

How Sacramento can save the Effie Yeaw Nature Center

An open letter to the community from the director of the Carmichael nature preserve

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'Janey Way Memories'

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Eager for E-Waste

Local Boy Scouts collect 45,000 pounds of E-Waste

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Vol. XIX • No. 4

Arden-Carmichael News is published on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month and is delivered by mail and home delivery. Newspapers are also available in stands throughout the area.

2709 Riverside Blvd.
Sacramento,
CA 95818
t: (916) 429-9901
f: (916) 429-9906

Publisher..... George Macko
General Manager..... Kathleen Egan
Editor..... Ryan Rose
Production Manager..... John Ochoa
Graphic Artist..... Ryan Vuong
Sales Manager..... Patty Colmer
Advertising Executives..... Linda Pohl
Marc Harris Desilés, Melissa Andrews
Distribution/Subscriptions..... George Macko

\$30 a year subscription



Faces and places

Boy Scouts score in E-Waste pick-up

Arden-Carmichael News Staff Report

Leaders, E-Waste Committee, Venturing Crew Members, Boy Scout troops 161 and 802 participated in an E-Waste Drive at Arcade Wesleyan Church Saturday, Feb. 20.

Starting the event at 7 a.m. after Committee Chair Harriette Carr held an orientation and safety meeting with the participants, the donors started arriving at 8:30 a.m.

Adults unloaded the E-Waste into the large bins and everyone received a "thank you" from the scouts as they departed – all of this at a pace greater than one car processed a minute.

The cars and pickups streamed steadily through the day until after closing at 1p.m. Four and a half bins were filled and moved to CEAR, which recycled the contents. All computer hard drives were shredded to protect any information that was still left on them.

Approximately 45,000 pounds of E-Waste was recycled, meeting the scouts' goals of "Going Green with the Boy Scouts."

With the success of this event, another is planned for April 24 at a location to be announced.

Photos by Arden-Carmichael News photographer Bill Condray.

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How Sacramento can save the Effie Yeaw Nature Center

Open letter to the community from the nature center director

By MARILEE FLANNERY
Effie Yeaw Nature Center Director
Special to the Arden-Carmichael News

Editor's Note: As many in the region already know, the Effie Yeaw Nature Center, located at 2850 San Lorenzo Way, may close due to Sacramento County budget cuts. Originally, the nature preserve was to be closed April 1; the center has since received a reprieve, staying open until at least June 30. Now the director of the center is offering an innovative way for this hidden treasure of the Carmichael area to stay open.

Great news – The County of Sacramento Department of Regional Parks will not close Effie Yeaw's doors on April 1 as previously announced.

Because we face high budget cuts for the next fiscal year beginning July 1, we will propose a transition to a nonprofit foundation. Fairytale Town and the Sacramento Zoo each transitioned from a unit of the City of Sacramento to individual nonprofits in the 1990s.

We will need your help to accomplish this major step of becoming a nonprofit organization.

Your help has been critical since the first budget cuts announced in September 2009 there has been a tremendous outpouring of concern, donations and people asking how they can help. Thank you to all of you who have given your money, your extra hours, your passion and

your heart to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

You have opened your wallets and checkbooks to fill our donation box, or clicked the Web site link (or e-mail at eync@saccounty.net) to donate. Thank you.

You have trusted us with your children. Thank you.

You have given us your precious time: those late-night hours building exhibits from next to nothing, those afternoons cleaning smelly animal cages, those early mornings stoking the fire in celebration of Maidu Indian Day. Thank you.

Maybe you worked for me and with me and now you sit at home because we've already had to cut so many staff hours at the beginning of this fiscal year. You deserve special thanks. No one will ever know how much you have managed to do with so little.

What can you do now?

The Effie Yeaw Nature Center is the heart of the American River Parkway and you the volunteers, supporters and staff all made it what it is. Though it is winter and the heartbeat is quieter, we know spring will soon arrive. As spring wakes the Nature Area and it thrums with life, the Nature Center will begin an exciting transition with your help.

The EYNC will certainly need some financial support from the County of Sacramento while it transitions

from a unit of County Parks into a strong nonprofit foundation of the American River Parkway. We hope this transition will be accomplished so that the schools of the Sacramento Region can continue to receive our popular nature education programs, and the nature preserve will be protected and safe.

If you have skills that can help to guide this transition, please volunteer to help the American River Natural History Association (visit them online at www.arnha.org) negotiate a transition contract with the County of Sacramento.

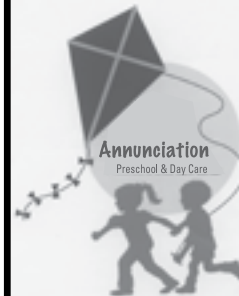
You can also help us keep our trails clean and managed through this transition so that everyone can see this is a well cared for preserve and people are out there watching out for it.

Representatives of the center added that the transition to a nonprofit would take a few years – definitely longer than the few months the nature center has left before it is slated to close. As such, the county would still need to support the Effie Yeaw Nature Center until its transition to a nonprofit foundation is complete. What do you think? E-mail your thoughts to ryanrose@valcomnews.com.



Photo courtesy of Effie Yeaw Nature Center
Children participate in one of many learning opportunities at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center.

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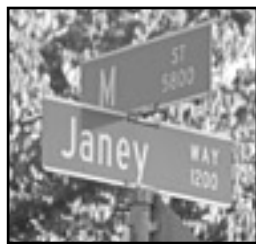
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Boxing at the Relles Gym



By **MARTY RELLES**
Arden-Carmichael News Columnist
marty@valcomnews.com

One Christmas, my father gave two pairs of boxing gloves to my brothers and me. He hoped this would help us learn to defend ourselves. Terry and I put on the gloves and sparred. Soon other kids came over to try on the gloves and box. We set up an imaginary ring in our backyard. A large tree marked one side of the ring, the garden in the rear marked another, the patio another side and the fence opposite the patio completed the square.

Soon we began scheduling regular 3-round bouts. I fought Dan Petrocchi and he bloodied my nose. He won in a TKO. I fought him later that year in a return match and bloodied his nose. I fought both the Ducray boys. They were tough fighters. I moved adroitly around the ring, kept jabbing and avoided heavy blows. I "flew like a butterfly," but did not "sting like a bee."

We had many other good fights in the newly founded Relles gym. I remember one fight in particular. Lou Viani fought a barnburner with Bob Pesce. They came right out throwing blows as if the fight would last only one round. No blood appeared, but faces reddened from the contact of the gloves. In the second round, the pace slowed. The boys slowly ran out of gas. By the third round, the pace of the fight slowed to a crawl, but the boys kept throwing leather, missing mostly. At the very end of the round, Lou slipped to the ground and in the heat of battle, Bob kept punching. We rushed in to halt the bout. By this time, the two boys were very angry at each other, but we made them shake hands and called the fight a draw. After that, the two good friends walked away with arms around one another's shoulders.

Bob Pesce died from a stroke last year. Lou Viani, a successful architect here in town, found the time to attend his old friend's funeral. They might have once traded blows, but the bond of friendship they forged on Janey Way lasted a lifetime.

The days of boxing at the Relles gym are only a memory now, but dad was right, the boxing did teach us self-defense. It taught us more. We learned to settle our differences by the Marquis of Queensbury rules, not the rules of the street. This lesson was doubtlessly more important than simple self-defense.

"They might have once traded blows, but the bond of friendship they forged on Janey Way lasted a lifetime."

Know your neighbor

El Camino High School: Generations share their memories of campus life

By **LANCE ARMSTRONG**
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
lance@valcomnews.com

Editor's Note: This is part two of a two-part story series. Read the entire story online at www.valcomnews.com.

Changing and evolving

In September 1979, El Camino, which was then under the direction of Principal, Dr. Joseph Peterle, became known as El Camino Fundamental High School.

In an attempt to set higher standards for a school that had declining enrollment and a truancy rate of about 20 percent, El Camino underwent various changes as a fundamental school.

These changes included a closed campus with an atmosphere conducive to learning at all times, challenging curriculum with an emphasis on basic English and mathematic skills, college preparatory classes and a four-year educational plan for each student.

Another unique aspect of El Camino as a funda-



Arden-Carmichael News Photo/Lance Armstrong

El Camino High School at 4300 El Camino Ave., at Eastern Avenue, opened in September 1950.

mental school is that it has no specific attendance area and is open to any student in the district.

With the school's commitment to providing an atmosphere conducive to learning, several projects have enhanced the campus, such as its more recent modernization project, which included new parking lot surfaces, new concrete near the A-wing, tree,

grass and flower plantings, and the installation of new sprinklers, cameras, heat detectors, clocks and an intercom system.

Unfortunately for El Camino, an earlier enhancement of the school occurred as a result of a tragedy.

A mysterious firebombing at the school in 1970

See *El Camino*, page 7

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El Camino: 'It's like a second home to a lot of people'

Continued from page 6

caused about \$25,000 in damages and resulted in an unexpected rebuilding and remodeling project that was paid for through district funds.

In addition to the passion for El Camino demonstrated by many of the school's alumni, many current El Camino students have developed much pride in their historic school.

Julio Escoto, 15, of the Class of 2012, for instance, said that he especially enjoys that the school offers various high level learning opportunities.

"The classes are great and they have good programs like the Back on Track afterschool program to help (students improve their grades)," said Escoto, whose uncle Tino Perez also attended the school. "We also have good sports teams."

El Camino today

Sixteen-year-old Lorin Sukkary of the Class of 2011 said that she truly loves El Camino High.

"I just love El Camino," said Sukkary, who writes for the school's newspaper and is a member of the school's nationally-ranked dance team. "It's not necessarily a school where you have to pretend to be someone who you're not. It's a place where the teachers will sit down with you and help you through anything, whether it's a school matter or a personal matter. It's like a second home to a lot of people. It's a really good place to go and



Photo courtesy of El Camino High School
Dr. Alva D. Abbott served as El Camino High School's principal from 1956 to 1972.

it's a really good place to send your kids. I want to live (in the area) and teach here (at El Camino), just because I want to give generations further down the experience that I had here."

At the entrance to El Camino High is a sign, which reads: "Through these halls walk some of the finest people in the country - our students."

And with the school's six decades of developing many students, who have led successful lives in the local community, the nation and beyond, it is difficult to dispute such a time-tested statement.

As El Camino High nears its milestone anniversary, the school appears on track for another 60 years of maintaining and establishing traditions and producing many more contributing members of society.



Photo courtesy of El Camino High School
Mayor Phil Isenberg, a graduate of El Camino High School, participates in the school's 1978 homecoming. To his left is homecoming queen Michele Fielding.

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Ambulance canopy opens

Sacramento's Mercy Hospital continues expansion

By **BENN HODAPP**
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
benn@valcomnews.com

The blessing of a new ambulance canopy earlier this year at Mercy General Hospital in Sacramento was the first step in what is sure to be an eventful two-year process for the facility. Fifty to 60 people attended the ceremony, which ushered in the beginning of the expansive Alex G. Spanos Heart & Vascular Center, set for open in the second quarter of 2012.

According to Shelly King, marketing communications manager of Mercy General, the new ambulance canopy is better suited to unloading patients and shielding them from the elements.

"It used to be that when people were taken out of the ambulance they were exposed to the weather," she said. "So if it was raining they would get wet or if it was 110 degrees they would have the hot sun hitting them."

Since its opening two months ago, King said the canopy has worked very well and has helped to make patients' stays as comfortable as possible.

The success of the canopy was important, but the next two years will see massive changes for the entire hospital.

The planning for the Heart & Vascular Center has been years in the making, with final clearance coming in winter of 2007. After tinkering and re-tinkering with the

plans to make them feasible, they finally came to rest on a four-story, 123,350 square foot space that will cost an estimated \$170 million.

Although the price tag may seem steep, King explained some of the reasons why Mercy General is deserving of the new facility.

"We are the first and only accredited chest pain center in Sacramento," she said. "We have also won awards eight years in a row for cardiology and were voted Best Overall Cardiac Care in the Region."

Health Grades offers up ratings for all hospitals in order for people to make an educated decision as they can when deciding which hospital to use. Along with its designation of Best Overall Car-

diac Care, Mercy General was also deemed Best in Region for cardiac surgery, cardiology, stroke, general surgery and spine surgery.

There are 14 hospitals in the region comprised of Sacramento, Arden Arcade and Roseville.

The expansion

The new addition will also allow the 85-year-old hospital to make room for the always-changing technology, according to King.

"The technology is always changing and we needed more space to utilize it," she said.

King added that the new patient rooms will be state of the art and will allow patients to have their own room instead of two or more to a room like in the past.

"That might not sound like such a big deal, but it's huge in terms of patient approval."

With the opening of the center planned for the spring of 2012, helping patients remains the number one priority while construction is ongoing.

"We've always had a high volume of heart patients," King said. "Experience is what makes us different from other hospitals. It separates us because of the type of care that people receive."

The plan

Construction timeline: August 2010, Heart & Vascular Center basement/foundation completed; October 2010, structural steel erection begins; fourth quarter 2010, Heart & Vascular Center "top out" steel; second quarter 2011, building is dried in, interior work underway; second quarter 2012, obtain final Heart & Vascular Center licensure and begin move in.

Mercy General is located at 4001 J St. in Sacramento. For questions about possible care or other concerns, the hospital can be reached at (916) 453-4545.

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86th edition of event to be held March 6-7

Local residents keeping Camellia Show in full bloom

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
lance@valcomnews.com

A Sacramento tradition will continue Saturday and Sunday, March 6 and 7, when the 86th annual Camellia Show will be held at the Memorial Auditorium. But before the venue's doors ever open, many locals will be heavily involved in various aspects of the longtime popular event.

Land Park resident Carol Schanz, who has served as president of the Camellia Society of Sacramento since 2008, said that she is very appreciative of the many society members, who help make the show a success.

"Our members come from many parts of the Sacramento area, including Land Park, East Sacramento, Arden, Carmichael and the Pocket-Greenhaven area, as well as Lincoln, Auburn and West Sacramento," Carol said. "Without the society members' dedication and hard work, this show would not be able to continue. And personally, I'm excited to

be a part of this event that has been a tradition of Sacramento for the past 86 years."

Celebration and ceremony

The free event is a celebration of the city's official city flower and was once a part of an earlier Sacramento tradition known as the Camellia Festival.

From 7 to 10 a.m. on Saturday, competitors will place their blooms on tables at the auditorium to be judged.

The venue's doors will open to the public at 3 p.m. and attendees can observe the many freshly-presented ribbons and trophies awarded to the most worthy exhibitors.

The show continues until 6 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday.

During the opening ceremony, Mayor Kevin Johnson and Supervisor Roger Dickinson will welcome guests of the event and be available for a meet and greet session.

The show, which is presented each year by the Camellia Society of Sacramento, will also in-

clude a plant sale, where guests can purchase their own camellia plants.

Carol said that the show presents a great opportunity for people in the community with camellia plants to become camellia exhibitors.

"Members of the society will be available to identify and help new exhibitors place their flowers," Carol said. "Also, people who are interested in camellias, but are not familiar with the different kinds of camellias will find the show to be a perfect opportunity to see the many varieties of camellias and select the ones that they like for their own yard."

In addition to camellia blooms, the Floral Design Guild will have a camellia floral arrangement competition.

One of Sacramento's sister cities, Matsuyama, Japan, will also have a display at the event.

The show includes competitions for the best camellias in a wide variety of categories, which feature these popular, winter-blooming flowers, which grow on evergreen shrubs or small trees.



Arden-Carmichael News Photo/Lance Armstrong
Carmichael resident Don Lesmeister, who serves as one of the co-chairs of the Camellia Show, admires one of his camellias.

As in its previous years, the event, which draws hundreds of camellia lovers each year, will showcase many different colors, shapes and sizes of camellias entered by veterans, novices and first time exhibitors.

A flower favorite

Carmichael resident Don Lesmeister, who serves as one of the co-chairs of the Camel-

lia Show and has been involved with camellias for the past 30 years, provided tips for newcomers of the event who are interested in showing their camellias.

Lesmeister said that the flowers should be carefully transported in small cups of 7Up or water with a little sugar, and

See Camellia, page 11

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Camellia: 'A great opportunity to celebrate our city's official flower'

Continued from page 10

without touching another flower or leaf.

He added that stems should be no longer than an inch and blooms can be protected by cotton or shredded newspapers to prevent bruising.

Carol added that she still utilizes an important tip about placing flowers from her father, who taught her to turn a flower on a show table until "its smiles."

Because of its longtime presence in Sacramento, the camellia can be found throughout the city in a variety of ages, varieties and sizes.

Among the many members who grow camellias in their own yards is Pocket area resident Jackie Randall, a past president of the society.

When asked what she enjoys most about the Camellia Show, Randall said, "It's the people. They are like family. My husband (Jim, a former society president) showed camellias for many years and after his death, the only reason I continued to show camellias is I needed to be with my camellia family."

Another member of the society, East Sacramento resident Patty Bonnstetter said that she first heard about the show while working at Sacramento City College.

"In 1981, secretaries at the college were selling Camellia Show buttons, so I decided to go to the show," Bonnstetter said. "In 1983, I bought a house in East Sacramento with 25 camellia plants. I have been attending the shows every year and buying a button and last year, I entered

five flowers for the first time and won four ribbons."

Carol, who is a second-generation Camellia Society of Sacramento member, is the daughter of Herbert and Harriet Martin, who were passionate camellia growers and exhibitors.

Herbert and Harriet's initial experience showing camellias resulted from admiring blooms on a camellia plant in their yard, Carol explained.

"My parents were given a couple camellia plants in 1944 as house warming gifts for their home in Oak Park and their interest in the camellias grew as the plants grew," Carol said. "Around 1955, they saw an announcement for the Camellia Show in a local newspaper, picked some of their flowers, entered them in the show and won blue ribbons. This experience began their lifelong love for camellias."

Carol said that her parent's love for camellias was contagious, as she and her husband, Gary, a 1964 graduate of McClatchy High School, became involved with the society and its shows.

In about 1970, Gary began to take an interest in Herb and Harriet's camellias and soon afterward began a camellia collection of his own.

For the past 38 years, Gary and Carol have been actively involved in the Camellia Society and showing camellias throughout the state.

Carol said that like every year, guests of this year's Camellia Show are very important

as they support a longstanding Sacramento tradition.

"I would like to personally invite members of the community to come to the show and be a part of this treasured Sacramento event," Carol said. "It is a great opportunity to celebrate our city's official flower and its rich history."

Sacramento's Camellia History

The camellia, with its history dating back to at least 500 B.C. in China, has been a part of Sacramento's landscape for almost every year of the city's existence.

Becoming Sacramento's official flower on Feb. 7, 1941, the camellia dates back to 1852 in the capital city, which is known as the "Camellia Capital of the World."

The popular flower, which is generally seen in solid or combinations of reds, pinks or whites and occasionally yellow, was first introduced to Sacramentans by former Boston resident, James Lloyd Lafayette Franklin Warren, who owned

Warren and Co. New England Seed Store at 15 J St. in Sacramento.

Although an effort to designate Sacramento as "The Camellia City" failed in 1910, the camellia's popularity reached a much higher level in 1924, when the city's first Camellia Show was held at David Lubin School at 3700 K St.

The Tuesday Club, a local women's organization, sponsored the first three years of the show, followed by the Sacramento Garden Club, which was founded in 1927, and then the Camellia Society of Sacramento, which was formed through the efforts of the garden club's 18-member Planting Committee in 1943.

The Camellia Show was later moved to the State Fair grounds' Garden Court at 49th and V streets, before establishing its most memorable home at the Memorial Auditorium in 1948.

Among the most notable camellia shows at the Memorial Auditorium occurred in 1972, when the nation's first lady, Pat Nixon, and California's first

lady, Nancy Reagan, attended the event.

The show, which gained further popularity with the 1955 founding of the once very well-attended, now nonexistent Camellia Festival, was held at the Sacramento Community Center from 1975 to 2003, with the exception of 1982, when it was held at Country Club Plaza.

In 2004, the Camellia Show took a step back in time, as it returned to the Memorial Auditorium.

But no matter where the event has been held, Sacramento's Camellia Show, which is currently part of an eight-show camellia show circuit in Northern California, has continued to be a success.

Furthermore, since its inception, Sacramento's show has been the largest camellia in the world.

For additional information regarding the Camellia Show and the Camellia Society of Sacramento, call Carol Schanz at (916) 447-1969 or Don Lesmeister at (916) 967-8420 or visit the Web site www.camelliasocietyofsacramento.org.



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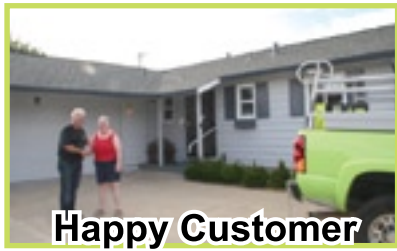
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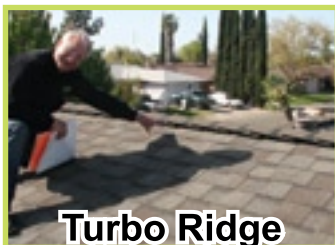
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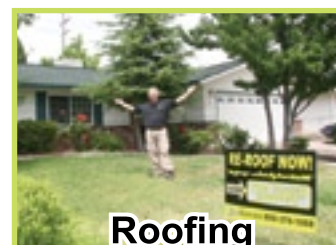
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'African American Treasures' an inspirational exhibit for all peoples

By SUSAN LAIRD
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
susan@valcomnews.com

The mission of The California Museum in Sacramento is to engage and enlighten visitors to California's rich history and its unique contribution to the world through ideas, innovation, art and culture. It seeks to inspire all people to dream the California dream and to dare to make their mark on history.

One Southern California couple is making a mark in California history by preserving an important part of the American experience. For the past three decades, Bernard and Shirley Kinsey have collected a wealth of memorabilia with the intent to preserve and present key aspects of America's black heritage. A part of their collection is currently on display at The California Museum.

"African American Treasures: History and Art from the Collection of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey"

is an exhibit of the history and courage of a people whose story is an important part of the fabric of American history. The Kinsey's personal collection is extremely diverse, spanning three centuries of politics, art, literature and culture. The story of a people is told here. Tales of suffering, courage, resilience, innovation and achievement.

In a sense, the collection is also a commentary on the Kinseys themselves. As African Americans, both overcame business and social barriers to become one of Los Angeles' most respected couples. Throughout their 43-year marriage, they have demonstrated their commitment to two simple principles: "To whom much is given, much is required;" and "A life of no regrets."

Over 30 items are on display, ranging in age from 1720 to as recent as 2006. It is a remarkable collection of art, books and manuscripts. This is an in-



Photo courtesy of The California Museum

The California Museum is a place to learn about California's prodigious achievements and contributions to the world.

spirational exhibit for everyone: every age, race and background.

The exhibit may seem small – only one long hallway in the museum – but plan to spend at least an hour. This is an exhibit

of incredible depth, with great balance and sensitivity given to all peoples. The viewer is encouraged to think of each item within the context of its era, as well as today. Visitors will want to take time to read

the documents on display, as well as to admire the artwork.

For example, one document on display is a bill of sale. Henry Butler, a

See Treasures, page 15

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Treasures: 'Significant that we spotlight this collection during Black History Month'

Continued from page 14

free man, purchased the freedom of his wife, Susan, and her children from Mary Anne Graham for \$100 in 1839. The display notes that Graham must have held Butler in high regard, because she sold his family to him for a significant financial loss. A female slave in her child-bearing years was worth nearly \$2,000.

Other documents show the lack of regard for the humanity of slaves, who were considered property.

Perhaps one of the most disturbing artifacts on display is a letter written by A.M.F. Crawford to dealers in 1854. In the letter, she directs the dealers to sell the 17-year-old young woman who brought the letter to them. "She does not know she is to be sold," Crawford wrote. The reader is left to ponder the state of Crawford's conscience, especially after reading that the girl was to be sold to purchase horses – and that Crawford "just couldn't" bear to tell the

"It reflects a story that every member of California's diverse population can relate to..."

girl's family that she was to be sold. Did her conscience bother her that she had separated a family? Or was she only worried about paying for property? One wonders what happened to each of the people in this human tragedy, now swallowed up by the mists of time.

Other items on display include a rare Matthew Brady portrait of Hiram Rhoades Revels, the first black U.S. Senator, letters from Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, sculptures by Ed Dwight, Artis Land and Vickson Kaphambe and artwork by African American artists dating from 1870 to the present day.

The exhibit is sponsored by the California Legislative Black Caucus and The California Museum

in honor of Black History Month.

"The Kinsey Collection is an important collection of art and history that reflects the unique experience of the African American Community before and since the Mayflower sailed to America," said California Senator Curren Price (D, 26th Senate District). "It is significant that we spotlight this collection during Black History Month, because it reflects a story that every member of California's diverse population can relate to. We are pleased that The California Museum will make this exhibit available to citizens of all ages who visit the state capital."

"African American Treasures: History and Art from the Collection of Bernard and Shirley Kinsey" runs through May 2. The Cali-

fornia Museum is located at 1020 O Street in Sacramento. Hours are 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$8.50 for adults, \$7 for seniors and students with valid ID, \$6 for children ages six to 13 and free for children ages five and younger. Parking is free on weekends. For more information, call (916) 653-7524 or visit www.CaliforniaMuseum.org.



Photo courtesy of The California Museum African-American Revolutionary Soldier (Ed Dwight, circa 1980, bronze sculpture).



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Arden Arcade cityhood update: LAFCo's EIR report released

Special to the Arden-Carmichael News

They did it. And now they have the proof.

After raising thousands of dollars in its push for cityhood, the Arden Arcade Incorporation Committee officially announced Feb. 21 that the Sacramento County Local Agency Formation Commission has released

the environmental impact report (called EIR) examining the incorporation application.

The report, published by LAFCo (the governmental body that determines whether a cityhood petition is viable), is a thorough examination of the possible ramifications that may be associated with Arden Arcade becoming a city. The release of the report is a positive

signal for the incorporation movement, as it is one of the final hurdles before the subject is placed on the ballot.

Arden Arcade Incorporation Committee members hope the question of cityhood goes before voters in November.

Future quality of life meetings

The Arden Arcade Incorporation Committee will have two

more "Quality of Life" community meetings before they present their findings at a later meeting. The group said the meetings are "A way to come together as a community, identify and prioritize our concerns and have them ready for our new city council as a blueprint for them to get started on."



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Special event: Twain you and me

By RYAN ROSE
Arden-Carmichael News Editor
ryanrose@valcomnews.com

In response to a news story that he was at death's door in London, Missouri-born Samuel Langhorne Clemens, known popularly by penname Mark Twain, wrote, "The reports of my death are greatly exaggerated."

Indeed, as Twain has since passed, his legend (and wisdom) lives on in popular culture. And while his larger-than-life persona is sometimes exaggerated by modern authors and playwrights, Twain's pointed humor, dogged honesty, keen insights and plainspoken ways are as welcomed now as they were when he was writing for The Sacramento Union newspaper during the 19th century.

Next month, Twain returns to life via the stage – and he is back in Sacramento. Actor Hal Holbrook portrays the famous

author Saturday, March 6 at 8 p.m. at The Community Center Theater. Tickets are available at the Convention Center Theater Box Office (1301 L St.), Tickets.com, and (916) 808-5181. Ticket prices are \$30-\$60 plus facility and service fee.

Considering Twain's far-reaching legacy, our city is very lucky to have such a connection to the author (much as I'm sure Salinas values John Steinbeck). Clemens might have been born on the Mississippi River, but Twain spoke the language of modern Californians – in his time, he was a pioneer for human rights, women's rights, the environment and the humane treatment of animals. He may have been a character of the Gilded Age (having coined the term in fact), but Twain, pseudonym and all, was the real deal.

The Sacramento Union believed that – and they traded on that reputation. Anytime The

Union encountered financial problems, the publisher would drag an old desk out from the backroom and sell it as a "Desk used by Mark Twain." Almost always, those desks sold quickly.

A chance to experience a form of Twain today is a treat. As Twain's close friend Helen Keller wrote, "I think 'Mark Twain' is a very appropriate nom de plume for Mr. Clemens because it has a funny and quaint sound that goes well with his amusing writings, and its nautical significance suggests the deep and beautiful things he has written."

Women and the gravity of aging

By DARBY PATTERSON
Arden-Carmichael News Columnist
darby@valcomnews.com

I am surely not the only person (okay, woman over 50) who watched Nancy Pelosi sit at the President's left side during the State of the Union Address and make faces. From her inaugural appearance as the first woman on the dais in 2009, she's been, well, a distraction.

More than a year ago Pelosi, 69, staged her own performance as Mr. Obama made his first speech to the nation. She contorted her face, pursed and un-pursed her lips, scratched her cheek, pushed her hair, ran her tongue across her teeth and engaged in what my grandmother would have called "monkeyshines."

Now, I mention this in the context of my aging and longevity column because I believe I understand her desire to be facially animated. Simply put, stern faced women over a certain age are worried about looking like shar peis – with deep wrinkles creasing from nostril to outer lip. Television cameras make this effect (and the presence of wrinkles – that seem to have miraculously disappeared from Pelosi's face) even more pronounced. In short, pulling back the facial muscles with a slight smile is a female device (and an effect of Botox) to minimize the effects of gravity.

Vice President Biden, 68, had no such worry because, surprise, life is not fair. As men age and their hair turns silver (or vanishes altogether) they assume the look of wisdom, the cache' of experience. Thus, as Biden sat stone faced through the speech, resembling one of those unhappy emoticons people add to e-mails, he looked just fine.

The issue of personal appearance as women age is complicated by America's cultural mores' – we worship the young and beautiful. We Botox, eyelift, chin-tuck and pile on expensive serums guaranteed to shrink your bank account, but not those wrinkles. Of course, the ideal is to grow older with grace, accept physical changes that we can't control and focus on characteristics that matter – personal traits that make us unique and bring value to people in our environment. That's the ideal, not our reality.

The poster-woman for remaining youthful through the wonders of cosmetic surgery is Joan Rivers who swears she would have been out of work 20 years ago had she not dubbed herself the Face Lift Queen. Who knows, she may be right. Although her humor is as ribald and sharp as ever, it may have not been enough to keep the moguls of show biz laughing with her.

I can neither condone nor condemn the surgical solution because I am experiencing the conundrum faced by women who continue to work in a competitive professional environment. I want to be the wise sage that develops greater inner beauty as the outer shell transforms. At the same time, I fear my contributions will be discounted in the presence of youthful enthusiasm.

However, those of us in the second half may find ourselves in good company. With the Baby Boomer generation about to take center stage, aging issues and preconceptions are changing. Surprisingly – or perhaps not so surprising – Hollywood may be leading a charge. In the past few years, mature women have been winning leading roles that don't make them look like dithering fools. Recently, Meryl Streep appeared as a love interest sans lots of glamour; she'll turn 60 this June 22. Helen Mirren is 64 and landing substantial roles; and Judy Dench still gets great parts and appears to have gone knife-less.

We're learning much more about healthy longevity for our bodies, and for our minds. I'm hoping that this growing demographic and new scientific research will help create new perceptions about growing older and, in many ways, better. Perhaps women will become beneficiaries of changing attitudes and expectations. It would be nice – comfortable – to simply grow better with age that mirrors the beauty of our spirit.

Darby Patterson is a member of the Sacramento County Adult and Aging Commission and the author of "Meow.org, The Cat-Napping Caper." Visit Darby at www.storiesandbooks.com.

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Drive and dine

Love at first bite: East Sacramento's Sushi Café

By JENEKA SANFORD
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
reporter@valcomnews.com

It's hard to remember the first time I stepped foot there, but it was love at first bite.

I'd heard about Sushi Café several times before we ever went. Various friends were always saying, "We found the best new sushi place!" I was curious what all of the commotion was about because for years, East Sacramento has been known for many things, but great sushi restaurants were never one of them.

Located at 1221 Alhambra Blvd. behind the old Andiamo's restaurant, Sushi Café can be hard to find, but it has become a favorite among East Sacramento residents. When we walk in, we are always greeted with a warm and friendly "Irasshaimase," which means "welcome" in Japanese, from the hostess and sushi chefs, and we rarely have to wait for a table.

We usually start with two tall Asahis and an order of their barbecued albacore, which is delicious. The menu offers 68 different sushi rolls, but we always order our two favorite rolls, which are the Café Special and the Alhambra rolls.

The Café Special roll includes shrimp tempura, snow crab, avocado, fresh salmon, sauce, green onion and masago. Not being a sushi chef or connoisseur, I can't claim to know what makes this roll so tasty, but I

The end result is a very savory, spicy-sweet combination

think it has to do with the combination of the crunchy shrimp tempura, the special sauce and the fresh snow crab that makes the Café Special truly special.

The Alhambra roll, which includes spicy lobster, tempura scallions, and lightly torched salmon with garlic sauce, works so well because the end result is a very savory, spicy-sweet combination that does not disappoint.

What to expect

Although we are only there once or twice a month on average, our favorite servers, Phoebe and Michelle, always remember our order, and service is always speedy and efficient.

On a recent Friday night, we decided to try happy hour, since we'd been told they had great deals on happy hour. As usual, we weren't disappointed. Happy hour, which is offered on Mondays through Saturdays from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m., is very popular among East Sacramento residents, especially on Fridays. Rolls are \$5.00, and beers on draft



Photo by Robert Ossa

Meghan Vasquez, on left, and sister Ariele Hill at East Sacramento's Sushi Café. The rolls they are enjoying are the Café Special roll and the Alhambra roll.

(Kirin and Sapporo) are only \$2.50 a pint. On most nights, the owner, Dean Louie, can be found having a beer or shot of sake with friends and restaurant patrons. A sake enthusiast, he has a wealth of knowledge regarding sake made both locally and abroad. Ironically, he said he is not a huge sushi lover, which I found unbelievable considering how incredible his restaurant's sushi rolls are. He prefers sashimi, he told me, along with the great selection of sake and beer they have to offer. The general manager, Damon

Lee, however, does love the rolls, and his favorites are the Paradise, Freeport, and Alhambra rolls.

The Sushi Café in East Sacramento has been open since late 2007, and the other Sushi Café, which is located at 4491 Freeport Blvd., has been open since 2002. My fiancé and I can't ever go there without running into several friends and acquaintances, which is always so nice. If their present success is any indicator, I imagine that Sushi Café will be a well-loved East Sacramento establishment for years to come.

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Grove Library. Deadline for entries is 5 p.m., Saturday, April 3, 2010. Entries may be fiction or non-fiction and not longer than 1,000 words. Manuscript must be typed and double-spaced. Final word count to be written at the top of the title page. Name, address, phone number, email address and story title to be written on a 3x5 card and attached to the entry. Do not put your name on the manuscript. Winners will receive cash awards. First place-\$100 Second place-\$75 Third place-\$50. Awards will be presented at the Elk Grove Library Writer's Workshop, April 17, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. Submissions will not be returned. Mail or bring your manuscript to Elk Grove Library Short Story Contest, 8900 Elk Grove Blvd., Elk Grove, Ca 95624.

within our organization. We would greatly appreciate it if you would post the following notice in your next upcoming publication. Thank you in advance for your continued support of the Casa Garden Restaurant and Sacramento Children's Home. Want to give back to our community and have fun too? Become a volunteer in the dining room, kitchen, or garden at the Casa Garden Restaurant. The restaurant, located in the Curtis Park neighborhood, has been raising funds for the Sacramento Children's Home since 1974. For more information about being a volunteer, please join us at our restaurant on February 24, 2010, 9:30 a.m., at 2760 Sutterville Road, Sacramento, CA 95820. Please RSVP by calling (916) 452-2809, as we look forward to meeting you.

Embroiderer's Guild of America
Embroiderer's Guild of America, 7 p.m. Wednesday, February 24, 2010, SMUD Building, 6301 S Street. "Petite Project" from National EGA. (A bookmark). Visitors welcome. (916) 961-3558

Friday, February 26 at 6 p.m. The event will be at the Elks Lodge No. 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. All proceeds go to support schools/charities in the community. Call (916) 428-0311 or (916) 396-7244 for tickets. Tickets: \$40.

American Guild of Organists concert
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about the organ at St. John's is available from nmetzger@rcip.com.

FEBRUARY 27

Friends of the Library event for schools
Pocket-Greenhaven Friends of the Library is hosting an event to donate children's books at Dude Where's My Yogurt! on Saturday, February 27, and receive a discounted yogurt! School with most donations will win a Borders \$100 gift card for their School's Library Books will be sold at the Pocket-Greenhaven Friends of the Library annual book sale in the spring.

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FEBRUARY

Jo Anne Marquardt art show

The Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento presents an exhibition of the artwork of Land Park resident Jo Anne Marquardt Jan. 22 to Mar. 21, 2010 at the UUSS Auditorium located at 2425 Sierra Blvd, Sacramento. An opening reception will be held on Friday, Jan. 22 from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. This event is free. For more information visit www.uuss.org.

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Good Friday Services - April 2nd - 11:00am, 7:00pm

Easter Breakfast - April 4th - 7:30am - 11:00am (Youth Fundraiser)

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Eppie's restaurants, The Great Race founder reminisces about his local memories

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Arden-Carmichael News Writer
lance@valcomnews.com

When it comes to local history, there have certainly been a great number of businesspersons who have gained widespread recognition within the capital city. But of these individuals, few have maintained such a lengthy career as Eppaminondas "Eppie" Johnson.

Many East Sacramento area residents remember Eppie for the first of his chain of restaurants, which were each known as Eppie's Restaurant and Coffee Shop.

This restaurant, which opened at 3001 N St. on

June 15, 1964, was designed by the Los Angeles architects Louis Armet and Elton Davis.

The building, which fronted James and Geraldine Burkett's Imperial 400 Motel at 1319 30th St., was no ordinary structure, as within a year it was named the "Best Designed Coffee Shop in the Country" by Institution Magazine.

Built at a cost of \$285,000, the popular eatery was originally operated under a lease from Edwin J. Bedell, a former Sacramento hotel and restaurant owner.

Launching a legacy

The grand opening of the restaurant, which was attended by Mayor James McKinney and other notable Sacramento figures, included the first dollar paid to the business by Richard Rathfon, who was the head of the city's planning commission and a then-future city manager.

Rathfon's contribution of a 1957 Silver Certificate dollar was additionally significant, since Rathfon had suggested the 30th and N streets site to Eppie.

Eppie recalled that Rathfon explained to him that the location of the restaurant was ideal due to its surroundings at the time.

"(Rathfon) said that it was a great location," Eppie said. "The freeway wasn't in yet and there was no off-ramp going on there. There was a bowling alley and you had the Alhambra Theatre (in the area). It was just the best (site)."



Arden-Carmichael News Photo/Lance Armstrong
Eppie Johnson, who established the very popular chain of Eppie's restaurants, has had a very notable life during his six decades in the capital city.

Eppie recalled his desire to own his own restaurant and coffee shop.

"I always wanted to do a 24-hour coffee shop like Denny's and Carrow's, so I heard that Eddie Bedell owned a whole half a block at 30th and N streets," Eppie said. "I contacted Mr. Bedell, who was in Carmel and he came up to see me, but it looked like Sambo's really wanted it. (Bedell) wanted a \$15,000 lease deposit, so I assured him that I had the money that I didn't have and then I started selling stock to different people. I wasn't to sure if

I was going to get the site and one day, (Bedell) called and he said, 'Let's make a deal. I went to Sambo's and the place is filthy.' So, we kind of shook hands on it and we went ahead and hired an architect. I went to Los Angeles and I found the best restaurant architect I could find."

Eppie added that an architectural sketch was created and then approved by Bedell.

Working to come up with the money for the building, Eppie sold stocks to various

See Eppie's, page 23

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Eppie's: 'They share with me their memories of the place' said DeWitt

Continued from page 22

people, including the Hansens of Crystal Creamery.

In addition to purchasing \$25,000 in stocks, the Hansens also leased equipment to Eppie.

Eppie said that he was very prepared for the opening day of his restaurant.

"I put together an operations manual and job descriptions, et cetera and I also got a simplified cooking manual," Eppie said. "I had pictures of everything on the menu, hamburgers, five steps how to put it together and everything. I was really, really organized and when we opened the doors, we had a lot of people waiting to get in."

Expansion outside East Sacramento

Eventually, Eppie's restaurants expanded to include many locations, including sites in Las Vegas, Cameron Park, Turlock and other Sacramento area locations, including 6341 Florin Road, 4600 Madison Ave., 2525 Watt Ave. and 4657 West Capitol Ave.

Eppie said that the opening of other locations of his restaurant was spurred through customers who would often ask when he was going to open new locations of the restaurant.

Eppie, who was once recognized on the cover of Sacramento Magazine with the title, "The Greek Tycoon," explained that although he is most widely known for his Eppie's restaurants, his establishment of these restaurants, which folded about a decade ago, were far from his first experiences in local restaurant service.

Many longtime residents remember that Eppie once worked at his father, George E. Johnson at Del Prado Restaurant, which was located at 5500 Stockton Blvd.

Eppie said that after being raised by his mother, Anastasia Johnson, in the Astoria neighborhood of Queens, New York, he attended New York University, before heading to Sacramento in 1950 to work for his father.

George, who was born in Broussa, Turkey in about 1900, was well established as a successful businessman by the time Eppie became a Sacramentan himself.

In addition to owning the Del Prado Restaurant, George at various times also owned the Little Giant Restaurant near Hart's Cafeteria on K Street, Cordova Lodge at 10701 Folsom Blvd. in Rancho Cordova and 8 Pillars Coffee Shop on Stockton Boulevard at Fruitridge Road, adjacent to Del Prado Restaurant.

Eppie's story

Coming to America at the age of 13 and volunteering for the United States Army five years later, George was an essential member of the Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation in Sacramento and a nationally known figure in Democratic politics.

Eppie said that in addition to working for his father, he spent time as a caterer for such places as The Limelight bar on Alhambra Boulevard and many Bar Mitzvahs in South Sacramento.

Adding to his accomplishments with Eppie's restaurants, Eppie also had several restaurants, called Epaminondas. These restaurants, which opened in the late 1970s, were located at Cal Expo, in Rancho Cordova and in Stockton.

Eppie also purchased tennis clubs in Davis and in the south area at 6000 South Land Park Drive.

These days, Eppie no longer owns any restaurants or tennis clubs, despite common confusion caused by the fact that his old West Sacramento location that bears his name is still in operation – it is privately owned by a different owner – he is still very active in the community.

His current activity in the community consists of the continuation of one of the city's better known annual events, The Great Race, which is sponsored by Eppie's Great Race Foundation.

After two decades as an avid skier, Eppie took an interest in kayaking during the early 1970s.

This interest led to the creation of The Great Race, which is recognized as the world's oldest triathlon and the largest paddling event in the nation.

Eppie, who will turn 82 in May, said that although he no longer competes in the kayaking portion of the race, he still enjoys being a very active part of the event's operations.

"The Great Race"

This year, the 37th edition of this nonprofit run, bike and paddle event, which was first held on July 27, 1974, will be held along the American River Parkway on July 13.

Today, the 30th and N streets Eppie's building – a newer, yet still classic structure that was built after a fire struck the original building – still stands awaiting a new tenant.

While working on the upkeep of this building last week, handyman Per DeWitt explained that although The Great Race is Eppie's last remaining major public endeavor, people certainly have not forgotten about their fond

memories of Eppie's restaurants.

"Every single time I'm working here, 15 to 20 people will come up to me and ask me about the restaurants and this (location)," DeWitt said. "Anyone from street people to bus drivers ask me when the restaurant is going to open and they share with me their memories of the place. Everyone just really loved Eppie's."

Eppie added that East Sacramento residents and others should eventually be able to dine at the old restaurant site, once he finds the "right people to lease to."

"I have had offers for the place, I am just waiting for the right people to come along," Eppie said.

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