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East Sacramento News

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Chalk It Up! festival showcases works of local chalk artists

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Chalk It Up! festival showcases works of local chalk artists

By Lance Armstrong
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Sacramento's Labor Day weekend festival, Chalk It Up!, returned to the sidewalks of Fremont Park for all three days of the Labor Day weekend, from Sept. 3-5.

For the 32nd annual year, this event gave artists of various levels the opportunity to showcase their talents on sidewalks, using the medium of chalk.

Dozens of artists made sure to arrive at this downtown Sacramento park, at 15th and P streets, during the early morning hours of each of those days in anticipation of the expected high temperatures that would consistently surpass the century mark.

But the heat did not deter these artists from spending the long weekend dedicating themselves to creating a variety of colorful images on the park's concrete sidewalks.

Both artists and spectators from throughout the capital city and beyond congregated for the chalk art experience, as well as live music, interactive art activities, local crafts, and food.

John Nelson, the publicity director for Chalk It Up!, referred to the festival as the only free, three-day, family event during Labor Day weekend in Sacramento.

Nelson mentioned that Chalk It Up! is a nonprofit, which supports and promotes local artists.

"What we're doing is we're raising money for the programs that support Sacramento artists," he said. "Every single (concrete sidewalk) square that you see around the perimeter of the park is sponsored. About $300 is coming into Chalk It Up! for each of these squares.

"We take the money, we hosted an awesome party over Labor Day weekend, and throughout the year, we give microgrants to youth art educators and the organizations that support young people who are trying to do art in the Sacramento community."

During this paper's tour of the event on the morning of Sept. 3, the participating artists were in various stages of the early portions of their works.

Among the veteran Chalk It Up! artists is Arden area resident Elena Perez.

"I've been doing this (event) since 1998," she said. "My sponsor is (a restaurant) named Frog & Slim, and I like to find out (who) my sponsor is and then I kind of get inspiration from that. So, I decided with a name like that I wanted to do (chalk art of) a frog."

Perez mentioned that she believes this event continuously improves.



Photo by Lance Armstrong

Alice Bourdykina-Jelobniouk, on Sept. 3, holds artwork showing how her chalk art would appear upon its completion. In the background is an early portion of that project.

"The festival has just gotten bigger and better every year, and you'll see some people, they will come every year," she said.

Gregory Berger, who also lives in the Arden area, noted that he has been a Chalk It Up! artist since about 2012.

"I love this festival," he said. "It's one of my favorite things to do."

Berger mentioned that this year he created two art pieces: one for Sacramento radio station, KISS 107.9 FM, and one for the Sacramento Children's Museum.

Another longtime artist of this event is Scott Clark.

"I've done chalk art for 11 years here at Chalk It Up!," he said. "It's a great event. I'm sponsored by a local orthodontist office, Giannetti & Booms. So, basically, every year I try to do something interactive.

"What I try to do is (create pieces) to have someone stop by and do a puzzle or game or something. So, this year, we've got a puzzle (to) solve, to find a forward answer to why don't trees need braces? If you want to know the answer, it's 'All bark, no bite.'"

Carmichael resident Nestor Mendoza spoke about his artistic contribution to this event.

"I am going to be drawing Mylar balloon lettering for my sponsor, North Natomas Jibe, and it will be a piece that hopefully inspires people to walk more, ride their bikes more and use public transit," he said.

Mendoza added that he loves this festival, because it inspires new artists to "do what they love, make decisions, to grow as people, as artists."

At the time he was interviewed by this publication, Shawn Asberry was busy working on an artistic image of a character who is known by people young, old and in between.

"I chose Oscar (of 'Sesame Street')," he said. "I've been seeing the image a lot. Other artists do it and I really wanted to make my own version of it. No specific meaning. I just wanted a cool image. I'm kind of giving him a happy vibe, instead of a grouchy vibe."

Alice Bourdykina-Jelobniouk, who lives in the Antelope area, mentioned that she was working on chalk art for Sacramento's Bob Dreizler.

"He has sponsored a Chalk It Up! square for 32 years, so the entire time," she said. "He's been around since the beginning. He lets me do whatever (chalk) art I would like."

Bourdykina-Jelobniouk spoke about her chalk art piece for this year.

"I'm drawing a belted kingfisher and a great blue heron from Mather Lake, which is a local lake down near Rancho Cordova," she said. "It's a local fishing spot, but it also has lots of birds. I (also) decided to go with sunrises, because they always look good with

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Chalk It Up!

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chalk."

Art is only a hobby for Bourdykina-Jelobniouk, who works as a political analyst. However, she noted that she is part of a long line of artists in her family.

Another artist, Natomas resident Andrea Johnston, explained why she decided to create a large image of a bee.

"For a couple of reasons," she said. "One, it was bright and colorful, (and) bees are kind of an issue these days. And also, it wasn't too complicated with the heat, and being able to get it done in time."

Johnston's daughter, Mia, said that she was working on an image of a dog that would take her the entire three-day festival to complete.

Mia added that she enjoys creating art with chalk.

"I think that chalk art is really cool, because of just how temporary it is," she said. "It's something that will maybe be there for only a couple of days and then it's gone. Everything you put into it is for the moment, and it's nothing permanent beyond like a photo."



Photo by Lance Armstrong

Pictured is Arden area resident Elena Perez's partially completed chalk art featuring a frog.

Working collaboratively on one chalk art piece was Laurel Shen and her daughters, Alyssa, 19, and Brianna, 16.

Laurel described her Roseville family's chalk art project for an East Sacramento nonprofit organization.

"Our sponsor is The Silver Orange," she said. "They're an organization that helps kids (through) art and stuff like that. And so, this is whimsical, a little bunny, and eventually he'll be hanging stars in the sky. And then we're going to try and do the moon. So, The Silver Orange. It's silver and then we're going to try and add a little orange to it."

Brianna mentioned that her family is building a tradition as participants in this festival.

"This is our fourth year doing Chalk It Up!, so it's been a lot of fun coming out here and doing chalk art," she said. "I think (the festival) is (for) a really good cause and it's a lot of fun, and people can join in and come and see. And kids can draw chalk art, too, so they can be a part of it."



Photo courtesy of Scott Clark

Shown above is the chalk art project completed by Scott Clark on Sept. 5.

Although he was not creating art, Pocket area resident Casey McCarthy attended the event in support of second-year Chalk It Up! artist Sarah Ledesma, of Sacramento.

Ledesma, who is 17, contributed an art piece featuring characters from the computer-animated film, 'Zootopia,' to the festival.

McCarthy mentioned that he was very impressed with the event.

"I think it's amazing," he said. "It is some of the best kind of free art you will see, and it's very expressive, and it's very independent, and it's all done by people who are local and who want to come out and do this every year on their own. There's no major commitment. They just kind of do it, because it's a great will of expression."



United Farm Workers complete 335-mile trek to state Capitol

By Lance Armstrong
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The United Farm Workers (UFW) labor union and their supporters arrived in Sacramento on Aug. 26, after marching more than 300 miles from Delano, a city located about 30 miles northeast of Bakersfield.

Following the historic Delano-Sacramento route made famous by civil rights activist and National Farm Workers Association (today's UFW) co-founder Cesar Chavez in 1966, the group left Delano on Aug. 3.

The original 1966 march was designed to draw attention to difficult working conditions in the fields and to demand rights and freedoms for farmworkers.

The recent journey, titled, "March for the Governor's Signature," was held with the purpose of urging Gov. Gavin Newsom to sign Assembly Bill (AB) 2183 – the Agricultural Labor Relations Voting Choice Act.

Authored by Mark Stone, D-Monterey Bay, and others, the bill calls for the right of farmworkers to vote by mail in union representation elections.

According to a United Farm Workers statement, this measure makes it "easier for farmworkers to vote in a union, free from intimidation and deportation by grower foremen, supervisors and farm labor contractors."

UFW spokesperson Marc Grossman, a former personal aide to Chavez, spoke about AB 2183.

"This bill would allow farmworkers the same voting choices that all California political voters have enjoyed for years – that is you can vote from the comfort and security of your home by mail, you can drop off ballots at certain locations," he said. "So, these were the voting choices that Gov. Newsom used to fend off the Republican recall nearly a year ago."

Opposition to the bill includes claims that it would force farmworkers to vote for unionization and take away their rights to vote privately.

As of press time, AB 2183 had not been signed or vetoed by Newsom. However, it was passed by the California Legislature on Aug. 29, and was sent to the governor's desk.

Candlelight vigils were set up in four California cities: Sacramento, Fresno, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

The vigil in Sacramento, at 11th and N streets, near the state Capitol, as well as the other three vigils, are intended to remain in

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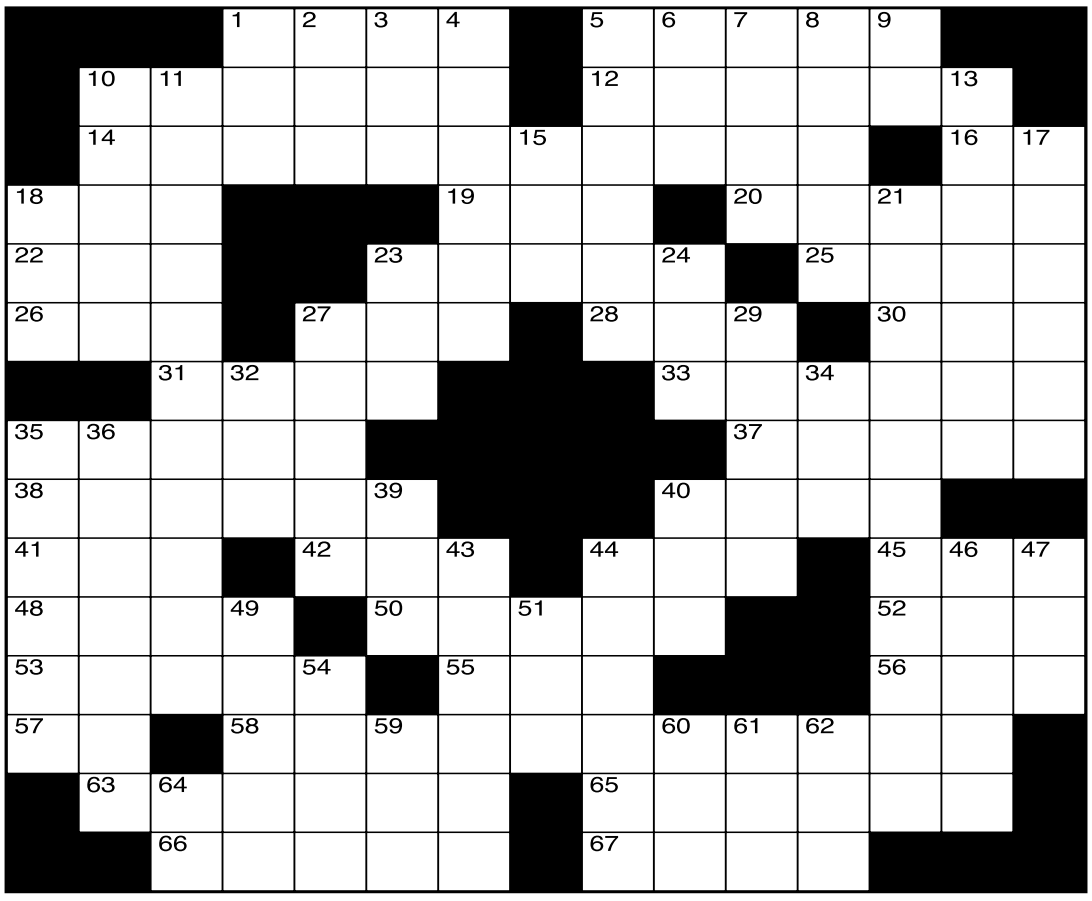
CROSSWORD



CLUES ACROSS
1. Crops sown in winter in India
5. Nursemaids in East Asia
10. Investigates
12. Treated like a child
14. About religious belief
16. Widely used exclamation
18. Car mechanics group
19. Not good
20. Indigenous people of Alberta
22. Everyone has one
23. Fencing sword
25. Soaks
26. The human foot
27. Of she
28. Erythrocyte (abbr.)
30. Soldiers
31. Energy, style and enthusiasm
33. Playwright O'Neill
35. Stone parsley
37. Small stones
38. Gas descriptor
40. Monetary unit of Samoa
41. Jeans manufacturer
42. NHL great Bobby
44. Cool!
45. Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!
48. Winged
50. Partner to "oohed"
52. Defensive nuclear weapon
53. Coated
55. Furry household friend
56. Chinese principle underlying the universe
57. Prefix meaning "within"
58. Makes easier
63. Transferred property
65. Branched
66. Hillsides
67. Abba __, Israeli diplomat

CLUES DOWN
1. Eggs in a female fish
2. Military mailbox
3. Unit to compare power levels
4. Line on a map connecting similar points
5. One who accepts
6. Partner to cheese
7. Ancient Greek sophist
8. About hilus
9. Southeast
10. Where actors ply their trade
11. Beloved Philly sandwich
13. Intend
15. Talk excessively
17. Bronx cheers
18. Drain
21. Renews
23. Monetary unit in Asia
24. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
27. Carthaginian statesman
29. Aged
32. Mauna __, Hawaiian volcano
34. Firearm
35. Consolation
36. An island in the north Atlantic
39. Pitching statistic
40. Disconsolate
43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
44. Call it a career
46. Behave in a way that degrades someone
47. Health insurance
49. Recommend
51. Baltic peninsula
54. Father
59. After B
60. Bar bill
61. Doctors' group
62. 2,000 lbs.
64. Equal to one quintillion bytes

United March

Continued from page 4

place until the governor either signs or vetoes the bill.

Included in the Sacramento vigil is an elaborate altar adorned with iconic UFW black eagle flags, religious objects, and the well-worn shoes of a marcher who completed the entire trek.

Grossman noted that Newsom has 30 days to sign or veto this measure.

As one who can give a first-hand account of the recent UFW march, Grossman was one of about 30 people who walked the entire 335 miles.

"(There were also) daily marchers," he said. "People would join the march for a day or two days. And when it got into a town, a lot of (people) would join – sometime hundreds of people in mostly farming communities."

Altogether, about 5,000 people joined the farmworkers' march.

Grossman recalled Chavez's longest and least known march, which came to Sacramento 47 years ago.

"I worked with (Chavez) on his longest peaceful march in 1975," he said. "(It was) 1,000 miles in 59 days, and we went from the Mexican border at San Ysidro, north along the coast to Salinas and drove to Sacramento, and marched south through the Central Valley to our headquarters on the other side of Bakersfield.

In the UFW's most recent march, on Aug. 26, marchers arrived at Southside Park, where they were joined by about 3,000 supporters en route to a rally at the Capitol.

During that rally, thousands of people chanted, "Sign that bill" and "Si, se puede (Spanish for 'Yes, it can be done')," the UFW slogan coined by Dolores Huerta, the union's other co-founder.

The rally also included a speech by Huerta, who explained that she seeks more than Newsom's signature on AB 2183.

"I want to ask the governor, not only to sign the bill, but to get the growers together and tell them they don't get any more legislation unless they recognize the farmworkers' union, OK?" she said. "This march is not in vain. Your sacrifice is not going to go unrewarded. We're going to step it up. We're going to demand more."



The United Farm Workers march heads to the California state Capitol on Aug. 26.



A United Farm Workers vigil is shown near the California state Capitol last month.



A crowd of about 5,000 people assembled near the state Captiol on Aug. 26 in support of Assembly Bill 2183.

Puzzle Solutions

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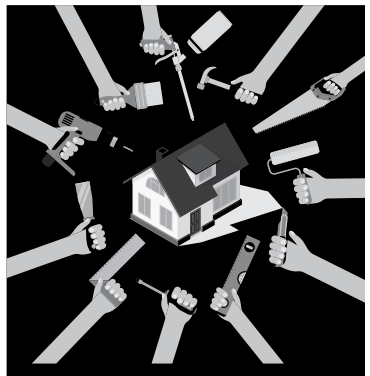

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