August 17, 2023

East Sacramento News

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Sacramento man offers woodworking classes for ‘kids, 8 to 80’

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NatureFest coming to Effie Yeaw Nature Center Oct. 8

NatureFest 2023, Effie Yeaw Nature Center's largest family event of the year, will be held on Sunday, Oct. 8, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

This event promotes science and nature education, and is an excellent opportunity to learn more about local organizations that support the community.

Held annually at Effie Yeaw Nature Center, 2850 San Lorenzo Way in Carmichael's Ancil Hoffman Park, this family-friendly event includes live animal presentations, hands-on activities, demonstrations and guided nature hikes.

The cost to attend this event is $7/general admission, and $3 for children, ages 3 to 11 years old. Children, 2 years old and younger, will be admitted for free.

For additional information, call (916) 876-4918, or write to info@SacNatureCenter.net.

FAIRYTALE TOWN OFFERS FREE ADMISSION DURING HOTTER SUMMER DAYS

Keep an eye out for high forecasted temperatures and beat the heat with a free, refreshing visit to Fairytale Town.

This children's park, at 3901 Land Park Drive in William Land Park, is partnering with Bonney, Plumbing, Heating and Air through Aug. 31 to bring free admission for Fairytale Town guests when the temperature reaches 95 degrees or higher. The temperature is based on Fairytale Town's on-site thermometer only.

Bring the whole family to explore the lush, shaded grounds, and cool off under the rainbow arch misters.

For additional information, visit the website, www.FairytaleTown.org.

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

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1109 Markham Way
Sacramento,
CA 95818
t: (916) 429-9901
f: (916) 429-9906

Cover by:
Patrick Powers

'Please adopt me'

Wiggles the dog seeks new home

"Hi, my name is Wiggles. I am a 4-year-old, spayed female, tan-colored, pit bull mix. I love human attention and I would love someone who can give me all theirs.

I am very friendly and I get very wiggly when I meet new people. I get along with kids, but I still would appreciate a slow introduction. I will need help learning that being alone at home while you run your errands is OK.

I know a few tricks, such as sit, stay, touch, and look. I will sit and lay down for treats, and I love a game of fetch. I will get a case of the "zoomies" from time to time. I walk well on a leash, and I am not reactive when I'm on a leash. I am an all-around fun and loving pup.

To meet me, make sure I'm still available at www.FrontStreetShelter.org, then ask for me at the shelter from noon to 5 p.m. seven days a week. My animal identification number is A587031."



Photo Caption:
Photo courtesy of Front Street Animal Shelter
Wiggles is a female, tan-colored pit bull mix. Her animal identification number is A587031.

Free life jacket rentals offered through fire department

With hotter temperatures, the Sacramento Fire Department (SFD) is urging swimmers and boaters to be cautious and wear life jackets in waterways this summer. And to help keep people safe, the department is currently offering free life jacket rentals.

"Our goal is to remind people of the risks of swimming in our local waterways and the best practices for keeping themselves and their loved ones safe," said Sacramento Fire Capt. Justin Sylvia. "This includes wearing a life jacket, especially for children."

Fire stations in the Sacramento region offer life jackets to the public on a loan basis. Life jackets are available for children and adults and can be borrowed for the day or weekend simply by completing a form.

Life jackets can be obtained at the following SFD fire stations: Station No. 1, 624 Q St.; Station No. 5, 731 Broadway; Station No. 8, 5990 H St.; Station No. 11, 785 Florin Road; Station No. 15, 1640 West El Camino Ave.; and Station No. 60, 3301 Julliard Drive.

Below are a few more water safety tips from the fire department:

Always wear a life jacket.

Never swim alone and never go in the water after drinking alcohol.

Stay within an arm's length of inexperienced swimmers.

Always watch children in and around water. Assign a "water watcher." Don't assume someone else is watching. Drowning is quick and silent, it can happen in seconds.

Drain inflatable pools and coolers after each use. A toddler can drown in just 1 inch of water.

Call 911 right away if someone is in trouble.

Learn CPR.

Wear sunscreen.

Sacramento man offers woodworking classes for 'kids, 8 to 80'

By Patrick Powers



Many handmade creations are made at Michael Bush's Sacramento wood shop.

"Do you know how to identify a dogwood tree?" asked Michael Bush, owner of Woodshop Squared, at 501 V St., near Southside Park.

After pausing a brief moment, he replied, "By its bark," before letting out a hardy laugh.

I knew this was going to be an interesting interview.

In this article, I have entered the realm of Tree and Wood 101. Wood is the main substance of trees. Wood is used to build furniture and buildings. Wood is also used for making art. Paper is made from wood. I am typing on a sheet of processed wood. Wood is a renewable resource, although it has gotten scarce in recent centuries.

There is no one better to explain wood than Bush, who is a craftsman and instructor at his business.

Bush has been intrigued with wood since his childhood.

During his interview with this paper, Bush explained the life of a tree and wood by presenting me with a show-and-tell explanation of wood. He showed me hardwoods and softwoods. He oohs and aahs as he caresses over the grains, the textures, sizes, strength and use of wood.

On his website, www.WoodShopSquared.com, Bush advertises that he offers woodworking classes for "kids, 8 to 80." If you fall into that group, this can be a fun and informative learning adventure.

In this workshop and teaching environment, you will learn to measure, saw, chisel, shape and carve different woods. One will be instructed on how to make a straight edge, rulers and other needed tools.

I witnessed a 6-year-old kid put on his safety goggles and use a lathe to make round wheels for a wooden truck he was constructing from plans from a 1950 Popular Mechanics magazine.

How did Bush end up with a woodworking school? It all started following a serious motorcycle accident in 2000.

In this motorcycle accident, he lost use of hands and arms. With dozens of pins and screws inserted into his shoulders and hands, he entered into rehabilitation. He progressed into simple moves with holding and grasping.

During this recovery period, he started measuring wood, holding wood, cutting wood, sawing wood, and planing and sanding wood.

Bush became familiar with wood during his high school years. He worked at the now-closed Old Sacramento Armory, where he helped the gunsmith technicians take a piece of exotic wood and turn it into a gunstock. He learned to identify wood and shape wood.

Bush also worked at a wood retailer called Woodcraft. This store then offered a wood workshop, and he started helping the students in the classes.

With a little teaching experience under his sawdust-laden belt, he became employed at the University of California, Davis.



Michael Bush is the owner of the Sacramento business, Woodshop Squared.

They had a recreation center with all kinds of noncredit classes. He had access to a 2,000-square-foot workshop with every woodworking tool and device. He was then teaching students woodworking skills.

At this point in the conversation, Bush said that an early pioneer did not have all these electrical mechanical marvels of tools to shape and manipulate wood. A pioneer with a trunk of hand tools could build a dwelling and the inside furniture.

Woodshop Squared is a museum of handmade woodworking tools. Bush showed me saws from

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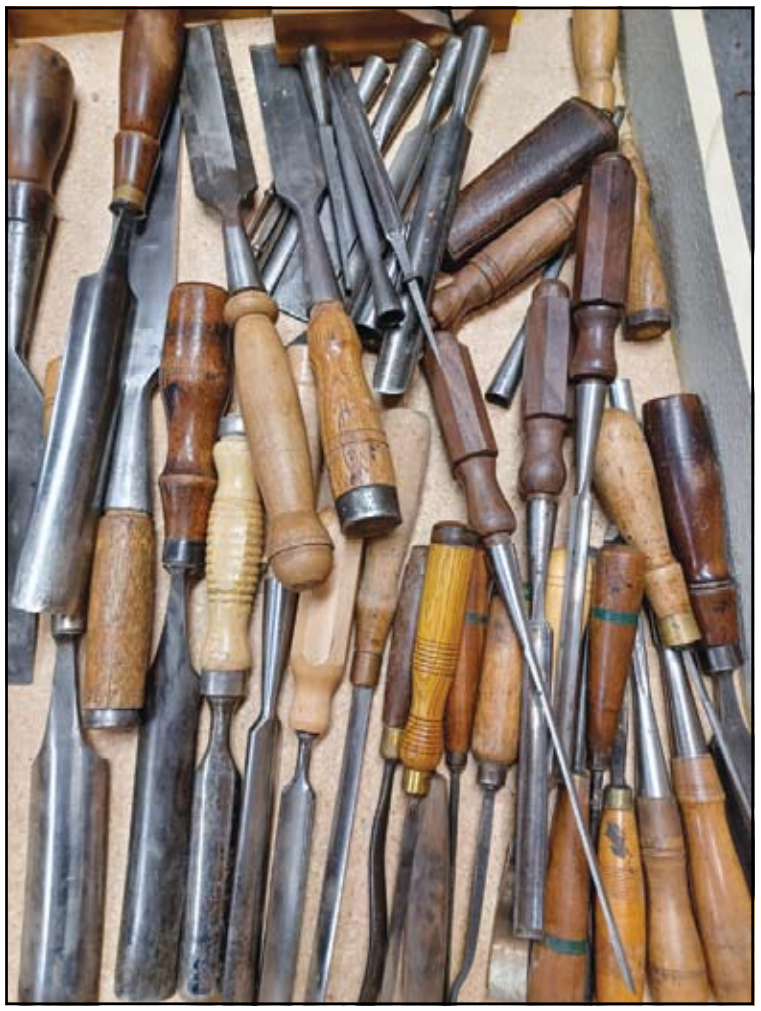
Photos by Patrick Powers

Locals are pictured at the Michael Bush's Sacramento woodworking shop.



Shown above is an array of woodworking tools at Michael Bush's shop.

Woodworking

Continued from page 3

the 1800s. He also has some hand planes from the 1700s – all still sharp and usable.

He explained, "There are only two woodworking joints: dovetail and mortise (and) tenon; all other joints are variations of those two joints."

Bush showed me various woods, their grains, and what happens when you saw some of the woods with different saw and cuts. Some woods have a 3D effect when looking at them.

To say the least, and in a good way, he has an addiction to wood. Sometimes he sees a fallen tree and he loads pieces of fallen wood into his truck. Last winter gave him a lot to look at.

Bush's shop has a large variety of beautiful and exotic woods, and his backyard is a temple dedicated to wood. He has stacks of boards, lumber and big chunks of fallen trees.

Bush even admits to having an off-site storage unit full of wood that is drying and seasoning. He cannot say 'no' to a beautiful piece of wood.

He caresses a piece of bird's-eye maple as if it is a living thing, which it was at one time. He has wood more than 100 years old.

Bush will be demonstrating his crafts at the upcoming Second Saturday art walk, and the reopening of the Sacramento Antique Faire.

If you are a kid, 8 to 80, and you want to learn and appreciate woodworking, take his class. You can make a Thor hammer, a wood truck or the most beautiful cutting boards made with three exotic woods and two joints.

I used the tools, and I can testify there is nothing more therapeutic than hand planing a fragrant piece of exotic wood.

For more information about Bush's woodworking class and studio, call (916) 308-0623 or visit the website, www.WoodShopSquared.com.



A boy shows off a wooden Thor hammer inside Michael Bush's shop.

New book highlights legendary life of swimming coach Sherm Chavoor

By Lance Armstrong
vcneditor@gmail.com

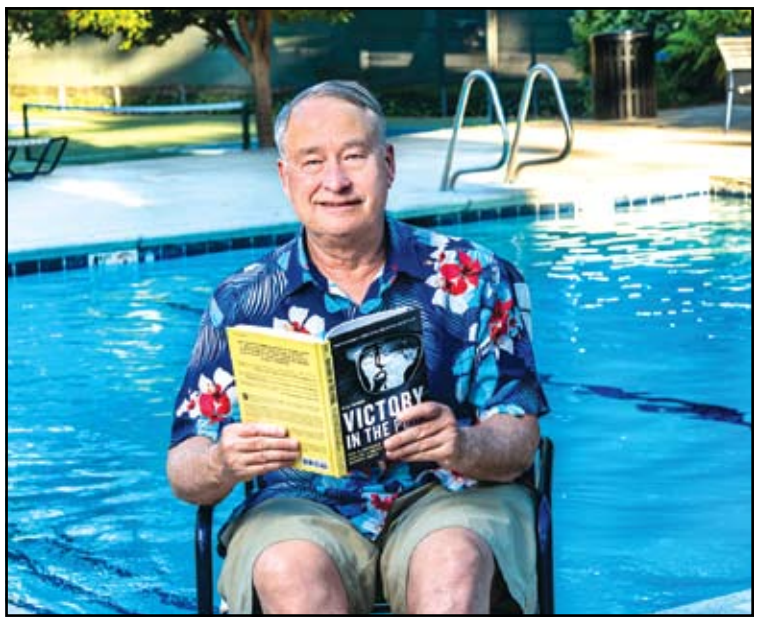


Photo by Aniko Kiezel
Former KCRA journalist Bill George sits poolside while holding his newly published book, "Victory in the Pool."

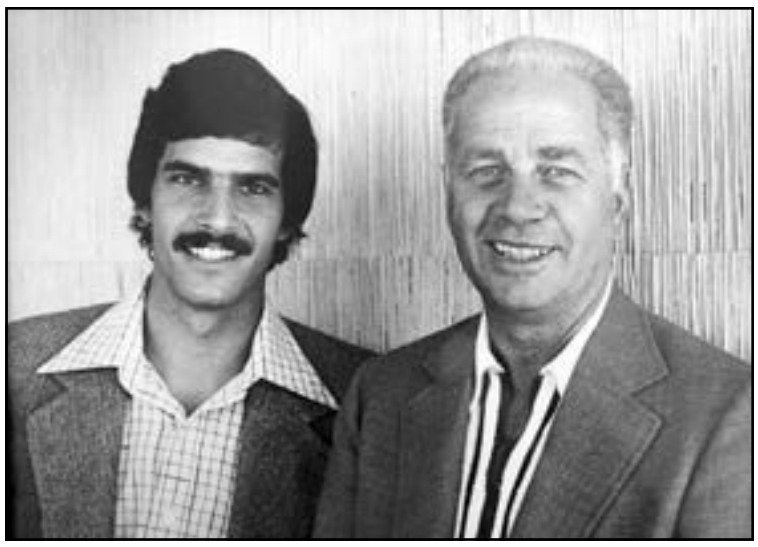


Photo courtesy of Life magazine
Sherm Chavoor stands alongside Olympic swimmer Mark Spitz following his record-breaking, seven gold-medal performance in Munich in 1972.

Former KCRA journalist Bill George is currently promoting his new book, "Victory in the Pool," which covers one of the grand stories in Sacramento's history: the story of a local swimming coach legend named Sherman "Sherm" Chavoor.

Chavoor, who died at the age of 73 in 1992, is forever remembered for training local swimmers, including Mark Spitz and Debbie Meyer, to Olympic glory.

In addition to his many years of training swimmers in the Sacramento area, Chavoor was also the U.S. Olympic women's swim team's coach in 1968 and 1972.

With Chavoor as his trainer, Spitz became a nine-time Olympic champion, and won a total of 11 medals in Olympic competition.

Spitz won seven of his gold medals, each with world-record times, in the 1972 Summer Olympics in Munich. That Olympic medal count record stood for 36 years, until it was eclipsed by another Olympic great swimmer, Michael Phelps. Phelps took home eight gold medals from the Summer Olympics in Beijing in 2008, with each of those medals won in world or Olympic record time.

Meyer, a former Rio Americano High School student who broke many world records as a swimmer, is best known for becoming the first person to win a gold medal in three freestyle events during the same Olympics. She accomplished that feat at the 1968 Summer Olympics in Mexico City.

Other swimmers who excelled under the training of Chavoor included Olympians Mike Burton, Jeff Float, Sue Pedersen and John Ferris.

Prior to receiving his own worldwide recognition in the swimming world, Chavoor served as a part-time physical fitness coach in the Army during World War II. In that role, he taught swimming lessons in Nevada.

Chavoor later moved to Sacramento and coached swimmers at the YMCA and the Sacramento Elks Swim Club before founding the Arden Hills wellness resort near the northwest corner of Fair Oaks Boulevard and Mission Avenue. The latter place was the famous training facility for his Olympic champion swimmers.

George told this paper that part of his motivation for writ-

See SWIMMING on page 5

Swimming

Continued from page 4

ing "Victory in the Pool" was his discovery that no book had been written about Chavoor, and also to commemorate this history for Sacramento.

"I thought, 'Well, certainly, somebody must have dove into this (topic) before," he said. "And I found out, really no book had been written about it."

He added that he was also inspired by the book, "The Boys in the Boat," about the American rowing team that won a gold medal at the 1936 Summer Olympics.

"That was kind of a template for it, and I thought, 'Well, you know, there's a story here,' and so, I kind of dug into it."

George mentioned that the more he researched about Chavoor and his swimmers, the more he became fascinated by this story.

His fascination with Chavoor resulted in a three-year project, and the release of his book.

George mentioned that he found out many surprising details about Chavoor during his research.

"I started finding some really surprising things like Sherm Chavoor's name wasn't Sherm Chavoor, (but instead Izikiel Correa)," he said. "(The) question is 'Why did he change his name?' None of his family really knows why.

"Also (of note are) the Japanese American swimmers, who were his first really great swimmers, if you will, and led by Tak Iseri, (who was a student at C.K. McClatchy High School)."

As a swimming coach, Chavoor knew how to win and get the best out of his swimmers, George noted.

"Every time he came to a challenge, be it with one of his swimmers, being it with the Olympics, rival coaches, other countries, Olympic officials, he knew how to win," he said. "And each swimmer will tell you that he could reach into them and get stuff out of them that nobody else ever could. And he did it through a combination of kind of gentle mockery, if you will – sometimes not so gentle – and encouragement."

George recalled when Meyer told him that she had a "love-hate relationship" with her coach.

But he added that Meyer also mentioned that this relationship was "mostly love."



Photo courtesy of Chavoor family

Sherm Chavoor was a two-time women's Olympic swim team head coach.

"Mike Burton would say the same thing and so would Jeff Float," he said. "That's just the kind of guy he was."

George referred to Burton's story as a swimmer as "unbelievable."

"He gets two gold medals – three gold medals total – two in the 1,500(-meter freestyle), first in 1968, and then against all odds in 1972," he said.

Burton, who is an El Camino High School graduate, had been diagnosed with vitamin deficiency in 1972 and barely made the Olympic team. However, he became the first back-to-back Olympic gold medalist in that event.

Returning to the topic of Chavoor, George noted that he was a great promoter and public relations person.



Photo courtesy of Chavoor family

Sherm Chavoor congratulates swimmer Debbie Meyer following a race.

"Whenever these people came through town, (Chavoor) was very quick to get on the phone with local reporters and get a story," he said. "And so, (just prior to the 1968 Olympics), they come out here. Here's (Doc) Counsilman, the great (swimming coach), talking about Arden Hills swimmers.

"And he tells the press, 'Nobody else has ever done this like Chavoor has done.' He said, 'Nobody has taken local swimmers from one local area and forged (a) great team. It just doesn't happen.' And I would argue I can't think of any other sport where it has happened."

To enhance his book, George acquired old Life magazine photographs, and also images from the collection of The Sacramento Bee and the Chavoor family.

The photograph on the book's cover shows a classic scene of Chavoor holding a stopwatch.

George found that photograph to be perfect for the book's cover.

"I wanted something unique, and when I saw it, I thought it just kind of epitomized the story, because one of Sherm's many nicknames was Stopwatch Sherm," he said. "So, there he is holding the stopwatch with a swimmer standing there. So, I thought it fit perfectly."

With his book now published, George mentioned that he has received some excellent feedback, including from Meyer and Burton.

"Both Debbie Meyer and Mike Burton said to me, 'I felt like I was back there standing (by) the pool waiting to jump in with the way that you described it,'" he said. "And I think that's really the strong point of the book. It brings you back to this (time), what's going on, the stakes involved. And I was really happy with the way it came out, again, thanks to the athletes themselves, who spent a lot of time with me on the book."

"Victory in the Pool" can be purchased online through Amazon or by contacting George by email at NimbusBill@iCloud.com.



Photo courtesy of Chavoor family

Mark Spitz, second from left, faced stiff competition as an Arden Hills age group swimmer.

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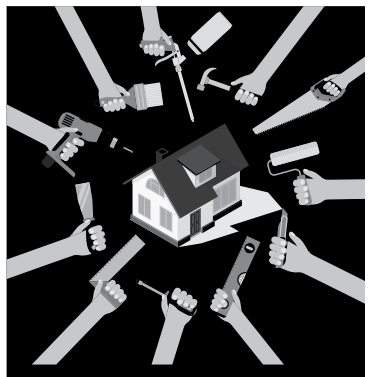

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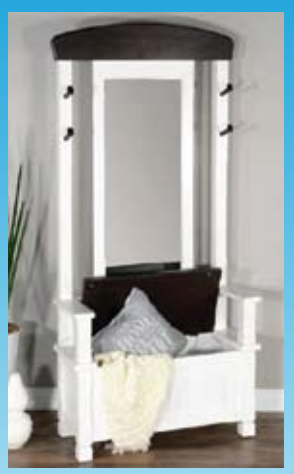

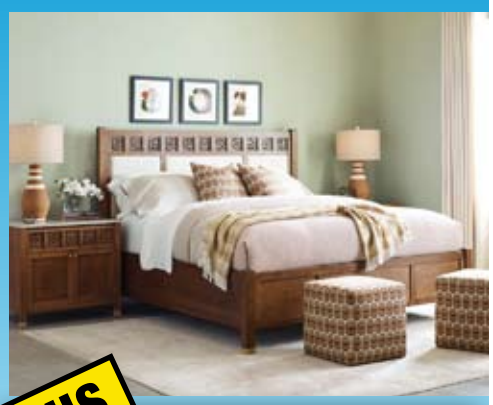
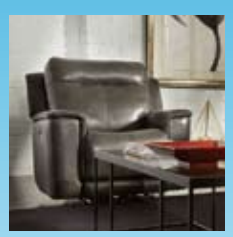


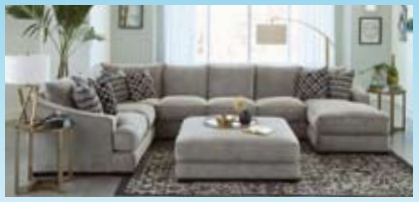



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