July 6, 2023

East Sacramento News

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East Sacramento cellist comes from musical family

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East Sacramento cellist comes from musical family

By Patrick Powers

East Sacramento resident Steve Millington has built his life around music, which is something that came naturally for him, given that he comes from a musical family.

Millington's two older sisters, June and Jean, formed the musical group, The Fannys, which performed throughout Northern California.

Taking after his grandfather, who was a cellist, Millington also plays cello. He began playing this instrument when he was 6 years old.

During the early 1960s, Millington began attending Sierra School, which was an elementary school at 2791 24th St. He joined the school's orchestra while he was in the 6th grade.

Continuing to progress as a cellist, Millington later played in the orchestras of California Middle School and C.K. McClatchy High School.

His experience as a cellist also includes performing in the Davis High School orchestra during his senior year, the Sacramento All Star Orchestra, and the Sacramento Junior Symphony.

Millington's passion for this instrument led him to extend his orchestra experience as a member of the University of California, Davis orchestra, as well as the Sacramento City College orchestra.

He would eventually earn two degrees in music at California State University, Sacramento.

In 1981, Millington formed the Millington Strings Trio with Steve Warren and Bruce Silva.

That musical endeavor was followed by the creation of the Millington Strings Quartet about nine years later.

Today, Millington, his wife and other musicians officially perform as Millington Strings Music, although they advertise under such names as the Millington Strings Quartet and the Millington Strings Quintet.



Photo courtesy of Steve and Anne Millington

This vintage Millington family photograph shows Steve Millington, center, as a young boy with his cello.

Millington Strings Music has performed at more than 1,000 functions, including fundraisers, weddings, conventions, private parties, engagements and memorial services.

Millington has performed for then-Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, Willie Brown, who served as speaker of the state Assembly and mayor of San Francisco, and several Sacramento mayors.

Just a few weeks ago, the Millington Strings Quartet played at Donner Lake for a surprise engagement party.

The quartet was on the beach under a rose petal-covered dock, and when the engagement couple walked to the dock, they had the music of the Millington Strings Quartet to help facilitate this monumental setting.

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

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1109 Markham Way
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Cover by: Courtesy of Steve and Anne Millington



Elks lodge to feature cornhole tournaments

Beginning this month, cornhole tournaments will be held at Sacramento Elks Lodge No. 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd., on the first and third Wednesdays of each month.

The tournaments are open to players of all skill levels for all Elks members and their guests.

The cost to participate in each tournament is $10, and prizes will be awarded.

Preregistration and warmups will begin at 5:30 p.m., and bags will fly at 6 p.m.

For additional information about these tournaments or volunteer opportunities for this ongoing event, contact Bill Palmer at (916) 202-6389.

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Cello

Continued from page 2



Photo by Rebecca Ronelo Le

The Millington Strings Quintet performs at Soil Born Farms in Rancho Cordova last May. Pictured are Mark Tammes (violin), Jessie Nibley (violin), Anne Millington (bass), Steve Millington (cello) and David Thorp (viola).



Photo courtesy of Steve and Anne Millington

The Millington Strings Quintet performs at a C.K. McClatchy High School reunion in June 2021. Pictured are Mariana Cota (violin), Mark Tammes (violin), Anne Millington (bass) and Steve Millington (cello).

While attending a music convention in about 1990, Millington met a cellist named Anne, who would later become his wife, a member of Millington Strings Music, and the group's webmaster. She also runs the bookings and contracts.

Anne recently spoke about meeting Millington, her work with him as a performing musician, and her transition to playing bass.

"When Steve and I met, it was at a chamber music workshop, at which we both played cello," she wrote in an email message to this paper. "Several years later, after we married, I started playing bass, so that we could do gigs together. (A) quartet only has one cello, usually.

"Steve started arranging for (a) quintet – quartet, plus bass – as well as for (a) cello duo, and we offer those combos for people's events. Basically, I still consider cello my primary instrument."

Millington made a major investment in 1985, purchasing a new cello for $8,500. He took out two loans to buy it. He still has that cello, which he mentioned is currently worth about $25,000.

"(It was) a good investment," he said.

Through his education in music and his longtime experience as a performing musician, Millington would eventually become a music professor at Sacramento City College. He worked at that institution for about 10 years, teaching cello and orchestra, before moving on to teach private lessons.

Millington has taught cello lessons to more than 100 students, and a couple of his former students have gone on to play professionally in orchestras and work as music session players.

Millington, whose musical activities include composing cello music, has compiled a binder of more than 600 arrangements, including classics and his group's originals.

He is currently arranging the music for the October grand opening of Joshua's House, a hospice for the homeless in East Sacramento.

Benefitting Millington is his American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers membership, which allows him to perform popular music that is not in the public domain.

Millington continues to practice his cello playing daily, something he has done for 60 consecutive years. He also enjoys playing his grandfather's cello, which is nearly 200 years old.

For those interested in attending a Millington Strings Music performance for free, the group plays on the last Saturday of every month at Soil Born Farms, 2140 Chase Drive, in Rancho Cordova from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

For additional information about Millington Strings Music, visit the website, www.MillingtonStrings.com.

Information about the cello

The cello, aka violoncello, is a bowed, four-string instrument of the violin family.

This instrument is played by drawing a horsehair bow across the strings to create a distinctive sound. It can be plucked or occasionally hit.

The cello's strings are usually tuned in perfect 5ths from low to high, and its strings are each an octave higher. Music for the cello is generally written in the bass clef.

Played by a cellist or violoncellist, the cello is part of the standard orchestra's strings section, and is the bass voice of a strings quartet.

The instrument is typically made from carved wood and traditionally has a spruce top and maple for its back, sides and neck.

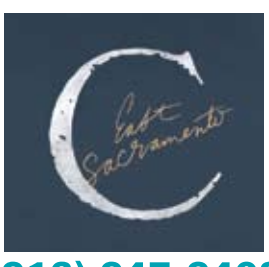
The fingerboards and pegs on a cello are generally made from ebony, as it is a strong material that does not wear out easily.

Historically, cello strings had cores made from catgut, which, despite its name, is made from sheep or goat intestines. Most modern cello strings used in the 2000s are wound with metallic materials.

Traditionally, cello bows are made with horsehair and stretched out between the two ends. The taut horsehair is drawn over the strings while being held roughly parallel to the bridge and perpendicular to produce the distinctive sound of the cello.

Some of the most famous composers of cello music are Bach, Vivaldi, Beethoven, Mozart, Debussy, and Mendelssohn, to name a few.

In modern times, cello music can be found in music by The Beatles, The Beach Boys, Nirvana, Smashing Pumpkins, Electric Light Orchestra, David Bowie, Sean Grissom, Rihanna, Billy Joel, and Stevie Wonder. Even the Rolling Stones have used cellos in their music.



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Crawford's Books to celebrate 40th anniversary

By Lance Armstrong
vcneditor@gmail.com

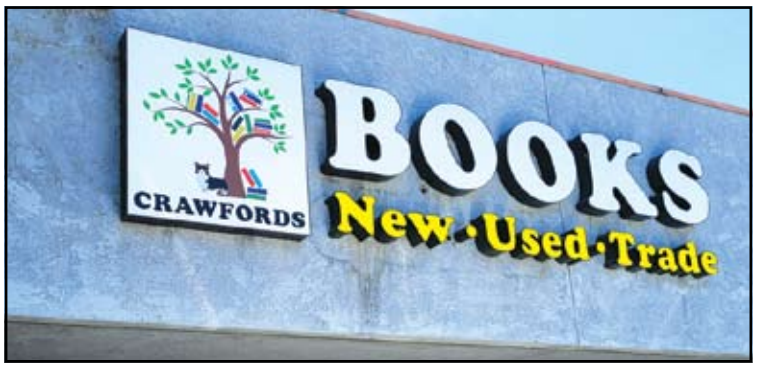


Photo courtesy of Crawford's Books

Crawford's Books is located at 5301 Freeport Blvd. #200.

Crawford's Books, one of the Sacramento area's few used bookstores, will reach a special milestone this August: its 40th anniversary.

This business has operated at its current location, 5301 Freeport Blvd. #200, between Hollywood Hardware and Little Caesars Pizza in the Hollywood Park neighborhood, since at least 2009.

Sue Richards, owner of this bookstore for the past five years, referred to her business's upcoming anniversary as "pretty incredible."

Richards acknowledged the store's original owners, Jim and Joyce Crawford, who she noted were able to survive the emergence of big-box stores and Amazon.

"A lot of that success had to do with the service they provided," she said. "It feels great to continue the legacy that the Crawfords established. They put a lot of blood, sweat and tears into it."

In mid-August 1983, this bookstore made its debut as The Book Rack. The store was then located in Greenhaven Plaza at 374 Florin Road, at Riverside Boulevard, in the Pocket area.

In September 1983, for an article in The Sacramento Bee, Jim spoke about one of his inspirations for getting involved as a bookseller while he was living in Oklahoma.

"One reason we opened up, I've always gone to bookstores and I've took my son," he told The Bee. "I lost him – he was 6 at the time – and he ended up in the section with the naked posters and stuff. What was needed was a family trade center, and I'd always wanted to own a bookstore."

The Crawfords' then-new, used bookstore, which featured only paperbacks, was part of a franchise operation, which had nearly 200 stores nationwide.

Prior to moving to the Pocket area in May 1983, Jim operated three of those franchises in Oklahoma City.

The Crawfords' decision to move to Sacramento was based on the city's warm climate, as well as a market analysis that determined that a franchise store would be successful in California's capital city.



Photo by Lance Armstrong

Sue Richards, owner of Crawford's Books, and her daughter, Jenny, an employee of this business, show off copies of books that are on their personal favorite books list.

Convenience played a large role in choosing a store site, as the Crawfords' bookstore was located only six blocks from their Pocket area home on Clipper Way.

At that store, one could buy paperback books for half the cost of their regular prices. The store purchased used books from the public for a quarter of their original prices.

The store proved to be successful at that site, as customers were regularly drawn to its large inventory, which featured thousands of used paperback books.

By August 1988, The Book Rack had relocated to 5141 Freeport Blvd.

The Book Rack's Citrus Heights location at 6632 Greenback Lane was in operation by 1990. It was one of the stores in a small shopping center near the intersection of Dewey Drive and Van Maren and Greenback lanes. Other stores in that center were Toscano's Fast Italian restaurant, J P Audio Video Service, and Dewey Liquor.

The Crawfords began using the name, J. Crawford's Books, for their business as early as 1992, thus abandoning The Book Rack name.

On July 31, 1993, the grand opening of the Crawfords' new store at 5011 Freeport Blvd. was held. That bookstore replaced the smaller store at 5141 Freeport Blvd.

At its then-new, larger quarters, the store transitioned from mainly carrying used paperback books to also offering an extended selection of hardback books and collectible titles.

The store's current selection of books at its present location, 5301 Freeport Blvd. #200, mainly consists of paperbacks.

Richards mentioned that her ownership of the store came as a

See BOOKS on page 5

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Books

Continued from page 4

result of a comment that she made to the Crawfords.

"I said (to them), 'When you're ready to sell, just keep me in mind,'" she said. "Jim turned to me and said, 'Joyce and I were just talking this morning about retirement, so let's do it.' And the rest is history."

It was under Richards' ownership of the store that this business became known by its shortened name, Crawford's Books.

For Richards, becoming the owner of this bookstore was a dream-like experience, considering that she already loved reading, and she had a tradition of giving books to her friends and family members as gifts.

Richards said that her love for reading did not begin until after her college years, noting that her high-energy level as a child did not work well for spending lots of time reading books.

"I think it was my short attention span," she said. "I later had a group of friends that passed books around. I got into reading with them, and we would have a shared experience reading the same book and talking about it. I just developed a passion for it."

She identified her favorite author as Markus Zusak, an Australian writer who is best known for his novels, "The Book Thief" and "The Messenger," which became international bestsellers.

With her background in mental health, Richards recognizes books as tools for helping others, as well as entertaining them.

"For me, I love being in bookstores," she said.

Richards described her business as a general used bookstore with lots of fiction and military history books, memoirs and biographies, classics and children's books.

The store, which offers about 40,000 different titles, is divided into various sections, and has reading areas for both children and adults.

As a used bookstore, Crawford's Books regularly purchases gently used books and offers trade credit for used books. Customers can also buy new books by ordering them through the store.

The store has several employees, and members of Richards' family have helped in various ways to aid this business.

Richards' husband, Greg, designed the layout of the store and built many of the bookcases.

Her daughter, Jenny, currently works part time at Crawford's, and offers her homemade crafts for purchase in the store.

Richards' son, David, helps at the store's front desk and assists with various projects within the store.

Since the fall of 2018, Richards' sister, Jen, a local high school teacher, has led Crawford's Mysteries & More Book Club. The club generally has about eight to 15 members and meets at the store on the first Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m.

Crawford's Books has a wide selection of mystery novels for sale.

Richards mentioned that she is always eager to welcome new customers.



Photo by Lance Armstrong

This view of a portion of a bookcase at Crawford's Books includes many books by Stephen King, a well-known American author of horror, supernatural fiction, suspense, crime, science-fiction and fantasy novels.

"If you are in need of a good book and you've never been to our store, we invite you to come check us out," she said.

Crawford's Books is open Mondays through Saturdays, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., and Sundays, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For additional information about this business, visit the website, www.CrawfordBooks.net, or call (916) 731-8001.



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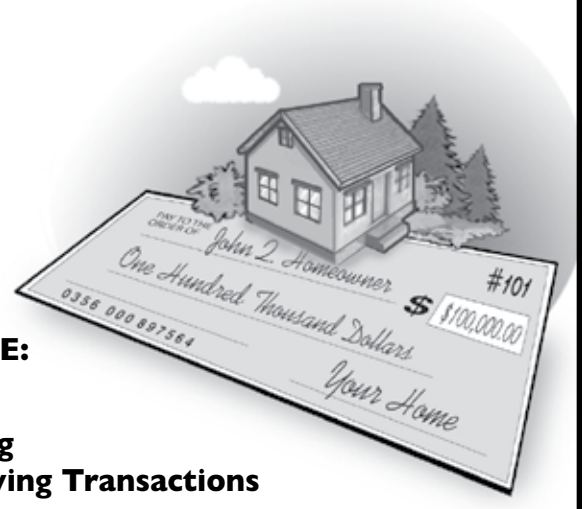
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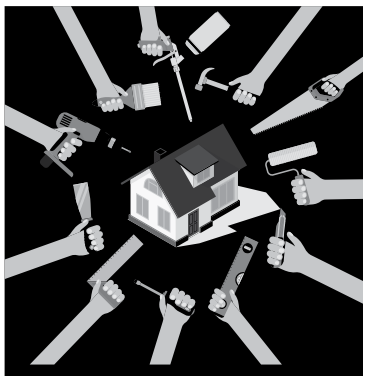
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ALL BEDROOMS ON SALE*



Oak Park

$1079 reg. $1229
QUEEN SLAT BED
$1279 KING SLAT BED
Nightstand $529
Chest $1179



Renaissance

$929 reg. $1049
QUEEN SLEIGH BED
$1079 KING SLEIGH BED
Oval Nightstand $469
Dresser $1139
Mirror $269









New Lou

$2299 reg. $2559
KING SLEIGH BED
$1999 QUEEN SLEIGH BED
Nightstand $979
Dresser $1959
Mirror $799



Plymouth

$1199 reg. $1359
QUEEN PANEL BED
$1349 KING PANEL BED
Nightstand $539
Dresser $1299
Mirror $359

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*Sale applies to all indicated items except "Special Buys", all "Mega Clearance" and Serta Arctic and iComfortECO™. Sale price not available in conjunction with any other offer or discount. Allow time for delivery on some items. Sizes and colors are approximate. Sale ends July 23rd, 2023.