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Local "Marmaladies" returned to the State Fair as the "Brine Babes"

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Local "Marmaladies" returned to the State Fair as the "Brine Babes"



Barbara Ruona and KD Proffit

By Pat Lynch

Remember the Marmaladies—- two Sacramento retirees who experimented together in 2015 to develop a knockout marmalade recipe? They were Barbara Ruona and K. D. Proffit, and they nervously submitted their first sample to Cal Expo food judges. They won Second Place, then Firsts in succeeding competitions, discovered they had an enthusiastic following, and finally, with the cleverly named submission, Clockwork Orange, took the ultimate prize, Best of Show. They'd gone as high as they could go.

Then came Covid, and the long lockdown. The State Fair closed; public gatherings ceased. Who doesn't recall those hard two years of retreat? Then, a recovery. Cal Expo reopened. Would the Marmaladies return to attempt a second season of triumph? No. This time it's different.

They have reinvented themselves. Now they are the Brine Babes, an edgier, sharper duo who chose the pickle as their food submission. But why the pickle? "You know how marmalade is sweet and tasty, and kind of …pleasant?" Proffit said. "This time we wanted to challenge ourselves with something completely different, to show diversity." They believed the pickle possessed a very different persona from marmalade. So, from fruity breakfast preserves to fermented cucumbers, from Ladies to Babes, the former champs have returned with their new name and newest culinary creation.

It was a hot, sunny July 22nd when we entered the welcome cool of Building B and found our way to the pickling competition. Six judges stood behind two display tables, sampling products, drinking from small vials of milk to cleanse their palates of previous pickle flavors, emphasizing that this is a serious competition that has attracted many submissions.

Barbara Ruona sat in the front row, intently focused on the tableau before her. Her colleague, K. D. Proffit, could not be there. Friends sat next to Ruona and others in the row behind her. All awaited the fate of the Brine Babes first pickling effort— a submission named Shake Spears.

What matters in these serious competitions is execution

See MARMALADIES on Page 3

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Marmaladies

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and presentation. The Brine Babes knew from painful experience that the tiniest flaw or oversight could cost points, even be disqualifying. Today a judge regretfully displayed two jars of pickles, one medium sized, the other smaller. The product was very good, the judge said, but the jars must be the identical size, identical make, and have identical lids. The size disparity caused this submission to be disqualified. Ruona shook her head at her friends and they visibly relaxed. The rejected jars did not belong to the Brine Babes.

But we were not to learn the further results that day. Ruona and her coterie finally left, leaving Shake Spears in the hands of knowing judges.

The next day? A First Place for the Brine Babes. Barbara Ruona immediately called K.D. Proffit and sent her a picture of their prize-winning Shake Spears. Pickle power reigned. But the contest isn't over, the competition goes on, and it's fierce. They won First Place, and next year they'll be back, to shoot for Best of Show. The Brine Babes are off and running.



Shake Spears



Judges Inspect Shake Spears

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Our East Sacramento Community Voices Scholarship Winners

As we creep close to the start of the 2022-2023 school year, take a moment to celebrate East Sacramento Preservation's 2022 Community Voices Scholarship winners. We recognized four graduating students from our designated public high school, Kit Carson International Baccalaureate. These students value and support their neighbors and neighborhoods.

Rocio Jazmin Villanueva plans to be a nurse and will attend Sacramento State University. During COVID-19 Jazmin helped clean up her neighbors' yards and came up with the idea of free manicures and acrylic nails. "Women who get their nails done sometimes do it to feel better, including me," Jazmin notes. Her volunteer efforts helped her neighborhood navigate the challenges of the pandemic.

Kiaya Batkin will attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and continue to a master's in City and Regional Planning. "Speaking up has never been my strong suit, but I have had to develop the skills regardless," said Kiaya. Work as a summer camp counselor offered her the chance to pass her burgeoning communication skills forward by helping several shy students overcome hesitation and anxiety.

Claire Kinego will study biology at UC Santa Barbara and plans a career working with animals. During the pandemic Claire volunteered at the Sacramento Public Library. She worked with children to develop their reading skills over Zoom. "Sometimes during the sessions, I could tell some of the students

See SCHOLARSHIP on Page 5

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Scholarship

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Kiaya Batkin



Claire Kinego



Emily Seltzer

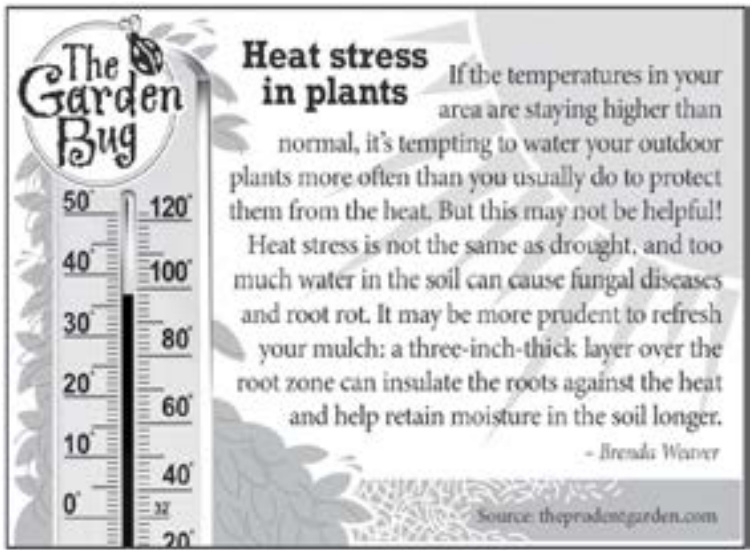


Roccio Jazmin Villanueva

were really struggling. Not just with work but also life," Claire explained. She realized that her hours tutoring over the computer may have not seemed like much, but it helped struggling kids during a tough time.

Emily Seltzer enrolled in Sacramento City College and plans to transfer to San Diego State University. She is working towards a career in physical therapy. Emily's childhood home saw the constant presence of therapists. "My younger sister has autism, and I learned a great deal about the condition and acceptance," Emily said All four years of high school Emily volunteered with the Fly Brave Foundation. This organization helps people with autism to develop life skills.

ESP is grateful to the community sponsors and individuals who make this scholarship program possible.





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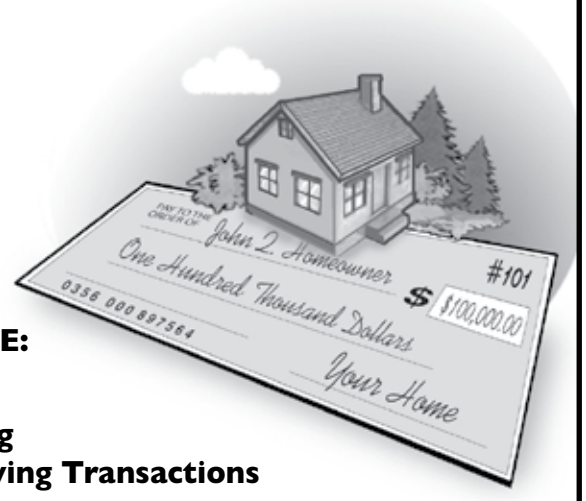


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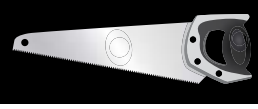
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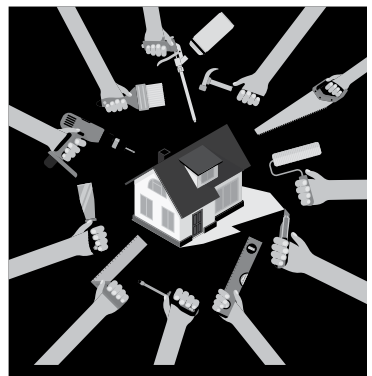
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