groups as well as the Northern California Grocers association and he was elected mayor of West Sacramento, but sadly the city was not incorporated... hence his title was "Mayor Without A City".

In many ways Willie was not just a person, not just another pretty face. Willie may have been more aptly characterized as the symbol of a generation, a generation of young people--born during a period of severe economic depression, matured during the greatest armed conflict the world has ever know and after returning home from war, flushed with victory ,faced the future with an exciting spirit of inspiration, anticipation, hope and adventure.

Willie and hundreds of thousands like him fled the cities of their childhood to carve out a new way of life for himself and his family.

Willie became a part of the development of West Sacramento---who among us does not remember the Westmore subdivision, the coming of the freeway, the construction of the barge canal, the development of the port, the unification of the school district---all in all the struggle to fulfill our destinies.





Circa 1960 Wilie's Market

In the beginning there was mama and papa DaPrato --over from Italy and then there was Willie. He was raised in Sacramento's North Beach"Little Italy--48th and M streets. Willie received his formal education by attending El Dorado Elementary School, Kit Carson Jr. High School and graduating from Sacramento High. However, his most valuable education, came from the school of hard knocks which made him streetwise.

Willie stared his professional career early in life working at odd jobs for pocket money and to help his family. In 1938 he began working part time for Louis De Fazio in Louie's market at 48th and J streets. While in high school, he continued to work for Louie until 1942. In 1943, Willie went to war and served in the European Theater of Operations as a member of an anti-aircraft unit in the U.S. Army. After his service in the Army Willie returned working for Louie.

Willie's association with Louie led to a partnership in 1949 in the purchase of the West Sacramento Market on 15th and Virginia streets. The store was nestled in a complex of commercial buildings that included the Rainbow Market, Dr. Watt's Soft Drink Factory, West Sacramento Land Administration, the post office, library, old fire station, and an old store (which became Peterson's, then Gormans and Beers Cleaner).

In 1949, Louie died and Willie became partners with Louie's son Bill until 1953 when he became the sole owner. In 1958, the historic old West Sacramento gave way to progress and was replaced with a modern building on the same site and WILLIES MARKET came into being.

Willie's family grew. He married Mary Helen Keller and later adopted her son Michael. They had Steven in 1950, Billy in 1953 and Jimmy in 1960. Not only did his family grow but Willie himself was beginning to emerge into the community leader which he eventually became. Willie's restless energy, contagious enthusiasm, and leadership qualities soon earned him the trust and respect of many people with whom he came in contact. Willie was active in community and professional organizations and inevitably occupied positions of leadership. Willie was in too many groups to mention but his Easter egg hunts, pancake breakfasts all in partnerships with service groups were so important to him.

Many people consider him the godfather of the West Sacramento Little League. When problems with finding the right lot was lost in an election and he made it happen. He was the initiator for the first 4th of July celebration.

Willie sold the market in 1979 and after a short retirement went into the restaurant business. His first venture was with Babe and Mario Luigi at Espanol on Folsom Boulevard. He was there for seven years. He then became a managing partner at the Sloughhouse Inn. It was during this time that he married Louise Harris and lived in Davis California for 30 plus years until her death. All those years were happy with traveling and being part of a new family.

Willie moved into his sister Gloria's home in Sacramento for the next five years. They spent most Friday nights at the Club Pheasant visiting with friends and getting free drinks from all the customers who told him they owed it to him for stealing candy at Willies Market. Willie always had his heart in West Sacramento.

Willie will always be missed. He spent 95 years here and his park near the market he built will ALWAYS be a reminder of the man, the Hero we all just called WILLIE!

Covid:

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times it has been a challenge to get her as excited as us to get out on our bikes. After seeing everyone out with their bikes, and seeing her dad help everyone that came by, she exclaimed that biking was her new favorite hobby!"

FREE LANDSCAPING FOR UNSUNG HEROES

Art Ballard, owner of Creekside Landscaping, is providing his services free of charge to employees of our local Bel Air. He told me,"I just had been hearing everyone appreciating the medical care professionals and of course I appreciate them putting themselves at risk, but there was another group of workers we all see frequently. They're putting themselves at risk and they seem worried and frazzled and it was something that was simple and easy for me to do to show appreciation for the people who are allowing us to get food and get necessities."

The number of people he's helping is growing. "So far 8 families have taken me up on it. They seem very, very grateful to have the help. They don't seem to get the recognition they deserve. I think it's pretty likely that I'll be able to expand to offer it to another store soon."

He adds, "I feel grateful that I'm able to continue working, so I wanted to be able to spread that and do my part for the community."

FIGHTING THE TP SHORTAGE

Tami Conger put her family to work getting toiletries and safety products to neighbors in need.

It was all the more impressive because she "was a little late to the party. As Covid was picking up steam, we were mentally pre-occupied because a friend in Florida had had a stroke and wasn't doing well. I was focusing on preparing for the trip and trying to make sure my work was covered. Just before we left, our grandson's car broke down so I was trying to get him a new car before we left on top of everything else. Obviously, I wasn't watching the news much."

Upon returning to work things quickly shifted, "When I came home after my first day back at work, I told my husband that the college was talking about shutting down. That's when he told me that people were going crazy for TP. I actually laughed because I thought he was kidding."

We all know he was not, so she quickly jumped into action, "I called my brother-in-law in Simi Valley. He owns a custodial business in So-Cal. I asked him if he could spare a case or two of TP & Paper Towels and he said 'absolutely'. My sister and I met half way and she gave me the cases." She added to that, "a supply of gloves and masks because my uncle had lived with us until he passed" and Lysol wipes from her Costco-enthused husband.

In total, she delivered 140 rolls of toilet paper, 40 rolls of paper towels, 6 boxes of gloves, 6 containers of Lysol wipes and 65 masks to 40 neighbors in our community.

"It felt great to have the ability to help my neighbors. I met a lot of new people and they were all so kind. I'm a bit of a workaholic and only really know the neighbors within a house or two. This gave me the opportunity to get to know more people within our community. I'm a strong believer in karma, both good and bad, and

see KINDNESS page 5

Pancake Circus owners vying to keep a Sacramento institution alive

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

Nick Ruebel, co-owner of the Pancake Circus, told the Land Park News last week that he would like to set the record straight regarding the status of his business.

Ruebel, who has co-owned this circus-themed eatery at 2101 Broadway with his father, Naren Muni, since 2002, said that like many businesses, his restaurant has struggled since it was ordered to cease its indoor dining operations nearly two months ago.

In response to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, Sacramento County public health officials, on March 19, issued a stay-at-home order, and called for the closure of all nonessential businesses. However, restaurants were allowed to remain open, but could only offer to-go and delivery food.

Under that order, Pancake Circus has experienced a significant loss in its business income.

But Ruebel stressed that his business, which is one of Sacramento's restaurant institutions, is not in dire straits, as many people have been led to believe.

"The way some of the other articles were worded, it sounded like we were going under," he said. "We aren't going out of business today or tomorrow. That's not the message we were trying to put out there.

"The message we were trying to put out there is that like a lot of businesses, we are very slow right now. And (that loss of income) does have an impact on our viability. But we aren't at that point yet."

Ruebel stressed that the response by the government to shut down restaurants due to the pandemic has definitely had a significant impact.

"Up until the other articles came out, we were very slow," he said. "We weren't getting a lot of take out and to-go business."

Ruebel added that a certain attitude by some people toward spending money at his eatery followed the order, and could have significantly affected his business's financial stability.

"What I have heard a lot is what a lot of people believe is 'Oh, well, my $10 or $13 doesn't really make a big difference,'" he said. "But in any business, every little bit of business makes a huge difference. If you have 100 people that think that way about their $13, that's $130. It all adds up."

He also speculated that many people believed his pancake eatery was no longer in business.

As of the deadline for this article, Gov. Gavin Newsom had not given a date for when restaurants would begin to allow indoor dining.

Despite Pancake Circus' decrease in business, Ruebel mentioned that there are some positive notes.

"For positive notes, we have a lot of our regulars coming by and saying that they miss us and they definitely want to come in more," he said.

Ruebel added that many customers also mention that they are planning to return to his eatery, and are eager to "sit down and eat."

"That's always positive, because you know that once you are allowed to open, then you'll have people back in," he said. "It's just really a matter of when.

"Now that we're starting to see a lot more cars on the road, it tells you people are tired of being stuck at home. And there's a lot of misinformation in the news, in my opinion, and hopefully everything starts to calm down soon, and we start to get businesses reopened."

Ruebel said he can only speculate when his business will reopen its doors.

"Well, there's no official word on a date when we can reopen and there's no official word on what restrictions are put in place," he said. "We've heard a lot of speculation around the 27th of May, with limited capacity, either 50% or 25% of our capacity. Twenty-five percent would be extremely detrimental to the amount of business that we could do."

Ruebel also commented on the concept of being required to use reusable, single-use menus in his restaurant.

"You're going to have to use single-use menus that you throw away after each customer uses it," he said. "Everything is a cost. A cost, a waste, so many different things." But on another positive note, Ruebel said that he has a lot of longtime, loyal customers who probably wouldn't need to grab a menu to place their orders.

"Most (of those customers) don't even look at a menu," he said.

Additionally positive for Pancake Circus is its gradual rehiring of its employees.

"We had laid off the entire staff (of 13 workers)," he said. "We have started to bring people back now, because we are at a business level that we need some people there.

"Two of us alone can't do it. So, we are bringing staff in. We've brought back six or eight (workers) so far. So, that's where we are right now."

Keeping tradition alive

Ruebel mentioned that it is important to him to keep the Pancake Circus in business.

He also expressed a desire to maintain the classic atmosphere of this restaurant's building.

"People always ask, 'Why don't you do upgrades or renovations?'" he said. "You know, part of the charm of the place is the 1960s vibe. The place isn't the same without that 1960s feel. It wouldn't be the Pancake Circus without (that) feel.

"We're working hard to keep (this) Sacramento staple alive, but with that said, you have to see a light at the end of the tunnel. You have to see a time when you can reopen. You can't lose money every day and do it forever."

Pancake Circus is currently open for take out or delivery orders from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. daily. Orders can be placed by calling (916) 453-3322 or through the website, www.pancakecircus.net.

Kindness:

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if I can help someone, I will. I'm fortunate that everything fell into place," Tami reflected. She fondly remembers how "Maritza met me at the door, all smiles. She thanked me over and over," adding, "thinking about Maritza still brings a smile to my face.

In addition to her family, she was grateful for some local help. "Although I had the idea, I never could've pulled it off without Kathi Windheim's help. She turned my crazy idea into something real. I wanted to make sure we got to the group of people that really needed the help and she took the time and had the know-how to help me do it."

OFFERING HELP

Jasmine Hale went on NextDoor and offered food for any neighbors who may have lost a job and may be low on funds or were just in need.

"I freaked out the first week, like pretty much everyone I think. But, after that initial dark week I recognized that I'm very fortunate to be sheltering in place in a nice home with lots of space, a big yard, plenty of food, and a good job I can work from home at. So, I tried an experiment to help lower my own anxiety and get outside myself and did my first act of kindness, making a brighten-your-day gift bag for a couple of local healthcare workers. Since then, I've kept up with my daily acts and it's helped me tremendously. Sometimes they are local in nature, other times they're for people and friends I know elsewhere."

The requests were simple things:

"One lady indicated she was older and afraid to go to the stores right now because she has lung issues. She only asked for carrots."

"A single mom [who recently lost her job] with a little girl who only wanted some dinosaur shaped chicken nuggets and ranch dressing."

And, of course, Lysol spray.

Of course, Jasmine gave more than they asked for, aiming for about a week's worth of food, "I bought a big bag with lots of fresh veggies and a few bags of groceries with all the foods my own little niece eats, Dino nuggets and ranch included!"

Why? "I have zero control over a pandemic, the economy, etc. but I can control how I respond to this and be a part of trying to ensure that the community I return to feels supported, not abandoned. I strongly believe that community who works together will ultimately allow us to recover in a better, faster way overall."

With all the generosity going around, she reflects, "Americans are a kind and generous people, but we are also a culture that says people need to pick themselves up by their own bootstraps. So I imagine it's not easy to ask for help." It's no wonder that offers to help on her NextDoor thread outnumbered requests by more than four-to-one.

Hopefully this serves to remind our neighbors who may be facing challenges right now, you are surrounded by a loving, generous community who is eagerly seeking for ways to help. We just need you to let us know what you need.

Jasmine also wanted to add a memory from late March, "When our grocery stores looked like ransacked post-apocalyptic scenes from Zombieland or Mad Max." She had already been to multiple grocery stores in search of her daily English muffins (carbs are comfort foods!), "I had a full on melt down in an abandoned bread aisle at Nugget (on Greenhaven) and was muttering to myself the unspeakable ills I wished upon all the newfound English muffin hoarders!" After collecting herself, she thought, "Why not ask if the store could just save me a box or two when they come in?" She didn't expect much, but a week later, she got the call she hoped for. "I know it's completely inconsequential in all of this, but just as I was able to brighten other's days, the Nugget brightened mine with two little boxes of muffins!"

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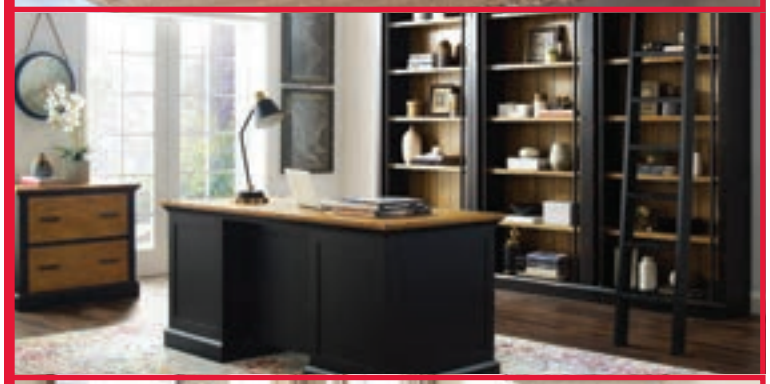
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