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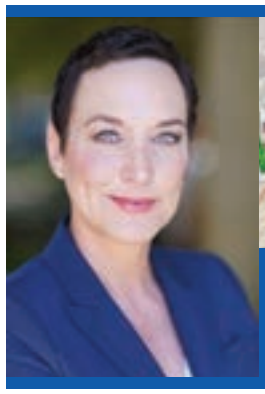
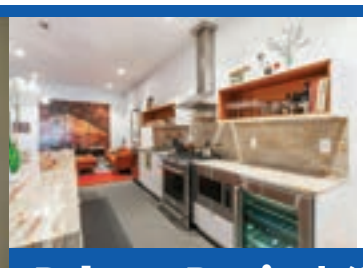
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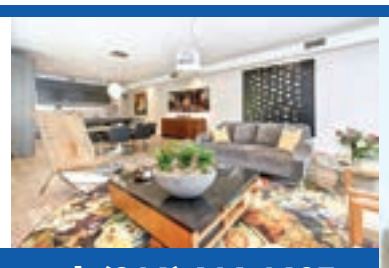
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Equity, Affordability, and Upzoning

By Chris Jones

What if I told you that eliminating single family zoning would make things worse for low-income families and families of color in Sacramento?

Sacramento's 2040 General Plan Update proposes major changes to zoning codes that would essentially eliminate single family zoning within city limits and allow duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes to be built in traditional single-family neighborhoods.

A main pillar of the argument for an end to single family zoning in Sacramento is the idea that by increasing density in places like Land Park and East Sacramento will allow for lower- and middle-income families to live in a neighborhood that is typically out of their price range, making neighborhoods more diverse and dynamic. Seattle, Minneapolis, Chicago, and several other cities both in the US and abroad have embraced the idea that forced upzoning leads to more diverse, dynamic neighborhoods and reduces racial disparity.

The devil, however, lies in the details. Does upzoning increase housing affordability? Does it increase diversity? Unfortunately, it looks like the answer is no on both counts.

Regarding the idea that upzoning increases supply and makes housing more affordable, there is, evidence that it in fact does the opposite. In 2013 and 2015, Chicago created a natural experiment by upzoning large sections of the city, allowing higher Floor Area Ratios (FAR), eliminating parking requirements, and increasing allowable housing density.

Yonah Freemark from MIT studied (Upzoning Chicago: Impacts of a Zoning Reform on Property Values and Housing Construction) the results of this upzoning over the next five years, and his conclusion was that first, there is strong evidence that upzoning increases the property prices for existing single-family homes and that second, there was no evidence for short or medium term increases in housing unit construction.

We need more affordable housing in Sacramento, how can we in good conscience make the problem worse by knowingly enacting a policy that produces no new housing, and worse makes the existing housing more expensive?

I don't think we'll find anyone who thinks that a diverse and dynamic neighborhood is a bad thing. In fact, it's one of the arguments in favor of this upzoning. Advocates say that White families make up over 70% of residents in some of the most privileged neighborhoods such as East Sacramento, Land Park, and Curtis Park in a city that is overall only about a third White. This argument is not borne out by research.

At New York University, Ignacio Aravena, Anastasia Lopatina, Alexia Nazarian, Doug Rose, and Yinan Yao conducted a study (Zoned Out? Examining the Effect of Upzoning on Neighborhood Demographic Trends: A Fixed Effects Analysis) on the effects of upzoning on demographics and the results were equally damning analyzing the impacts of forced upzoning in New York City, they found that upzonings changes made between 2000 and 2007 led to a five to nine percent increase in the share of White residents.

The implication being that the housing which was created, did not go to lower income families of color, but were mainly occupied by White residents. If the idea behind forcing higher density is to allow families of color to move into these "privileged" and "majority white" neighborhoods, then how do we justify pursuing a policy that decreased diversity when used elsewhere? Ironically, it won't be Land Park and East Sacramento that bear the brunt of redevelopment and gentrification unleashed by upzoning. Diverse and relatively affordable neighborhoods like Oak Park will be the first places targeted for new construction.

Sacramento is a city that is poised to see huge growth over the next 20 years. We have major freeways, strong health and government sectors, and we are well positioned to absorb families fleeing the extortionate cost of living in the Bay Area.

We need to grow, but in a way that enables everyone to take part in that growth. The ideals of increasing affordability and diversity are good ones, but we need to really examine whether the changes proposed in the 2040 General Plan Update are going to get us there, or if they're just empty words to make us feel good. I think we can do better than empty words.

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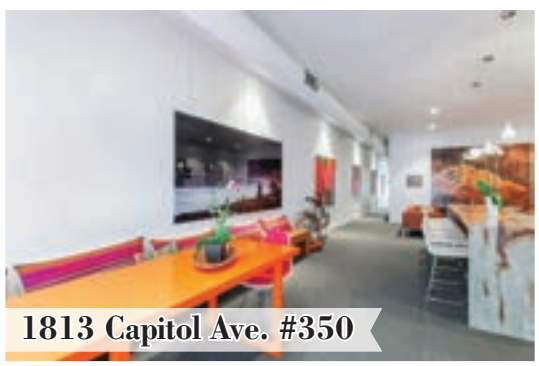
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SMUD accelerates its fleet electrification with five all-electric work trucks

Partners with the California Mobility Center and Zeus Electric Chassis, Inc.



SMUD has partnered with Zeus Electric Chassis, Inc. and the California Mobility Center (CMC) to procure five custom, all-electric work trucks as it works to transition to an all-electric fleet. The trucks are the only all-electric work truck chassis manufactured in North America in the medium duty class and will be customized for a variety of uses throughout SMUD's service territory.

"This is a phenomenal addition to our fleet," said SMUD General Manager and CEO Paul Lau. "Not only does it showcase the future of electric vehicles and the ability to transition a large fleet to all-electric, but it also reduces our operating costs and greenhouses gases – helping us meet our goal of zero carbon by 2030."

SMUD has invested in fleet electrification for more than 10 years and has a total of 950 assets in its fleet consisting of sedans, service trucks, bucket trucks, trailers, cable pullers and other construction equipment. Electrification efforts have depended upon commercially available technology and focused on electric and hybrid light duty vehicles and hybrid bucket trucks. Just last year, SMUD added 16 new Chevy Bolts to its fleet, bringing the count to 122 all-electric or hybrid vehicles across the fleet.

SMUD has a goal to transition 25 percent of its total fleet to electric or hybrid options by 2022 and recently added electric service trucks to its fleet.

Zeus is a start-up company out of Lindstrom, MN and is currently the only complete custom upfit electric truck chassis manufacturer in North America for medium duty work trucks.

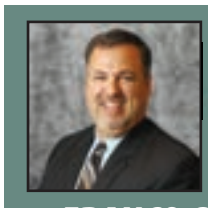
SMUD's fleet engineers helped design the vehicle specifications and Zeus will fabricate the trucks in collaboration with the CMC. With a nine-month lead time, SMUD hopes to have the vehicles in operation by the end of the year.

SMUD has long been a supporter of electric vehicles, having worked with major automakers and a wide variety of technology companies for the past 30 years to help test and optimize EVs and vehicle charging equipment, and demonstrate real-world effectiveness.

SMUD's efforts and partnerships have already brought electric vehicles to underserved communities; electric school buses to local districts; clean public transportation; mobile battery charging stations and more.

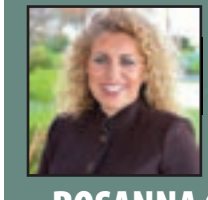
Additionally, SMUD's special EV rate discount allows EV owners to save money when they charge their vehicles between midnight and 6 a.m. This allows owners to maximize their savings while mitigating the impact to SMUD's electric grid for all customers.

SMUD was introduced to Zeus through its work with the California Mobility Center that was founded to serve as an innovation hub of policy, funding and commercialization of clean transportation technologies including autonomous transportation; electric vehicles; battery storage; shared mobility solutions; public transit and more. The goal is to provide equal opportunities in Sacramento for increased mobility and access to employment, healthcare and education.



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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, long-time 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.

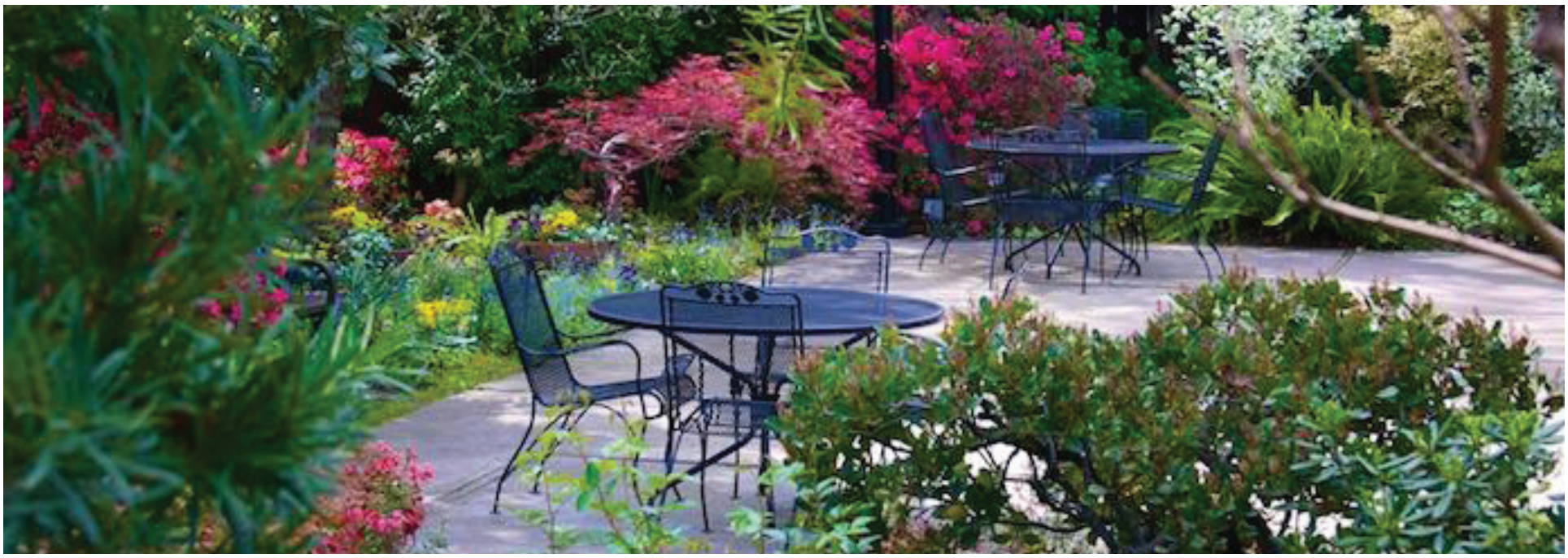
Forty-six years ago, the Casa Garden was just a fundraising idea from two Sacramento Children's Home board members, yet, with a rubber stamp of approval from the others on the board, the restaurant was designed so that if it failed it could become one of the cottages for the Children's Home.

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 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 al-

see Casa page 5



Casa:

continued from page 4

ways 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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20

Winery operated at 15th, R streets a century ago

Establishment was founded by Italian immigrant

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

Although few Sacramentans are aware of its history today, a thriving winery was once located at 1800 15th St., between R and S streets.

Known as the Roma Winery, the establishment was founded, owned and managed by Alfredo "Alfred" Simi Sr. (1863-1937). His home was also located on the grounds of that winery, which began its operations in the early 1900s.

The Roma Winery was established as an immigrant success story.

A native of Lucca, Italy, Alfred Simi Sr. immigrated to the United States in about the mid-1880s, and after completing necessary requirements, he obtained his American citizenship on the testimonies of Italy natives Pietro Antonio "Peter" Galgani and Martino "Martin" Morrelli on Feb. 25, 1891.

Morrelli, who immigrated to the United States in 1869, and Galgani, who came to America in 1888 and owned a groceries and provisions business at 1801 M St. (now Capitol Avenue), both testified that they believed Alfred Simi Sr. was an honest man who would be a good American citizen.

An article in the Feb. 26, 1891 edition of The Sacramento Union notes that, during the previous day, Alfred Simi Sr. "renounced his allegiance to King (Umberto I) and the Italian government in the presence of Judge (Amos P. Catlin)."

Alfred Simi Sr. was the son of Paulo "Paul" and Altamira (Picasso) Simi, who were also natives of Italy.

His wife, Maria "Mary" Simi, who he married in 1898, was also an Italian immigrant, having emigrated from Lucca to the United States in 1890.

The couple would eventually have three children: Alfred Jr., Libero and Giusto Simi.

During research for this article, it was found that prior to establishing his 15th Street winery, Alfred Simi Sr. owned a winery at 1722 2nd St. His home was also located at that address.

The first city directory to recognize the existence of the 2nd Street winery was the 1902 directory.

It is noted in the 1893 city directory that Alfred Simi Sr. was then working as an employee of the Southern Pacific Company, and was then residing at 416 10th St. Other city directories show his positions for that company, at separate times, as locksmith, machinist and brass finisher.

The 1901 city directory lists Alfred Simi Sr. as a Southern Pacific employee and his address as 1722 2nd St.

Although the following year's directory lists Alfred Simi Sr. as the proprietor of a winery at that address, the 1903 through 1905 city directories once again list him as a Southern Pacific employee.

It can be speculated that Alfred Simi Sr. maintained his 2nd Street winery while also working for the Southern Pacific Company, considering that the 1906 directory recognizes him as the proprietor of that winery.

In July 1906, Alfred Simi Sr. officially asked the city for permission to have a railroad spur extend to his 2nd Street winery.

A brief summary in the Feb. 3, 1907 edition of The Union refers to this winery as "one of the thriving institutions engaged in spreading the fame of this section."

The summary also describes the Roma Winery as having a capacity of about 30,000 gallons and "enjoying a large trade."

Continuing, the summary notes: "The wines are made from the best grapes obtainable, and bear the reputation of being among the purest and highest grade on the market."

It was also in 1907 that the then-new city directory listed Louis Simi as a winemaker at the Roma Winery. The following year's directory refers to him as a laborer for the Southern Pacific Company.

The Roma Winery is once again praised in an article in the Nov. 26, 1908 edition of The Union.

It is recognized in that article as a "thriving institution" and one that is "helping to spread the name and fame of Sacramento abroad, and placing our city in a class second to none in California."

Other details in that article include that the winery used domestic and foreign grapes, and had vaults with high concrete walls and floors.

The winery is briefly mentioned in the Nov. 10, 1908 edition of The Sacramento Bee as follows: "A. Simi was granted permission to sell liquor by the quart at the Roma Winery, 1800 Fifteenth Street."

A 1912 listing of members of the Sacramento County Winemakers' Protective Association includes the Roma Winery.

Alfred Simi Sr. was also a trustee of the Italian Bersaglieri Society No. 3, of Sacramento, and a member of Sacramento Druids No. 12.

The following words appeared in an advertisement for the winery in the Nov. 25, 1912 edition of The Bee: "Thanksgiving and Christmas. For these two holidays, we will deliver to you in any part of Sacramento WINES of the finest quality at the most reasonable prices. Buy direct from the winery and get the special price for the holidays. ROMA WINERY, Fifteenth and R sts. We deliver. (Telephone:) Main 1668L."

The aforementioned mother of Alfred Simi Sr. – Altamira Simi – died at the age of 74 on Oct. 29, 1915. At the time of her death, she was living in Alfred Simi Sr's home at 1804 15th St.

An article in the March 7, 1916 edition of The Bee refers to an accident in which Curtis E. Metcalf Sr. ran into a stationary team of horses of a Roma Winery wagon at 15th and R streets. Metcalf suffered a broken arm and various bruises in the accident.

Although the issue made its way to police court, Police Judge John J. Henderson dismissed the case, because it was brought before him under the wrong ordinance. However, Henderson advised Metcalf to pursue a civil court case, if he so desired.

No evidence was found during research for this article that Metcalf sought civil damages in the matter.

Alfred Sr. and Mary Simi suffered the loss of their 17-year-old son, Libero, on March 5, 1917. His funeral was held at his former residence at 1804 15th St., and he was interred at East Lawn

see Winery page 7

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Winery:

continued from page 6

Cemetery – today's East Lawn Memorial Park.

That year's city directory recognizes Roma Winery's owners as Alfred Sr. and Giusto Simi, and the 1918 directory lists the same information, with the exception of the addition of Alfred Simi Jr. as one of the proprietors.

By 1920, the Roma Winery no longer existed, and Alfred Sr. and Giusto Simi had formed Simi & Son tomato conservers at 1800 15th St.

Although Giusto Simi was no longer involved in that operation by the following year, Alfred Simi Sr. is mentioned as a tomato conserver in the 1921 city directory and a farmer in the 1922 city directory.

The 1923 city directory lists Alfred Simi Sr. as simply a resident of 1804 15th St. Giusto Simi is referred to in that directory as a mechanic living at the same address.

When he was 12 years old, Alfred Simi Jr. made news on Oct. 7, 1925, as The Union reported that he swallowed a copper coil.

During his examination by Dr. Gustav Henrickson at his office at 902 J St., an X-ray was taken to determine the location of the coil. No further details pertaining to this situation was found during research for this article.

Alfred Simi Jr. obviously survived that incident, as on Sept. 12, 1933, The Union reported that he graduated from the University of California, Berkeley's College of Pharmacy.

On July 17, 1937, Alfred Simi Sr. died at the age of 75, and he was interred at East Lawn Cemetery. His wife, who died in San Francisco at the age of 81 on April 8, 1960, was buried alongside him.

Giusto Simi died at the age of 41 on Feb. 28, 1943, and was survived by his wife, Mary Simi, and their daughter, Corrine Isola (Simi) Gibbert (1926-2020). He was interred at Odd Fellows Lawn Cemetery on Riverside Boulevard, following his services at the Palm Chapel of James R. Garlick, at 20th and P streets.

According to the obituary of his grandmother, Rose Picasso, in the May 3, 1946 edition of The Bee, Alfred Simi Jr. was then residing in San Francisco.

Through further research for this article, it was found that Alfred Simi Jr. died in that city at the age of 54 on Dec. 18, 1966.

During a visit to the former Roma Winery site for this article last week, the block was occupied by several businesses, including the Iron Horse Tavern, the European Wax Center, Mas Taco Bar, and the law offices of attorneys Desmond, Nolan, Livaich & Cunningham.

Kayla Courchaine, a manager at Iron Horse Tavern – one of several businesses that share the historical address, 1800 15th St. – said she was excited to learn that this bar and restaurant sits on the former winery's property.

"That's awesome," she said. "I had no idea. Yeah, I think it's phenomenal. And we just grow on top of it. It makes this land and this area seem more valuable. I think everybody should know that. I'm going to be telling everybody it used to be a winery, too. That's amazing."

After explaining that Iron Horse Tavern was named after a historic term for early locomotives, Courchaine referenced the R Street train tracks that border the tavern.

"I believe they may have brought the grapes in on the trains and then exported the wine on the trains," she said.

While visiting that business with two of her friends, Elk Grove resident Monique Figueroa also commented on the site's history as the location of a winery.

"I think that's really neat (that) it was part of a winery," she said. "You're here [at Iron Horse Tavern] enjoying spirits and having a good time and when you go to a winery [it is the same concept]."

After also learning about the history of the Roma Winery last week, Sean Kinlock, a 2005 graduate of Christian Brothers High School, told this paper that he hopes that a marker will one day be placed on the site to recognize its winery history.

"It's hard to believe there was a winery here," he said while standing near the tracks, just west of 15th and R streets. "I would like to see the past incorporated with the present. I'm bummed there is no indicator that a winery was here. It would be nice if they put a plaque at this site to recognize the old Roma Winery."



Photo by Lance Armstrong

The Roma Winery was located at 15th and R streets.

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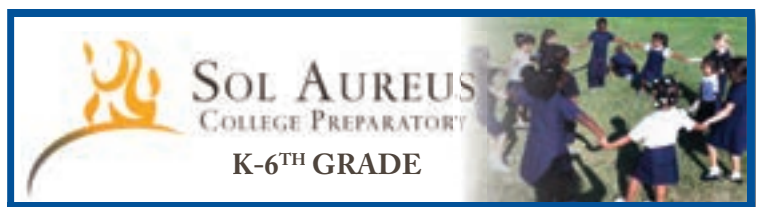
Households throughout the Sacramento region are eligible for free virtual help preparing taxes and claiming credits this year, saving an average of $200 in preparer fees and earning up to $8,000 in credits. More households are eligible to participate in United Way California Capital Region's Free Tax Prep program this year, including those earning $65,000 or less in 2020. Qualified households can upload documents online and a United Way IRS-certified volunteer will call them to help claim the maximum tax credits for which they are eligible before submission, including the federal and state Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC and CalEITC). The IRS will not begin accepting electronically filed returns until Feb. 12, but United Way recommends filing as soon as tax documents are in hand and it will submit the returns on Feb. 12. To learn more, visit YourFreeTaxPrep.org.

"After a year where many people lost employment and income, it's more important than ever for households in our region to take advantage of this program that helps people save money on tax preparation fees and ensures they apply for the maximum refund and credits for which they are eligible," said Stephanie Bray, president and CEO, United Way California Capital Region. "This program is an important way for our community to jumpstart the local economy in 2021, and it's a key element of our Square One Project that provides resources for local families so their children can graduate from high school prepared to succeed in college or career."

This year, more people are eligible to receive the CalEITC and Young Child Tax Credit, including qualifying ITIN holders, after Governor Newsom signed Assembly Bill 1876. Households may be eligible for CalEITC if the taxpayer is at least 18 years old and the house-

see Tax page 9





Get a jump start on summer-Performing arts camp registration open now!

Campers who confirm their spot by March 15 save 10%



The weather might tell a different story, but at CLARA Studios, summer is fast approaching. CLARA Performing Arts Camp offers an extensive, arts-focused range of activities for campers ages 11-18. Students will explore 15 different performing arts disciplines over the two-week period -- and registration is open now. The camp is offered in two sessions -- June 21 - July 2 and July 26 - August 6 -- and costs $495 / student.

Building on the success of the two-week camp, CLARA is also excited to introduce a one-week Performing Arts Junior Camp for kids ages 6-10. Students attending this camp will discover nine dance, music, and theatre genres over the course of a single week. Junior camp is offered in one single-week session July 19-23 and costs $245 / student.

Campers who confirm their registration for either camp by March 15 will save 10% on their tuition; returning campers receive an additional discount. In keeping with CLARA's mission of making the performing arts accessible to all, financial assistance is available based on need.

"Camp is my absolute favorite time of year," said CLARA Education Outreach Director Emili Danz. "Last summer, we were very proud of the virtual summer camp we created in response to COVID-19, but I am really looking forward to being in-person with our campers and getting to see -- firsthand -- their enthusiasm for discovering new performing arts forms."

"This was a fantastic experience," wrote a parent whose child participated in the 2020 Virtual Camp. "Every day [our child] left happy and inspired by the creatives who shared their time and talents with the kids. You have left a lasting positive impact on our daughter. Thank you!!"

This will be the fifth year that CLARA has offered youth summer programs, but the organization recognizes that the continued presence of COVID-19 means this summer is not "business as usual." While the intention is to offer an in-person camp, CLARA does have a digital camp contingency plan should continued increases in COVID rates make an in-person camp against the best interests of artists and students.

Camp will run Monday through Friday, from 9-4pm, with drop off beginning as early as 8. Each day will include classes in dance, music, and theater, with students learning over 15 different performing arts disciplines during the two-week camp, and 9 disciplines in the one-week camp. Tuition includes healthy snacks and daily lunch, all teaching supplies, class and performance materials, a reusable water bottle, and a T-shirt. All camps take place at CLARA -- 1425 24th St -- in Midtown Sacramento. For more information and to register, visit www.claramidtown.org/camp.

About CLARA: CLARA provides studios for both professional and community-based arts groups and a place for creative collisions and collaborations – including an innovative partnership with Sacramento City Unified School District which provides underserved students with access to arts summer camps, internships, tickets and in-school programs fostering interaction with professional artists in a studio environment. Housed at the historic Fremont School in Midtown Sacramento, CLARA was funded by grants from the City of Sacramento and private donations, including the Raley-Teel family. For more information, visit claramidtown.org.

Tax:

continued from page 8

hold earned less than $30,000 in 2020. Many CalEITC-eligible households are not legally required to file taxes due to low income; however if they file, they can claim state and federal credits. Experts recommend everyone files early, noting that many people do not realize that unemployment income is taxable.

United Way's Free Tax Prep program was shifted online last year when the pandemic and stay-at-home order hit. Even with the pivot to virtual services, United Way's Free Tax Prep volunteers filed 7,060 returns for the 2019 tax year and put $10.5 million back in the pockets of local families through federal refunds.

For nearly 100 years, United Way California Capital Region has brought local people together to make community change happen. Today, the nonprofit is bringing people together across Amador, El Dorado, Sacramento, Placer and Yolo counties for its Square One Project, a 20-year promise to significantly increase the number of students in our region who graduate from high school ready for success in college and beyond. United Way believes ending poverty starts in scho ol and is working to ensure kids meet important milestones and their families receive support and resources. To learn more and make a donation, visit YourLocalUnitedWay.org.

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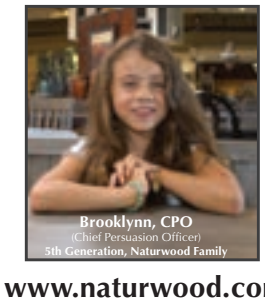
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