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East Sacramento News

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JUVENILE HALL STUDENTS

LEARNING CONSTRUCTION TRADE BASICS

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Sacramento County reintroduces indoor mask mandate

Community responds to order

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

With the July 29 announcement that Sacramento County public health officials reinstated the mandate requiring people to wear face coverings in indoor, public spaces, local residents shared their thoughts on that order.

The reinstated mandate went into effect the following day and pertains to most people, regardless of whether they have been vaccinated against COVID-19. The mandate does not apply to people who are medically exempted from wearing face coverings.

Face masks are also not required for those working alone in a room or exercising.

Indoor public settings, according to the mandate, include restaurants, retail stores, movie theaters, gyms and offices.

The mandate's return occurred nearly two months after being lifted, following the end of California's color-coded tier restrictions for businesses and public buildings.

Dr. Olivia Kasirye, the county's public health officer, stated in her July 29 order that the rise in COVID-19 cases led to the reinstated order.

"Since June 15, 2021, when most restrictions from the state of California's Blueprint for a Safer Economy were lifted, the average daily incident case rate of COVID-19 in Sacramento County has increased 5.5-fold to reach the 'high-transmission' level of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's indicators for levels of community transmission," she wrote.

"The testing positivity rate in Sacramento County has also risen 4.3-fold since June 15. Hospitalizations from COVID-19 in Sacramento County have risen from 60 patients on June 15 to 175 patients on July 27."

Kasiyre additionally stated that the "significantly more transmissible" COVID-19 Delta variant is the predominant strain in the United States, and has accounted for 64.8% of positive specimens collected from county residents and genotyped, since June 15.

As of Aug. 4, the county reportedly had a COVID-19 case rate of 25.6 per 100,000 residents. In contrast, the case rate was reportedly 5.2 cases per 100,000 residents on July 1.

Kasiyre did not provide a date for when the order would be lifted.

Land Park resident Melanie Davis mentioned that she believes in following the county's mask mandate order.

"I'm all for contributing to whatever the solution is, and if that means we all have to wear masks now," she said. "I work in the medical setting, so I've had to wear one from the beginning. So, it's not much of a change for me."

Curtis Park resident Kathy Strawser also believes in following the order.

"I always wear the mask (in public)," she said. "Everyone in my family is vaccinated, so when I'm at home, I don't wear the mask. If I go to Safeway or (in a gas station), paying cash for my gas, then I put the mask on."

Former Land Park resident Lisa Santos, bartender at the XO Lounge, noted that she does not agree with the mandate's requirement for vaccinated people to wear masks indoors in public places.

"I think if you were (vaccinated), I don't think it should apply to you," she said.

"I do think that it's unfortunate that people still have to wear (face coverings). I'm not about government at all, and I think you should do what you want to do."

Stefon Love, who identified himself as a homeless man who lives in the area, believes that it was not necessary to reinstate the mandate.

"On this pandemic and things that are going around with the mask, even though the government says we don't have to wear the mask ever since June, but we have to turn back around and wear them, to me I can understand the panic," he said. "But this is something that if 1,000 people ain't dying in one city to the other to the other, I really think they overregulate.

"I understand the concern, because I'm concerned about it, but I don't think the government or the city where you live (needs) to go this far."

While sitting inside a Land Park business, Gerry Kushida shared his thoughts on the mask mandate.

"The variant is so powerful, I guess, it really effects everybody," he said. "So, we're going back to square one (with face coverings), I think. So, we've got to be careful. Hospital rates are high. I'm concerned about it. What can we do? Everybody's rebelling against wearing masks, and they don't want to get vaccinated.



Photos by Lance Armstrong
Meadowview resident Sam Gevara is among the supporters of Sacramento County's reinstated mask mandate.

"I think it's up to you. If you want to wear your mask, fine. If not, fine."

Little Pocket resident Lein Shanahan said that he is frustrated with the "flip-flopping" of the mandate.

"To me, it's like, we got vaccinated, trying to get back to normal life and you want to flip-flop and say, 'Oh, now that you're vaccinated, you've got to go (back) and wear masks.'"

Steven Quarles, a 1975 graduate of John F. Kennedy High School, mentioned that he questions the recent mask mandate.

"I don't give (an expletive) what the government thinks," he said. "I'll be damned if I'm going to follow anything they say. I've always felt suspect. You know, conspiracy theorist."

Asked about the mandate, Meadowview resident Sam Gevara noted that he has grown frustrated with Gov. Gavin Newsom.

"We should have (continued to wear) masks before the second opening," he said. "Our governor. He don't care. He would rather have us get sick and die. So, I would rather have people inside the stores or buildings have masks on, because you don't know who got sick, who's not.

"Personally, I think (the mandate) is a good idea, but most people, they don't realize

see Mask page 3

EAST SACRAMENTO NEWS
WWW.VALCOMNEWS.COM

E-mail stories & photos to: editor@valcomnews.com
Editorial questions: (916) 267-8992

East Sacramento News is published on the first and third Thursday of the month in the area bounded by Business 80 on the west, the American River on the north and east and Highway 50 on the south.

Publisher ..... David Herburger
Editor ..... Monica Stark
Art Director ..... Annin Piper
Advertising Director ..... Jim O'Donnell
Advertising Executives: ..... Melissa Andrews, Linda Pohl

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Vol. XXX • No. 17

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Juvenile Hall Students Learning Construction Trade Basics

SCOE and NCCT Partnership Teaching Students Job Skills

Construction teacher Jack Maberry closely watches his students as they work to build shelves as part of a class project. His job: part instructor, part motivator.

"You know how to read the tape. You guys just did it. You aced it!" Maberry encourages loudly above the racket of hammers. A few minutes later he compliments a student who is gaining confidence using power tools. "There you go. Good job!" he shouts.

Maberry is not a conventional trades instructor working in a conventional school. He works for Northern California Construction Training (NCCT), and the students he teaches attend El Centro Jr./Sr. High School—a Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) juvenile court school program inside the Sacramento County Youth Detention Facility (YDF).

The closely supervised NCCT pre-apprenticeship program helps students learn the basics of the construction trade. Through this program, students can eventually join trade unions in fields like welding and carpentry following their release. The full support of the Sacramento County Probation Department makes it possible for SCOE to offer this Career Technical Education inside the YDF.

"The kids love it. It's one of our most in-demand programs, and it will help these young men and women earn a sustainable wage when they leave us," said Barbara Modlin, El Centro Jr./Sr. High School Principal.

Students learn construction basics, such as how to properly use tools, how to work in teams, how to create budgets, and how to plan projects. They also gain hands-on experience that teaches them how to use applied math.

"They're learning real-life applications," the principal explained. "It teaches the kids so many transferable skills that they can take with them once they leave us."

"Out of all the years I've been teaching," added Maberry, "there's something that just doesn't compare to teaching youth. To be able to access these students at the age they are and to expose them to something like this, something I'm very passionate about, which is building. Nothing can fulfill that. I can't buy that in a can or a bottle."



The instructor says he hopes the construction course will give students a level of comfort so that, upon their release, they will enroll in adult classes with NCCT, find a career in the construction trade, and earn a good wage.

Mask:

continued from page 2

that. It's really stupid all these people sitting around not wearing a mask. It's dumb. I believe the real-life science. I don't believe the fake news stuff."

Oak Park resident John Williams told this paper that he supports the reinstated mask mandate.

However, he noted that although he is very concerned about the spreading of COVID-19, he does not attempt to promote his view with others.

"A grown man or woman has to make their (own) choice," he said. "I don't judge. Just don't give (the virus) to me."

Katie, a nurse in the community who did not want to share her last name, supports the reinstated mask mandate.

"I'm all for the mask mandate," Katie said. "Our hospitals are being overflowed again. We don't have the means to keep up with the rate that it's going up, and if masks can help cut that down even a little bit, I think it's an easy concession to make for the betterment of everyone around you."

She also commented on the COVID-19 variant.

"We're already seeing it mutate so far, and we're already seeing it become smarter than us at this point," she said. "So, I think wearing masks can keep us smarter than mutations. If wearing masks cuts down the ability for it to further mutate, so our vaccine might not even work anymore, I think we've got to do our part."

West Sacramento resident Melissa Gomez mentioned that she especially supports the mask mandate, due to her medical issue that prevents her from getting vaccinated.

"I think the mask mandate is a good thing to do, and I think we should be wearing them," she said. "I haven't gotten sick since we had to (wear them)."



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Faces and Places: Food distribution at Encina High School

Photos by Stephen Crowley

San Juan Unified, in partnership with River City Food Bank, hosted a monthly food distribution event at Encina Preparatory High School on Thursday, Aug. 19. In addition, a resource fair was held to provide emergency supports for our Afghan community.

A significant portion of our San Juan Unified community, including students, families and staff members, have family ties and connections to Afghanistan. To help support our community members that are struggling with recent events, San Juan Unified is bringing community partners together to provide resources to our families in the Arden-Arcade area.

Supports will include: Community resource agencies, mental health resources, therapeutic art kits for families, San Juan Unified supports.

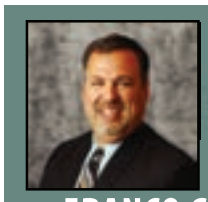






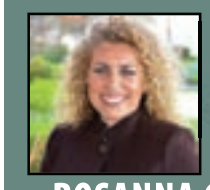






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The following is a message from SJUSD Superintendent Kent Kern:

I am devastated to learn about the horrific events currently occurring in Afghanistan and cannot even begin to imagine what the Afghan people are going through. Basic human rights are being violated and no one deserves to have these rights taken away.

A significant portion of our San Juan Unified community, including students, families and staff members, have family ties and connections to Afghanistan. I want to let those that are personally being affected by these events know that we are here to support them in any way that we can.

Counseling is available to students and staff who may need extra support or simply someone to talk to. Please contact your school front office or counseling department if you'd like to request counseling support.

Additionally, below are a few resources that may be helpful as we have conversations over the next few days.

- Mental Health Resources
- District Services & Care Solace Referral Service
- Helping Children Cope with Emergencies
- Supporting Children's Mental Health

Thank you for being a part of our community and for supporting one another during these difficult times.

Local church extends homeless assistance to Southside area

By LANCE ARMSTRONG

A local church's ongoing project to assist Sacramento's homeless was recently introduced at a homeless camp along W Street, in the city's Southside area.

While wearing blue T-shirts bearing the words, "Capital Dream Team," and the acronym, CCC, a group of male members of Capital Christian Center carried bags and boxes containing food and other essential goods from their vehicles to the camp.

Capital Christian Center is a longtime operating Sacramento church, which is located in the Rosemont area, near Highway 50 and Bradshaw Road.

The church's effort to bring food, clothing and other essentials to homeless camps in Sacramento was established by the church's men's group, which is known as the Capital Men.

Michael Paschenko, one of the coordinators of the church's homeless assistance program, told this publication that this group's deliveries are an extension of the church's larger food assistance program for the homeless.

"We put together about 200 bags of food for people to just drive through – and as they come through, we would be COVID(-19) compliant and have our masks on and such – and (the volunteers) hand

see Homeless page 7



This homeless camp on W Street is among many such camps with border streets in Sacramento.

Oak Park First Fridays featuring "Dinorah"



The Brickhouse Gallery & Art Complex returns with their first "Oak Park First Friday event since the pandemic, featuring "DINORAH" in the outdoor patio with J Beezy Stage Truck providing the sound and stage for all First Friday events. This is a free event from 6 to 9 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 3.

Acclaimed multi-award winning singer, songwriter and musician, Dinorah has performed for audiences throughout the U.S. and Mexico for over 25 years.

Born and raised in Mexico City, Dinorah started her musical education at age of eight years old when she learned to play guitar and quickly developed a passion for Flamenco, Salsa, Bolero, and Ballads.

Dinorah has performed with legendary artists such as Stevie Wonder, Mariachi Vargas, Mariachi Sol de Mexico, Patti Labelle, Celia Cruz, and many more.

Based locally, she manages a traditional Latin American and Spanish group, Las Brujas; a salsa and blues band, Crosswinds; and performs music from all over the world as a soloist with her inseparable guitar.

Dinorah is also involved in the production of shows and festivals, including Sacramento's own Annual Mariachi Festival.

The Brickhouse is located at 2837 36th St. in Oak Park.

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Chautauqua Playhouse presents Peter James' "The Perfect Murder"



Chautauqua Playhouse will open its new season with the murder mystery "The Perfect Murder", by Peter James, adapted for the stage by Shaun McKenna, beginning on August 27 at the Playhouse. The show will run on Fridays and Saturdays at 8:00 pm and Sundays at 2:00 pm through September 26. The performances are held at the Chautauqua Playhouse, 5325 Engle Road in the La Sierra Community Center in Carmichael. Admission is $23 General, $21 Seniors/Students and SARTA members. Premium seating is an additional dollar. Tickets at the door are general pricing.

Have you ever wondered how you commit the perfect murder? Victor Smiley and his wife Joan have been married for a long time. But their marriage has reached a crisis point, and Victor has decided there is only one way to get Joan out of his life forever... but he's about to get a nasty surprise. You'll be on the edge of your seat! *

*This show is rated R, for language, violence and sexual situations.

Patrons will be required to follow CDC, local and state requirements and must be masked during the performances. Proof of vaccination or a recent negative covid test may be requested.

The direction is by Patricia Lee Schmeltz, with set and light design by Andrew Fiffick. The cast features Lynnette Blaney, Warren Harrison, Said Noori, Destiny Syftestad, and John Goodin.

Information and tickets are available through the Chautauqua Playhouse website: www.cplayhouse.org or call the box office at (916) 489-7529, during business hours.

Got News?
e-mail editor@valcomnews.com

Homeless:

continued from page 5

over two bags of food to each car that came through. And that was (held on) Sundays. And now we're continuing it and increasing the number of bags."

The group recently handed out 200 bags of essentials at their church grounds and then distributed additional bags of food and other items directly to homeless camps.

"Tent city" deliveries are made by the Capital Men on the fourth Sunday of every month.

Although the area for these deliveries currently extends from the Rosemont area to the homeless camp across from Southside Park, Paschenko noted that the church hopes to eventually expand its deliveries into other nearby areas.

"As long as we (have) grocery bags to hand out, time on our hands," he said.

The bags of food and other essentials are supplemented with any available clothing, shoes and toiletries, Paschenko said.

In addition to delivering food and other essentials to people experiencing homelessness, Capital Men members also pray with them and listen to their personal stories.

In speaking about people who live on the streets, Paschenco said that among the top things that they desire are an address, which will allow them to apply for jobs, and a home where they can comfortably lay their heads at night.

He also mentioned that many homeless are sick, have dependencies and have no way of obtaining professional assistance.

"They're on the streets and they're just surviving," Paschenko said.

Paschenko noted that the church's efforts to help the city's homeless is not new.

"It started with the (church's) Winter Sanctuary (in 2012)," he said. "It allowed the homeless to be bused to our church for a week or two at a time as an overflow when (Sacramento) County had run out of spaces to house them during the winter months."

As part of that program, during those winter evenings, the church's gymnasium was opened with sleeping quarters, and tables were set up for feeding the homeless. Many were shown movies, while others played games, prior to going to sleep for the night.

Each morning, the group was awakened at 5 a.m., provided with breakfast-to-go, and then they were transported back to Loaves and Fishes, a longtime provider for the homeless, on North C Street.

At the time of the church's beginnings with its food distribution program, CCC Senior Pastor Rick Cole was part of that county program, which united more than 30 churches to assist local homeless people.

Cole spent two weeks living with homeless people in Sacramento in 2014 to raise awareness and funds for the Winter Sanctuary program.

Capital Christian Center's involvement with the Winter Sanctuary continued for several years, until funding became an issue.

Paschenko told this paper that although the possibility of reintroducing that program is contemplated, it is not currently an option due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

He added that almost every homeless person aided by his church is very appreciative of that assistance.

"They are so appreciative," he said. "They feel like they're invisible. Nobody sees them, they just walk by them. They don't stop and talk to them. They cross paths by going across the street to avoid them. They don't look at them.

"So, they're everyday people, just like you and I. They've gone through some difficulties and some of them are brand new on the streets and they're learning (about that lifestyle)."

Paschenko mentioned that some of the homeless people who the Capital Men served expressed astonishment with the kindness of these volunteers.

"(They are impressed with) the fact that we would take our time to go to a desolate area where they have their tents set up, and the fact that we took our time to over there and recognize them and help them with food and clothing and such. We find areas that are so desolate that we were the first ones to ever come (visit) them.

"I can't even describe how much they appreciate that we come to them and recognize them and let them know that they're valued and that we love them. And that's why we're here."

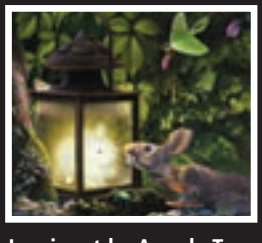


Photos by Lance Armstrong

Michael Paschenko, middle, is shown with residents of a homeless camp in the Southside area.

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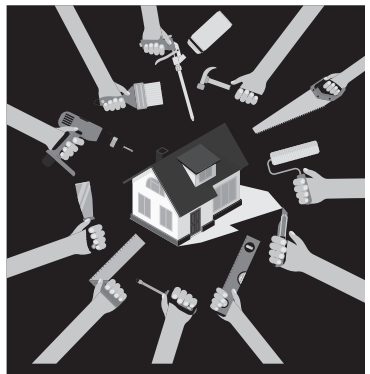
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Faces and Places: Hot Arden Night Car Show



Photos by Stephen Crowley

The community came together to enjoy some great looking cars while listening to live tunes by Dyanna and the Cherry Kings at the Hot Arden Nights Car Show, which was held on Saturday, Aug. 21 at Arden Park.

Covering the rock 'n' roll hits of the 1950s such as Eddie Cochran, Carl Perkins, Wanda Jackson, the young Elvis Presley, Patsy Cline, the band was a perfect match for the car show, as the Cherry Kings are a high-energy band that always encourage you to get-up-and-dance the night away. Source: dyannaandthecherrykings.com/about







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MONTHLY MEETING

MEMBER BREAKFAST

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8

8:30 AM - 10:30 AM

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3330 Mckinley Park Drive

MIXERS

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

5:30 PM - 7:00 PM

Lefty's Tap Room

5610 Elvas Ave

Sacramento Play Summit returns virtually on Sept. 11



Play is the most important work of childhood, setting the foundation for a child's physical, emotional and cognitive well-being. Yet there are growing threats and limitations placed on the time, resources and spaces devoted to play.

Presented by Fairytale Town and Sacramento Public Library, the Sacramento Play Summit will be held online this year on Saturday, Sept. 11 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. It aims to highlight the importance of play, the many types of play, ways to incorporate play into daily and school life, and more. This conference is ideal for adults who work with children: preschool and elementary educators, early childhood education specialists, childcare providers, after-school program administrators and practitioners, parks and recreation professionals, physical education professionals, parents and grandparents.

Presented by Fairytale Town and the Sacramento Public Library, this conference highlights the importance of play, ways to incorporate play, and more. The conference also qualifies for seven hours of professional growth credit.

The following is a question and answer with event spokesperson Sacramento Public Library Youth Services Manager Christie Hamm and Valley Community Newspapers.

Valley Community Newspapers: Who are the speakers? Why were they chosen for the summit?

Christie Hamm: This year we have an amazing lineup of speakers. The virtual nature of the Summit this year allowed us to bring some much needed expertise that might not be possible if we were in person.

Our morning speakers Dr. Corliss Outley and Dr. Harrison Pinckney will highlight the experiences, concerns and opportunities that families raising Black children consider when engaging in play. Attention will be given to lessons learned through play and its impact on identity development and self-esteem. Tips will be provided for providing positive play experiences for families raising Black children.

Our afternoon will close with a presentation from Dr. Ariana Blazer and Juli Blazer, two play educators on sustaining cultural identity through play, promoting play as an avenue to celebrate, learn, and be in relationship with one another across all spectrums of life. And in between we have breakout sessions from local experts on a variety of topics – playing with books, outdoor play, play for children with special needs, weapon and fantasy play, and more.

VCN: How many years has this event gone on? How has it changed over the years?

Hamm: This is the 9th year Sacramento Public Library and Fairytale Town have presented the Play Summit. The Summit has changed some over the years. While we missed being together in person, we were able to pivot very successfully in 2020 to a virtual environment, which we will do again this year.

VCN: What do you hope attendees get out of the event? What are you looking forward to most?

Hamm: Since its inception, it has brought together members of the community for a combination of practical hands on sessions, inspiring keynotes, some silliness, and networking, all with the aim of making sure Sacramento has access to the very best resources to support our community's children.

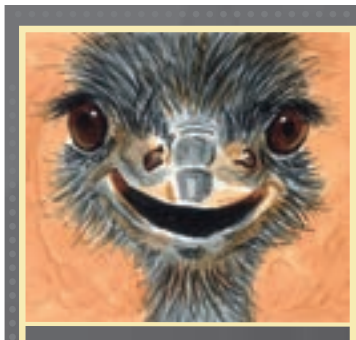
VCN: What role does the library play in putting together the play summit? Tell us about the partnership between Fairytale Town and the library in getting the summit underway.

Hamm: Sacramento Public Library is committed to making sure children and families have the supports they need to be ready to learn.

There are five early learning practices which help prepare children for learning – Talking, Singing, Reading, Writing, and Playing. The Play Summit is a way to help develop this important learning practice.

The Play Summit began in 2013 because of Library Director Rivkah Sass, and Fairytale Town's former director Kathy Fleming. The two of them saw the need in our community for this kind of discu ssion and celebration and learning opportunity. It was clear that first year that this was something much needed, and it has attracted a sell out crowd every year since. The good part about the virtual space is there's room for everyone!

For more information, visit: https://www.fairytaletown.org/calendar/sacramento-play-summit/



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