February 2, 2023

East Sacramento News

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Chinese New Year event coming to south Sacramento Feb. 4

See page 3



Elk Grove City Council approves additional $800K for proposed zoo

Sacramento Zoo could potentially relocate, expand in Elk Grove

By Lance Armstrong
vcneditor@gmail.com

The Elk Grove City Council on Jan. 25 unanimously adopted a resolution to allocate $800,000 toward that city's proposed zoo project.

This funding comes through the council's approved amendment of the city of Elk Grove's fiscal year 2022-23 annual budget, allowing the $800,000 to be transferred from the city's General Capital Reserve Fund to its General Fund.

If this proposed plan becomes a reality, the 95-year-old Sacramento Zoo would move from its current 14-acre site in William Land Park to a designated 70-acre portion of a 100-acre, city of Elk Grove-owned site at the northwest corner of Kammerer Road and Lotz Parkway in Elk Grove.

Last year, a six-month feasibility study between the Sacramento Zoological Society and the city of Elk Grove identified a potential relocation of the Sacramento Zoo to Elk Grove as a viable option.

That study was followed by the adoption of a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the zoological society and the city of Elk Grove. The MOU outlines steps involved in the planning process and potential development of the project in Elk Grove.

In February 2022, the city of Elk Grove provided the initial funding of $500,000 for the analysis of this proposed project's master planning efforts and the preparation of the environmental impact report (EIR) for the Elk Grove site.

An additional $33,000 was combined with that amount from the city of Elk Grove's fiscal year 2021-22 budget from department operations in that city's strategic planning and innovation, and economic development.

The additional $800,000 in funding allows for the payment of expenses totaling $1.3 million.

An itemized list of current and anticipated costs for the proposed project include $400,000 for the completion of the EIR, $142,000 for preliminary concept designs for roads and cost estimates, and $35,000 for a water supply assessment.

Prior to the council's deliberation and vote on the resolution to add $800,000 toward the city's proposed zoo project, Elk Grove resident Felipe Martin, who unsuccessfully ran for an Elk Grove City Council seat last November, expressed concerns about the request for additional funding for the proposed zoo.

"We're spending a lot of money, putting the cart before the horse," he said. "We need to understand how we're going to do this, and understand how we're moving forward.

"We're spending a lot of money, the economy is changing. As you know, the state is having financial issues. It will start trickling down. So, we need to understand where we're spending our money before we go spend it."

Elk Grove City Council Member Darren Suen responded to Martin's comments by stressing the need to spend money prior to making an informed decision on the zoo proposal.

"We are going to have to spend a little bit more money to make sure we have a full picture from environmental standpoint, from our utilities, to our sewer, water, storm drain, all these other things before we can make an informed decision to go forward," he said.

Elk Grove Vice Mayor Kevin Spease mentioned that while he supports Suen's position to take this next step, he wants to avoid burdening Elk Grove taxpayers with this project.

"For me to be interested in continuing this in a further step, I'm going to need to see a significant portion of the support come from private funds," he said. "I'm not interested in doing this on the back of Elk Grove taxpayers. So, I'll leave that there. That's my warning signal for the future, but I will vote in favor tonight."

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Email stories and photos to: vcneditor@gmail.com
Editorial questions: (916) 267-8992

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Photo courtesy of the Sacramento Zoo

A new zoo resident

The Sacramento Zoo's newest resident, this female Masai giraffe calf, poses for the camera. She was born at the zoo on Jan. 22 at 12:28 p.m.

Chinese New Year event coming to south Sacramento Feb. 4

Lance Armstrong
vcneditor@gmail.com



Photos courtesy of Chinese New Year Culture Association

The Chinese New Year Culture Association's Chinese New Year event will include various festive dancing. Pictured is a Beijing opera dance with young dancers wearing costumes with headdresses.

A Chinese New Year celebration previously held near East Sacramento has been relocated to Luther Burbank High School in south Sacramento.

The event, a 26-year, annual tradition of the Chinese New Year Culture Association, will be held at its new location at 3500 Florin Road on Feb. 4 from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

This upcoming family-friendly attraction will feature food, entertainment, cultural and vendor booths, and children's games. Its organizers are expecting about 2,000 attendees.

Rung Fong Hsu, a spokesperson for this event, spoke about the association's decision to relocate this festival from Hiram Johnson High School.

"Hiram Johnson, we always (had a) parking problem," she said. "(There was) not enough parking, and also (on) Saturday(s) now, they have basketball games. There was one year their basketball game was the same time as our (event). There was no place to park. We need parking. So, Luther Burbank has got a huge parking lot.

"The new venue, it's a newer location, larger, and the parking is great. (Its) covered corridor is wider. (If) it doesn't rain, we can put out booths over there. Overall, it's a better facility."

This year's edition of this event also represents the first time it will be held in person since 2019, Hsu noted.

"We got everything ready (in February 2020) and we stopped (due to the emergence of COVID-19)," she said. "So, there was 2020 and we (also) stopped (in) 2021 (and) 2022. Those three years, we did virtual celebrations, (which were) not as exciting. But this is the first time we (will hold) our in-person celebration (since 2019). We all anticipate to have (the festival in person), because people (were) cooped up in the house too long."

Shortly before 11 a.m., a Chinese lion dance will begin to attract people to enter Luther Burbank High's auditorium.

Other entertainment, which will be presented in the auditorium from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., will include Chinese classical dancing and singing, martial arts demonstrations, and an orchestra featuring musicians playing both Chinese and Western musical instruments.

Beginning at noon, various Chinese food, including meat and vegetable dishes and dim sum appetizers, will be available to purchase, as well as

See CHINESE NEW YEAR on page 4

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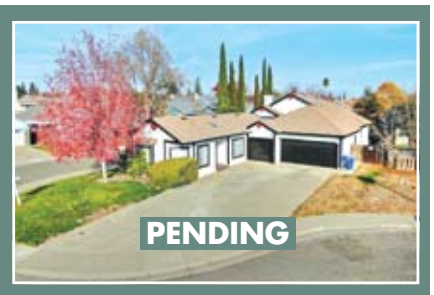
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Chinese New Year:

Continued from page 3

bubble tea and snacks.

Hsu mentioned that the festival will also present opportunities for adult attendees to receive instruction in dancing. That activity will begin at 2 p.m.

"We (will) have free line dance teaching or cha-cha-cha teaching," she said. "(Guests can learn) this kind of dancing that you don't need (a partner). It's not like the ballroom (dancing, in which) you have to have a man and a woman that hold hands. It's just for fun. It's easy. It's very fun."

Activities for children will include a bounce house, paper cutting and calligraphy. There will also be children's games for prizes, and gifts for children. Those features will begin at noon.

Another attraction of the festival will be an exhibit of children's drawings in celebration of the Chinese "Year of the Rabbit."

Hsu, who grew up celebrating Chinese New Year in her native country of Taiwan, shared details about Chinese New Year.

"The Chinese years go by the lunar calendar, so it's not Jan. 1," she said. "No, (the date) changes. It's just a big day – the first day of the (Chinese) year. The old custom is that you have fireworks and loud noise to scare away the evil, get rid of the evil and welcome a prosperous new year. And, of course,

See CHINESE NEW YEAR on page 5



A kung fu master performs during a Chinese martial arts exhibition.



Children performers hold up fans bearing their Chinese surnames.



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Performers and others gather during the 2018 edition of the festival in Sacramento.

Chinese New Year:

Continued from page 4

(families get) together, have special food together."

She added that Chinese New Year was established as a 15-day celebration.

"It was an agriculture society in those days and this was the time you rested on the whole year's harvest," she said. "You celebrate 15 days, you do not work, and the 15th day ended with a lantern festival. And people will make their own lantern, put a candle in their lantern and walk around the street. Sometimes there's a competition to see whose lantern is prettiest. And then there's special food."

Hsu told the East Sacramento News that the association's festival was created to bring the excitement of Chinese New Year to Sacramento.

"We started (the festival), because we (felt) like it (was) kind of too quiet (in Sacramento), as in no celebration, no festival," she said. "And also we want our children, our grandchildren to know there is such a Chinese culture, Chinese heritage. So, it turned out to be good, and this last October, we even had a parade. It was the first (Chinese New Year) parade in Sacramento."

Hsu noted that this festival allows people of Chinese heritage to have their own local event, and to share that culture with people of other backgrounds.

"The best thing about this event is you showcase your culture to (the) Sacramento region, those that are not familiar with our culture," she said. "People like to see our thing and it helps (people of) different ethnic(ities to know) each other better and feel better with each other. And also, it really united the Chinese Americans in Sacramento.

"You don't know how involved it is. Everybody's involved, everybody feels this is a pride and honor to carry it on. People from Folsom, Elk Grove, El Dorado Hills, Davis, Rocklin, Roseville, Sacramento, everybody's together for this event, everybody. A lot of volunteers put this event together."

Admission for this festival will cost $6/general and $1/children, 11 and younger. Parking for the event will be free.

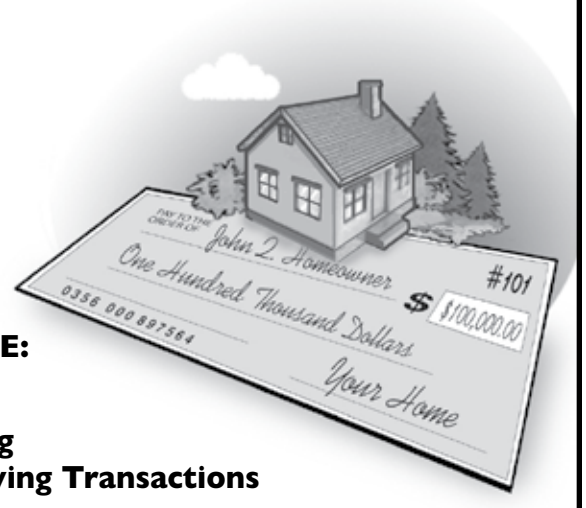
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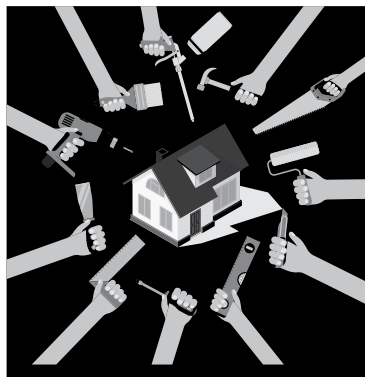
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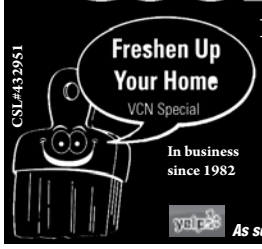
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