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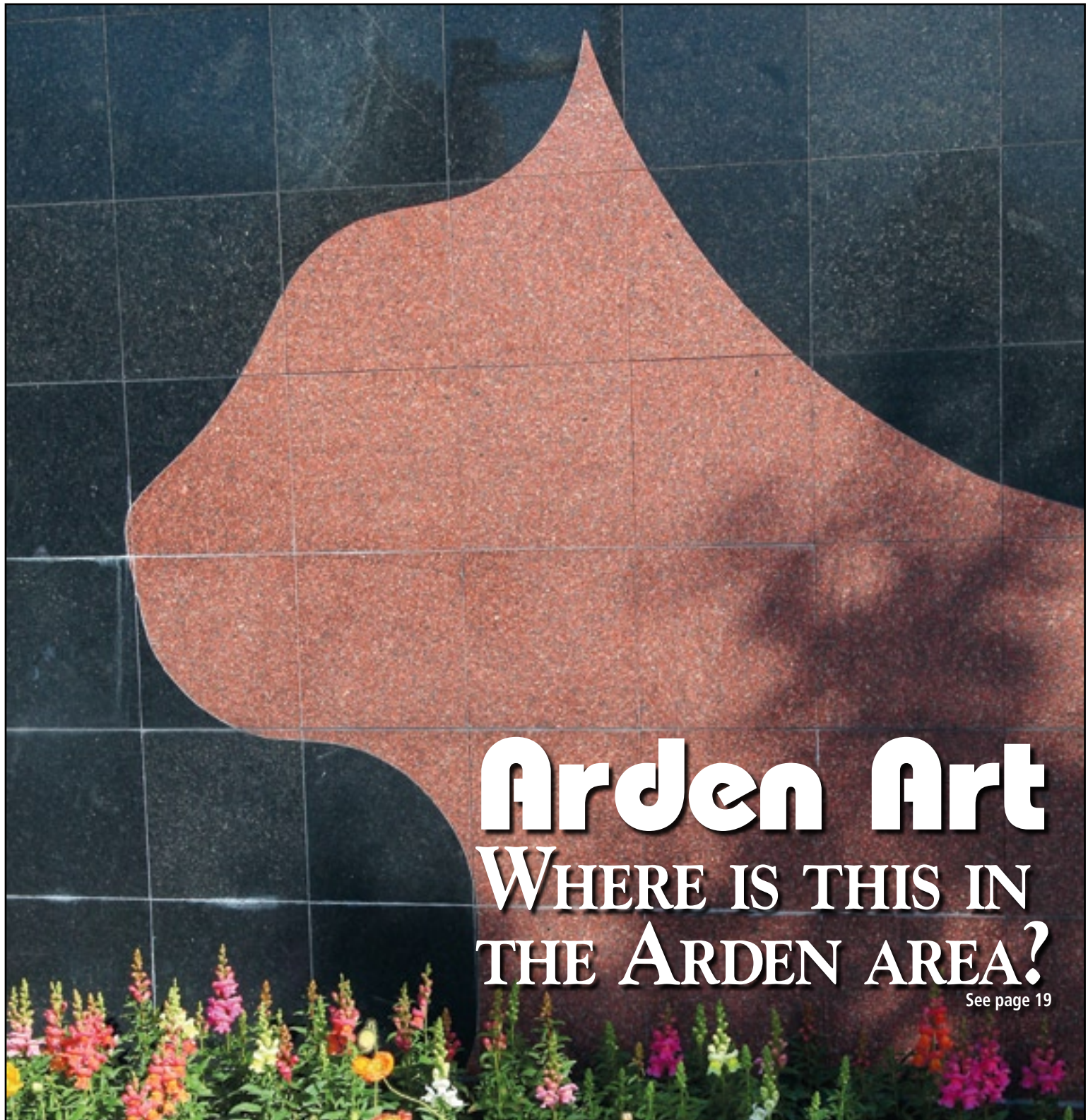
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E-mail stories & photos to: [vcnnews@valcomnews.com](mailto:vcnnews@valcomnews.com)

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# 5th annual 'Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive' set for Dec. 11

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

When Rosie Carollo was hospitalized at the Sutter Children's Center, Sacramento due to a rare form of childhood epilepsy at just 6 months old, she took great delight in the toys, movies and activities in the hospital's Child Life Program.

After Rosie's passing in 2004, just shy of her second birthday, her parents, Arden residents Nicole and George Carollo, were determined to keep her memory alive by giving back to the Sutter Children's Center – a children's hospital located inside Sutter Memorial Hospital in East Sacramento – after they provided such great care for their young daughter.

While strolling through their neighborhood admiring holiday decorations and looking to get a few ideas for their own house, the Carollos noticed barrels in front of homes for people to donate food as they, too, strolled down the street appreciating the decorations. It was at this moment that the Carollos had the idea to host a toy drive in Rosie's honor.

The Carollos began their charitable toy drive in 2007. This year marks the fifth anniversary of the Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights Toy Drive, which will be held from 5-9 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 11, and is part of the Carollos' intricate Christmas display at their home at 3961 Fair Oaks Blvd. in the Arden-Arcade area of Sacramento. New, unwrapped toy donations, as well as any cash or check donations, will be

collected to give to the children at the Sutter Children's Center.

Last year, this special event collected more than 1,600 items, up 50 percent from the previous year, and had more than 400 people in attendance the night of the toy drive.

This year, the Carollos and the Child Life Program are requesting Pillow Pets, crib-side soothers, toy doctor kits, infant rattles and toys, Lego sets, teen crafts and DVDs for children and teens. Monetary donations are accepted the night of the toy drive as well as gift cards to stores such as Target, Toys "R" Us and Walmart.

"This is easily the happiest night of the year for me," said Nicole.

Guests and their families enjoy the elaborate display of 15,000 Christmas lights, a gingerbread village, flying reindeer and a life-size nativity scene along with cookies, hot chocolate and even a special visit from Santa Claus.

If you would like to be a part of this event but cannot make it out on Dec. 11, the family is gladly accepting donations through the entire month of December at their driveway drop box located at 3961 Fair Oaks Blvd., at the corner of San Ramon Way and Fair Oaks Boulevard. For further information on how you can help, e-mail Nicole Carollo at [N\\_Carollo@yahoo.com](mailto:N_Carollo@yahoo.com), or visit the "Rosie Carollo 5th Annual Christmas Lights Toy Drive" page at [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com).

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38th annual Sacred Heart Holiday Home Tour showcases 'Fab '40s' homes

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

One of Northern California's most loved walking holiday home tours returns this December with five elegantly decorated homes in East Sacramento's historic Fabulous Forties neighborhood open for viewing, Dec. 2 through Dec. 4.

For 38 years, this popular tour has grown to include nearly 5,000 patrons from throughout northern and central California. The homes showcase elaborate renovation while preserving historic design, custom interior decoration and creative holiday décor that is sure to ignite the spirit of the season.

"This year, one of the homeowners is one the original two founders of the Home Tour in 1973," said Leslie Wilson-Lopez, co-chair of the home tour and school parent. "Caroline Reid was one of two founders of the home tour, she was a Sacred Heart parent. Now her children are grown, but the tradition continues. Last year her daughter's home was on the home tour. This year, Caroline has a grandchild at Sacred Heart, so this year's tour has tremendous meaning."

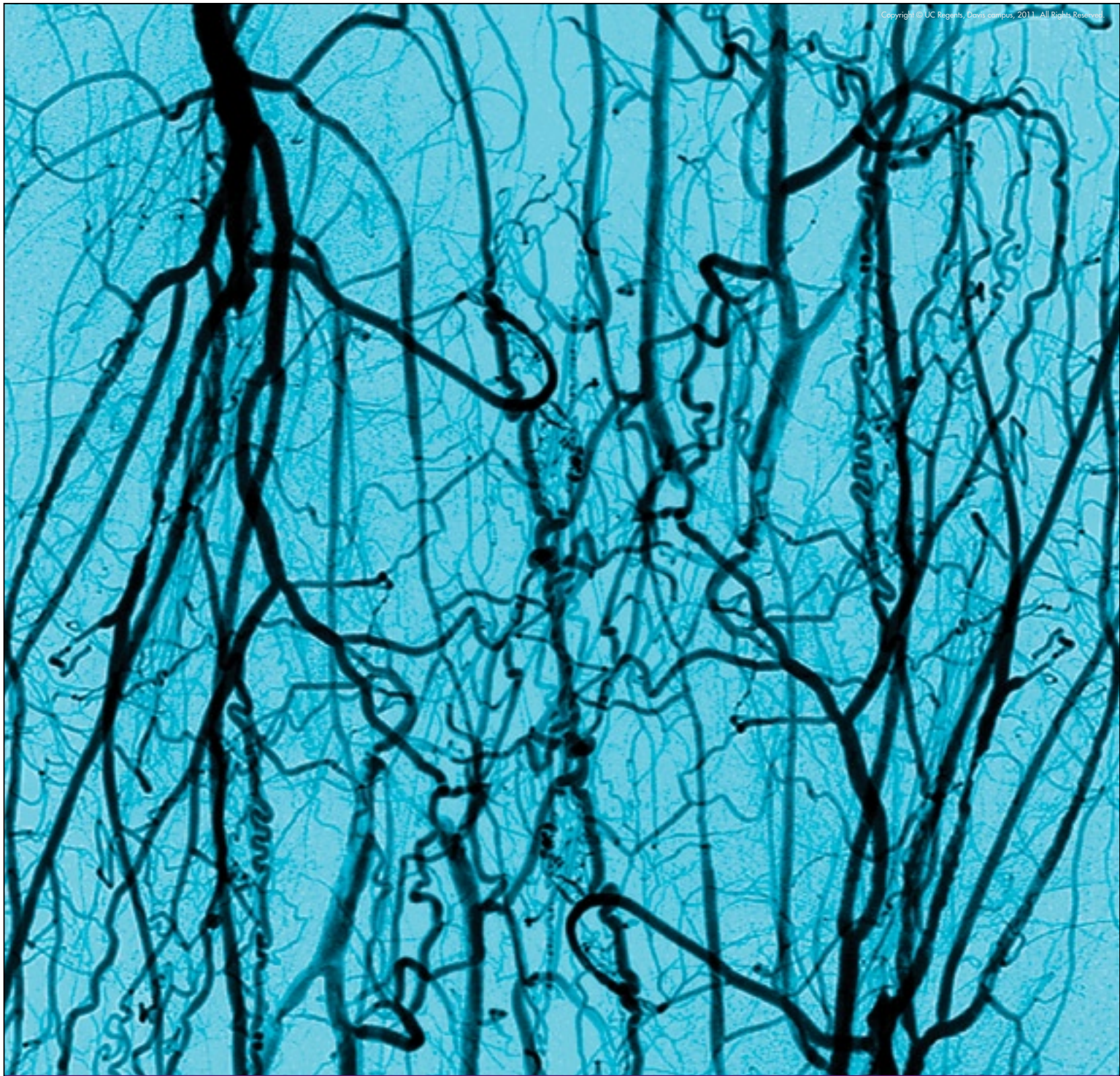
One special remodeled home on the tour features an area that was once a foundry (a factory that produced metal casings). Built prior to 1915, this structure boasts some East Sacramento history.

"The homes are all lovely," said Wilson-Lopez. "One home on the tour is owned by one of the designers: Jill Dudensing. She has a real minimalist, mid-century style that marries traditional Christmas with contemporary style. It's a kind of Andy Warhol meets Norman Rockwell kind of vibe."

This year's list of talented interior and floral designers also includes: Haus Home Décor and Specialty Gifts, Beyond the Garden Gate, East Sac Florist and Gary John's.

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# Bel Tempo Handbell Christmas Concert at Northminster

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

Bel Tempo – Sacramento’s premiere community handbell choir sponsored by Northminster Presbyterian Church and directed by Mary Balkow – will perform its traditional benefit holiday concert on Sunday, Dec. 11 at 4 p.m.

*Ring We Now of Christmas* will feature traditional Christmas carols as well as sacred and secular holiday favorites. Bel Tempo plays five octaves of English handbells and hand chimes and will be accompanied on various selections by violin, English horn and a variety of percussion instruments. Musical selections will include Eng-

lish, French and Latin pieces. Also, audience members of all ages will have an opportunity to “Ring N Sing-along” with Bel Tempo to their favorite holiday selections.

This year’s Bel Tempo Concert will be a benefit for River City Food Bank which provides life-sustaining food for 4,000 people each month. There

will be a freewill offering at the end of the concert and concertgoers are encouraged to bring a can of food for the community food pantry.

Northminster Presbyterian Church is located at 3235 Pope Avenue in Sacramento. For more information call (916) 487-5192 or visit northminsteronline.org.

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Photo courtesy, Sacramento Youth Symphony Academic Orchestra  
 ANGELO MORENO will conduct the Sacramento Youth Symphony Academic Orchestra in a special, free concert at the Sacramento Central Library on Dec. 4.

# Sacramento Youth Symphony to perform free holiday concert

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

The Sacramento Public Library invites families to celebrate the winter season at a free holiday concert with the Sacramento Youth Symphony Academic Orchestra on Dec. 4 at 1 p.m.

The 85-member ensemble will perform in the Tsakopoulos Library Galleria at the Central Library, located at 828 I Street in Sacramento.

The musicians will be under the direction of Angelo Moreno, Academic Orchestra conductor. The orchestra will play a variety of classical and holiday selections, including the beautiful Ralph Vaughan Williams' adaptation of *Greensleeves*. The Saltarello Flute Ensemble and the Clarion Clarinet Quartet will also be featured during the program.

For more information, contact the Sacramento Public Library at (916) 264-2920 or visit [www.saclibrary.org](http://www.saclibrary.org).





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Valley Community Newspapers, Inc.

www.valcomnews.com • November 24, 2011 • Arden-Carmichael News

5



# 'Community News in Your Hands' for 20 years

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

As it is that time of year when families get together to give thanks to the many things that they appreciate in life, Valley Community Newspapers (VCN), publishers of Arden-Carmichael News, East Sacramento News, Land Park News, Pocket News, and California Kids! would like to give thanks

for having the opportunity to serve local communities for the past 20 years and looks forward to many more.

This year, VCN celebrates its 20-year anniversary, which has thus given the business's ownership and staff an obvious reason to reflect upon its history.

Although VCN's newspapers were established by Ken Mandler, who is best known as the founder and former, long-time proprietor of the Capitol

Weekly newspaper, the business underwent an ownership change only four years later.

It was then that George Macko and Steve Chanecka purchased the business, which at the time was located in the South Hills Shopping Center at 5962 South Land Park Drive and consisted of the *The East Sacramento News*, *The Land Park News*, *The Pocket News*, *The Arden News*, *The Carmichael News* and *The Laguna Times*.

Under Macko and Chanecak's ownership, the name, Valley Community Newspapers, Inc. was introduced, the Arden and Carmichael papers were combined to create the *Arden-Carmichael News* and *The Laguna Times* was discontinued.

In 1999, VCN acquired *California Kids!* a monthly family oriented publication, filled with events, activities, arts and science, puzzles, book reviews, etc., all geared for the family. The three main writers, Connie Goldsmith, Carmel Mooney, and Patricia Newman have been writing for *California Kids* from its beginning.

In 2000, Macko bought out Chanekas' interest in the business. The office was relocated to 394 Florin Road in 2001 and has been located at its current address of 2709 Riverside Boulevard since February 2006.



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Susan Laird  
COMMUNITY NEWS...in your hands. Valley Community Newspapers, publishers of *The Arden-Carmichael News*, *The East Sacramento News*, *The Pocket News*, *The Land Park News* and *California Kids!* is two decades old...and still going strong.

Macko said that an ongoing philosophy at VCN has been to provide low cost advertising, quality customer service and community news.

"We have one basic philosophy and that has always been: we want to be a low cost provider to businesses, so they can afford to advertise," he said.

VCN's advertising philosophy has also helped it survive in a time when newspapers have been struggling and many papers have even ceased existing.

Also beneficial in the longevity of VCN is the fact that the company has never focused

on two struggling elements of newspapers – subscriptions and classified advertisements.

Macko has observed that the economy has begun to improve, thus resulting in a better outlook for his newspapers.

Susan Laird, VCN's editor, said that one of the keys to success at VCN is the importance the publications place on the local community.

"Our readership and advertising base continues to be strong, because we focus on the local community," she said. "And while the industry may be adapting to new formats, the thing our readers care about – a focus on local, community news – that will never change."

## Love of 'telling the story'

Macko explained, "Over the years we have had a lot of fun covering stories from the communities. Today we have a group of writers and photographers that have that same energy and joy of writing and capturing the moments as our past veteran writers, who wrote because they just loved writing."

Macko said, "For years we ran 'Kay's Corner,' by Kneeland Lober, a true gentleman and friend, sharing his memories of growing up in the East Sacramento area. Now we have Marty Relles' column, 'Janey Way Memories,' which captures his youthful adventures. A very popular column and the only column piece we run.

"Dwayne Spilsbury would uncover interesting stories in the Arden Carmichael/East

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# VCN: Stories come from every walk of life in the neighborhood

Continued from page 6

Sacramento area. We really enjoyed working with him. Roy Watanabe brought humor and history to our Land Park paper, as did Kay White, for many years. Now we look forward to Lance's history stories, a real favorite with our readers.

## Commitment to readers

"Our papers are not filled with columns. We run stories. Stories about people in the community, volunteers, people giving back to their communities," Macko said. "We spotlight youth and their achievements, unique hobbies, family businesses, historical facts on the areas and residents, etc."

Members of the community often drop by the newspaper office on Riverside Boulevard.

"Our stories bring people to our office wanting copies for their families," Macko said. "Our stories cause people to pick up the phone and call us with a thank you. We have calls all the time with suggestions for story leads – people can just walk in and visit, no layers here. You've got a story idea – just call or come in."

Story ideas come from everywhere, and every walk of life, according to Macko.

"Usually one story leads to the next. People will read it and call and say, 'Hey, I remember that place – and there would be

another memory, another interesting fact to print," he said.

## Commitment to business community

"The majority of our advertisers have been with us since the beginning," Macko said. "We appreciate them – everyday. And they continue to get the best customer service from our outstanding sales team."

In his efforts to operate a successful business, Macko said that he is fortunate to have a quality staff. And he always runs the company with this thought: "I want you to enjoy coming to work and like what you do."

Macko believes the success of VCN is due to a combination of his loyal advertisers, the readers who contribute all the wonderful articles, and the VCN family – his employees.

## A family that cares

"A successful company has longevity with its employees. Turnover is rare," Macko explained. "Recently, we had an opening for a sales representative due to an employee who had to move out of state. But the VCN 'family' has been a part of our journey for years, some ranging 20 years, 16, 15, 11 years with the company. Even our distribution drivers have been with us for years

as our drop locations continue to expand. It's a great place to work. As one employee put it, 'Our collective positive attitude, sense of humor, and concern for our advertisers' success makes coming to work every day a real joy. That sums it up perfectly.

"Our Production Dept does quality work – professional

through and through," he continued. "They not only design the ads (and we do not charge for changes), layout the papers (two a week/nine a month) but they also designed our website, [www.valcomnews.com](http://www.valcomnews.com), and keep it current for our readers. You can read all our papers online. Great place for advertisers, too."

The VCN team generates nine papers a month, with additional special sectional inserts. From the popular *Real Estate Quarterly*, *Senior Lifestyles*, *Home & Garden*, *Valley Shopper*, to just name a few.

"It's a busy place," Macko said. "We're looking forward to 2012."



## Dad Left his Beret in France

Born and raised in Paris, he witnessed WWII through the eyes of his older brothers who fought in the French Resistance. After the war, this youngest son was sent to America by a mother who believed there was only one place left in the world with a future.

Dad's love of his new country came quick and ran deep. When the Korean War broke out, though not yet a US citizen, he joined the fight.

Over the years I learned so much from him, nothing fancy but what could be more valuable than: work hard, be honest, show respect.

Now I've watched over dad for years as he's needed help with daily tasks, like food prep, housework, and transportation. Lately, living by himself has got him down and I've grown too exhausted to care for my own household's needs.

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Call the community nearest you for an appointment or more information.

Visit [www.aegisliving.com/VA\\_Benefits](http://www.aegisliving.com/VA_Benefits) to learn about applying for the Veterans benefits they deserve. Or contact your local Aegis Living community to learn more.

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# Wellspring Women's Center celebrates 25 years of 'Hospitality with Dignity and Love'

By **CORRIE PELC**  
Arden-Carmichael News writer  
corrie@valcomnews.com

It's about 7:30 in the morning on a chilly Friday in November.

A handful of women and children are waiting outside Wellspring Women's Center in Oak Park for the doors to open.

Precisely at 7:30 the door is unlocked and the smiling face of 91-year-old volunteer Pat Trippet welcomes each guest with a warm "Good morning," and a hug for any that would like one.

Women of all ages and ethnicities make their way to their usual tables to meet and greet their friends, while children scamper about as they wait for the Children's Corner to open. Later that morning, a volunteer chiropractor will make his services available, social workers will offer counseling, and the Craft Club will meet.

Back in the kitchen, the usual Friday morning Wellspring volunteers are busy preparing breakfast burritos, while volunteers from Jesuit High School in Carmichael serve every guest with a smile. Volunteers and staff work in the back room (aka. "The Hub")

working on sorting donations of hygiene items and diapers. And Executive Director Sister Judy Illig, IBVM makes her rounds, greeting every single guest at Wellspring by name.

Welcome to a typical morning at Wellspring Women's Center – a nonprofit whose mission, according to Sister Illig, is "to nurture the innate goodness and personal self-esteem of women and their children" under the theme of "providing hospitality with dignity and love."

## All are welcome

It was that sense of hospitality that first attracted Sister Illig to become involved with Wellspring, first as a Board member and now for six years as executive director. "Anyone is welcome (at Wellspring) – there are no restrictions on what women and what children can come, there are no criteria that have to be met in order to be a guest," she said. "I love the fact that we refer to everyone as our guest."

## Then...

That ideal of guests and hospitality has been the cornerstone of Wellspring from the very beginning when the concept was first created by co-founders



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Corrie Pelc  
WELLSPRING WOMEN'S CENTER Executive Director Sister Judy Illig, left, and Children's Corner Coordinator Yi Yang, right, spend some time with their youngest guests in Wellspring's Children's Corner.

Sisters Catherine Connell and Claire Graham, both members of the Sisters of Social Service, around 1983. Sister Connell said the concept for Wellspring came during one of their evening walks after work when both she and Sister Graham were approached in downtown Sacramento by a woman in need.

"A woman came up and nudged me on my arm and said, 'Got any money for food?'" Sister Connell recalled. "It was real clear, I could smell the alcohol on her and I thought, 'Oh dear, here this poor soul wants money for more alcohol.'"

The Sisters took the woman to a fast food restaurant in the area where they treated her to a meal.

"When we left and we were walking down the street, I turned to Sister Claire and said, 'Wouldn't it be wonderful if someday we could offer something more than just food and good-bye in the night?'" Sister Connell said.

Four years later, after leaving her current employment, Sister Connell called up Sister Graham and said it was time to make their dream a reality. With help from a friends and the local parish community, Wellspring Women's Center was born. The Center spent its first two years as a program of the Sacramento Food Bank &

See Wellspring, page 14



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Know your neighbor

# Sacramento 'Counts on Relles Florist' for 65 years

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

One of midtown Sacramento's oldest businesses, Relles Florist, is presently celebrating a special anniversary, as the longtime popular florist recently reached its 65th year in business.

Jim Relles, who has been a proprietor of the florist since 1972 and has maintained sole ownership of the business since 2008, said that such a celebration was made possible through a commitment to customer satisfaction that began with his father Ross Relles, Sr.'s founding of the business on Oct. 19, 1946.

"It's a pretty distinct celebration – 65 years in business," Jim said. "(Customer service) hasn't changed since my father started the business. It's just listening to the customers' needs and working real hard to get what they want with quality product in a timely manner of their order, and not promising things that we can't do and promising things that we can do. Customer satisfaction is following through on promises you made to the consumer. You need to follow through and do it and be honest with the consumer. If you can't do something, then you need to tell them up front or offer alternatives."

Jim added that like many businesses, Relles Florist, which has been voted "Best Florist" by *Sacramento Magazine* for the past 11 consecutive years, has survived through its willingness to adapt to changes.

One of the major changes, Jim explained, has been the growing importance of the Internet.

"Ten years ago, we didn't have a Web site and we didn't sell over the Internet and now probably 30 or 40 percent of our business is over the Internet, where 10 years ago it was zero (percent)," Jim said. "We now have a Web site, a Facebook page and a Twitter account. Most of the younger generation is doing all their business from their smartphones, so we're in the process of getting a floral app (application). If you want to stay in business, you just have to keep adapting."

## Roots of the Relles family's florist

During his meeting with the *Arden-Carmichael News* last week, Jim, who is a cousin of Marty Relles, who authors the series, "Janey Way Memories," in this publication,

shared information about his father's beginnings as a florist.

"My dad, growing up, worked for (G. Rossi and Co. florist at 1026 8th St.)," Jim said. "He also worked for Hires (Bottling Co.). They were down on 21st and R (streets). It was the prelude to Norcal (Distributing Co. at 424 17th St.). He (later) went to Arizona State (Teachers College, as Arizona State University was then known) and got his teaching degree, but he came back to Sacramento and he just looked at the business side (of teaching) and decided he didn't want to become a teacher. Then World War II broke out. After he got out of the war, he worked for Senator Florists (at 1014 11th St.) and I guess about a year later – I think he wanted a raise (from Senator Florists) and they said, 'No,' – he decided to go out on his own and open up his own flower shop."

## Five locations of Relles Florist

Although Relles Florist operates at two locations – 2400 J St. and 801 Howe Ave., north of Fair Oaks Boulevard – these current business sites are not the only places where a Relles Florist shop has been located.

Ross Relles, Sr., who gathered additional early experience in his field when he worked as a delivery person for McElhaney's Florist in Phoenix during his time at Arizona State, established his first florist shop at 2220 J St., within the Meril Studio shops, about 15 blocks from the main downtown business district.

The site suited the business well, since it was located on what was then one of the two main streets connecting East Sacramento, Carmichael and Fair Oaks with downtown Sacramento.

Jim said that the site was also ideal due to the fact that it was located within a short distance from several funeral homes, including the N.G. Culjis Funeral Home at 2231 J St., Citizens Mortuary at 2301 J St., Miller and Skelton at 1015 20th St., W.F. Gormley and Sons at 2015 Capitol Ave., James R. Garlick Mortuary at 2001 P St., Cippa and Nicoletti at 1501 28th St. and Harry A. Nauman and Son at 2021 28th St.

On July 11, 1953, Ross Relles, Sr. opened his second shop at 2210 J St. in a two-story house, with a raised basement, that he had purchased and remodeled to accommodate as both his business and his home.

Although this relocation proved to be a worthwhile endeavor for the



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Lance Armstrong  
ALL IN THE FAMILY. Jim Relles and his sister, JoAnn (Relles) Bradley, stand in front of midtown Sacramento's Relles Florist. The business is celebrating its 65th year in business.

business, Relles Florist eventually outgrew its original space at this site, as it expanded to the structure's top two floors and basement.

As was the case with its second location, Relles Florist did not have to concern itself with costly moving expenses, as it relocated a very short distance away to its third site at 2320 J St. It was at this site where the first Relles Florist shop to be built from the ground up was constructed.

This shop, which opened on July 26, 1971, proved to be the last Relles Florist site operated by Ross Relles, Sr., as he passed away on Jan. 15, 1972.

Relles Florist, which opened its Howe Avenue shop in February 1978 and its present midtown site on Sept. 26, 1981, has built a reputation as a strong, family-owned business.

Jim said that altogether about 25 Relles family members, including his brothers, Ross, Jr., Tom and Ronald, and his mother, Margaret, have worked at Relles Florist at various times.

In addition to Jim, his sister, JoAnn (Relles) Bradley, works at the midtown shop, where she has continuously assisted with its success since June 1975.

Also quite notable in the business's history is former Relles Florist employee Al Balshor, who opened Balshor Florist at its original location at 730 O St. in 1950.

Twenty-one years later, another former Relles Florist employee, George L. Procida, opened Procida Florist at its now former location of 1315 J St.

## Relles family history

The Relles family's history in America began with Jim's grandfather, an Italian immigrant, named Saverio Relles, who arrived at Ellis Island in New York Harbor on Feb. 4, 1907.

Jim said that like many immigrants arriving in the United States during this era, Saverio had his surname changed at Ellis Island, since the person who wrote down his last name at this famous inspection station wrote "Relles," instead of the correct spelling of "Reres."

Saverio married Helen Sclafani – born Elena Sclafani – in Chicago Heights, Ill. on June 12, 1910.

Although Saverio died on April 16, 1918, he had three sons – George, Ross, Sr. and Martin – with Helen prior to his passing.

Eighteen months later, while residing in Santa Clara, Calif., Helen was remarried, as she was joined in matrimony with Rosario "Ross" Petta, who was a laborer in the construction industry.

Helen and Rosario, who together had four children, Vito, Alice, Katie and Margaret, were living in the capital city at 523 ½ 14th St. by at least 1922.

And as a result of Helen and Rosario's move to Sacramento during this time, when Relles Florist celebrates its 75th anniversary in a decade, the Relles family will possibly also be celebrating another anniversary – their 100th year in Sacramento.

For additional information regarding Relles Florist, call (916) 441-1478 (J Street shop) or (916) 920-4911 (Howe Avenue shop) or visit [www.rellesflorist.com](http://www.rellesflorist.com).





# Harvest of Hope at Troubie Homecoming

Story by SUSAN LAIRD  
Arden-Carmichael News editor

Photos by GENNY CARIDI-MCNULTY  
Special to Arden-Carmichael News



The students of St. Francis High School kicked off their annual Spirit Week (Nov. 14 – 18) with two traditional Troubadour competitions: the Canned Food Drive and the Penny War.

Each class competes against the other in this annual warm-up to one of the most unique – and loud – spirit weeks in the region. (Troubies are often asked, “How can you have Homecoming when you have no football team?” “It’s complicated...”).

## Canned Food Drive results

The Canned Food Drive benefits area food banks in the Sacramento region on a rotating basis. This year, the Troubadours chose to help the Elk Grove Food Bank.

Some 100,300 items were donated by the young women to the food bank, including:

- + 47,000 boxes of macaroni and cheese,
- + 25,000 jars of baby food,
- + 11,780 cans of fruit,
- + 11,520 cans of soup, and
- + 1,200 cans of tuna.

Results for the Canned Food Drive were as follows: First place, the Senior Class; Second place, the Juniors; Third place, the Sophomores; and Fourth place, the Freshman class.

Students also held bake sales and a fundraiser evening at Chipotle, raising some \$6,600 in cash for the food bank, also.



## Penny War

Each class competes to see which one can raise the most money for charity. Students “vote” points for their class with pennies. In an interesting twist, “silver” coins (nickels, dimes, etc.) can subtract points. This can make the competition interesting when one class donates a roll of quarters to another one.

This year’s Penny War beneficiary is Cristo Rey High School, which provides a private high school education for students who otherwise could not afford one.

In this competition, the Senior class placed first; the Sophomore class placed second; the Junior class placed third – narrowly defeating the Freshman class, which placed fourth.

Some \$9,000 was raised by the Troubadours for the students of Cristo Rey High.





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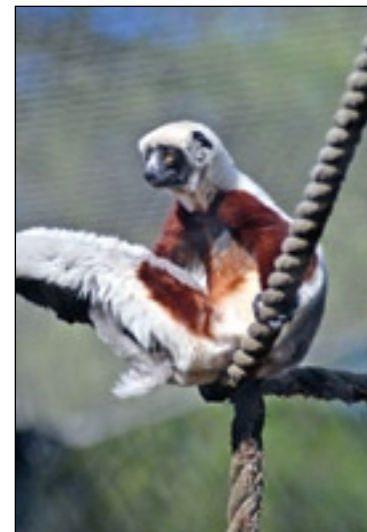
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Season's Greetings!



## Volunteer educators share time and talent at the Sacramento Zoo

By TONJA SWANK  
Special to Arden-Carmichael News

If you've spent time at the Sacramento Zoo, you have undoubtedly encountered many of the 153 yellow-shirted docents sharing animal information and answering visitor questions. If you've ever wanted to share your love of animals, now is the time.

Join forces with those who give a total of more than 6,000 hours to the Zoo each year. The Sacramento Zoo is taking applications for the 2012 Docent Training class until Dec. 15.

As a Docent, you will share the strength of a tiger's jaw, show the vertebrae in a giraffe's neck and compare paw prints. Docents conduct station talks at the Zoo, giving visitors a hands-on education about animals at the Zoo and around the world. With additional training, you can lead school field trips, give tours and participate in live animal presentations, both on and off Zoo grounds.

Zoo Docents are volunteer educators, 18 and older, who have a love for wildlife and enjoy people. An orientation meeting will be held on Jan. 7, 2012, followed by a nine-week class. This mini-course in Zoology runs every Saturday through mid-March. For more information on becoming a Docent and to receive an application, contact the Education Department at (916) 808-5889 or [spez@saczoo.org](mailto:spez@saczoo.org).

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\* For additional information on adoptions, call the SPCA at 383-7387. Adoptions occur daily and it is not guaranteed the above featured animals are still available. If they are not, the SPCA has many other loving pets available to suit you and your family. The SPCA is located at 6201 Florin-Perkins Road.



# Wellspring: Women and children of every background, every neighborhood served

Continued from page 9

Family Services, then became a separate agency.

After two locations on Broadway, Wellspring found its current home in 1995 in the old Oak Park Firehouse.

## Now...

At the Oak Park Firehouse, Wellspring is concentrating on its main programs, the first of which is a Nutritious Meal Program. From 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., any woman and/or child can come in for a free hot breakfast. Wellspring averages about 200 women and children a day coming through its doors.

However, the unique thing about Wellspring is the support the guests receive in addition to their meal.

"I always think about what would happen if Wellspring wasn't there – where would those people go to get a nutritious meal and sometimes more importantly the support that they're given – the emotional support if they're going through a hard time," said Andy Thielen, an East Sacramento resident and Wellspring Board member for the past five years. "They're in a safe place for that morning from 7:30 to 11:30. They get a warm meal and are able to have a conversation with someone and discuss their problems with other people that may have similar

## Volunteering at Wellspring

For the past 13 years, Wilton resident Sheri Stuckey has been coming to Wellspring Women's Center every Thursday for one hour before heading to work as a paralegal on Capitol Mall. Stuckey says she'll do anything to help out while there, either working in the kitchen or helping to serve breakfast, working in the back room or in the administrative offices upstairs. Additionally, for the past six years Stuckey has chaired Wellspring's annual dinner and auction fund raising event.

For the past eight years, now 91-year-old Pat Trippet has been volunteering at Wellspring. Known as Thursday's "official

hugger," Pat greets each Wellspring guest with a cheery "good morning" and a hug.

And volunteer Board members Patti Martinez and Andy Thielen have a combined eight years on the Board of Wellspring. A real estate agent with Lyon Real Estate in downtown Sacramento, Andy sought a position on Wellspring's Board after hearing about the nonprofit through his volunteer work on the Sacramento Association of Realtors' Masters Club. He later brought on Martinez – a Lyon Real Estate colleague from the Land Park location.

These are just a few of the many volunteers at Wellspring Women's Center.

So what is it about Wellspring that keeps volunteers coming back? Trippet believes it's all about the people.

"I love the people, their warmth," she said. "The volunteers get as much out of it as the people do. I look forward to Thursdays."

Stuckey also found volunteering helps her keep prospective in life.

"When we get busy in our own lives, it really helps to volunteer and to see how other people are handling stress in their lives or problems in their life," she said. "And I think everybody has a little bit inside of them that they can always help someone else with. They just have to get out there and make themselves available to those people."

For information on volunteering at Wellspring Women's Center call (916) 454-9688 or visit [www.wellspringwomen.org](http://www.wellspringwomen.org).

problems. (It's) an escape for them."

Women like Elly (not her real name) and Beth (not her real name), call the Wellspring table they share each morning "sacred." Elly has been a guest of Wellspring every morning for 11 years, and she refers to Wellspring as a place of spiritual healing and love.

"It's for women who are in pain, women that are hungry – your soul is healed here," Elly said. "You are welcome here – all the staff welcomes you like you are a family. I don't know what I would do without it."

For Beth, Wellspring gave her a sense of belonging after her children grew up and left.

"For the first time I was very lonely and I wanted to find some place to come," Beth said. "(I am) so thankful to the volunteers. Everyone is wonderful and they really care for us."

Beth was also able to receive counseling she needed, as well as assistance in finding employment.

The women that come to Wellspring come from all different ethnicities and all different situations in life. Some are unemployed. Some are homeless. Some have mental health issues. Some are in or have escaped abusive relationships. Some are battling substance abuse.

To help the women through their problems, Wellspring of-

fers a Women's Wellness Program that offers counseling, case management, resource referrals, wellness activities and workshops – all free of charge.

Wellspring currently has one social worker on staff and three social work interns, so there are two-to-three social workers for guests to speak with each day. And workshops and activities run the gamut from parenting classes to poetry writing to exercise classes, which are all related to helping the women that come to Wellspring build their sense of self-esteem and dignity, according to Sister Ilig.

Many of the women that come to Wellspring find support from their peers as well.

"A lot of times you'll walk around the tables and you'll hear someone say "This is what's happening with me right now and I know you went through this last year, how did you do it, what did you do?" Sister Ilig said. "They really are very good about helping each other. There's a real sense of trust there and the guests feel safe. It's wonderful to be in that kind of family environment."

While the women receive the support they need, their chil-

See Wellspring, page 18

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# CALENDAR

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Send your event announcement for consideration to: susan@valcomnews.com at least two weeks prior to publication.

## ONGOING

### 'Bingo: the Musical'

Through Jan. 8, 2012: Everybody gets to join in the fun at this musical. Call for times, prices. The Cosmopolitan Cabaret, 10th and K streets., Sac. (916) 557-1999 www.CosmopolitanCabaret.com

### Clayton Bailey's World of Wonders

Through Jan. 15, 2012: 180 works and complementary ephemera span 50 years of Bailey's prodigious production of genuine marvels. A ceramist, sculptor, and self-proclaimed "mad scientist," Bailey aims to surprise and delight with his art. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org

### Florence and the Baroque

Through Feb. 12, 2012: Drawn from the largest private collection of Florentine Baroque painting in the United States, this exhibi-

tion reveals the intense emotion, saturated color, and refined brushwork that characterized painting in 17th-century Florence. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org.

### The Art of Disegno: Italian Prints & Drawings

Through Feb. 12, 2012: This exhibition, from the collections of the Georgia Museum of Art and Giuliano Ceseri, explores the variety and beauty of Italian draftsmanship through drawings and prints from the 16th through 18th centuries. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org.

## NOVEMBER

### Bilingual Toastmasters

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Una oportunidad unica para mejorar sus habilidades bilingues y superar el temor de hablar delante de gente con nuestro club Los Oradores Toastmasters. Improve your language skills and lose fear of speaking in front of people in Spanish and English with Los

Oradores. Every Thursday/Cada Jueves 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Sutter Cancer Center 2800 L Street, Sac. Teri Bullington (916) 723-6232 teri.bullington@gmail.com, www.sacramentoastmasters.com

### Bingo!

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Enjoy a great local charity game of bingo every Thurs. night at 6:30 p.m. Benefits projects in the community. Early bird for \$5, Regular game buy-in of \$20. Elks Lodge No. 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd., Sac. (916) 422-6666

### Florin Sears Store Farmer's Market

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Florin Sears Store Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, year round. 8 a.m.-noon. Florin Rd. & 65th St., Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Food Addicts Anonymous

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: 12-Step group for those who struggle with obesity, food obsession or eating disorders. Meets Thursdays. 9 a.m. St. Andrews United Methodist Church, 6201 Spruce Ave., Sac. (800) 600-6028.

### Living Positive with Chronic Disease group

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Meet-up group for people living with chronic disease who honor how important a positive mindset is. If you want to complain - this isn't the group for you. The group will discuss and support: best practices for managing your condition, communication strategies, ways to laugh, have fun, engage with life and more. Free. Meets Thursdays. 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. Starbucks, 1401 Alhambra Blvd., Sac. Danae Horn (503) 319-4247

### Rotary Club of Pocket/Greenhaven

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Hear guest speakers address local, regional and international topics. Visitors welcome. 7:30 a.m., every Thurs. Aviators Restaurant, 6151 Freepoint Blvd., Sac. Kelly Byam (916) 684-6854.

### Sacramento Downtown Plaza Farmer's Market

Nov. 24, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22, 29: Sacramento to Downtown Plaza Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, May-Sept. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 4th & K streets, Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Answers to Where is that?

1. Pyramid and towers, Arden Fair Mall
2. Sphinx, Arden Fair Mall
3. The Lumberjack statue, Lumberjack's Restaurant
4. Golden Bear, Cal Expo State Fairgrounds
5. Sculpture, Buca di Beppo Restaurant

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**JESUS' BIRTHDAY PARTY** FRI. DEC. 16, 7PM  
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# Wellspring: Capital campaign to pay off mortgage to women's center 'in the works'

Continued from page 14

dren can have fun in another Wellspring program, the Children's Corner, full of books, games and toys.

"The real emphasis (in the Children's Corner) now is on socialization skills, just fundamental learning skills," Sister Illig said.

"They do a lot with just the kids working together, sharing."

During October, 106 different children came to the Center, with an average of 17 a day between the ages of 18 months and 8 years.

The Children's Corner has its own special activities. For example, Land Park resident and Wellspring Board member Patti Martinez told a children's author she knew about Wellspring. The author wanted to come to speak to the children.

"She brought some of the books that she wrote for Chinese New Year," Martinez said. "She did a reading to all the kids and brought some tastes of Chinese food that they would all share if it was Chinese New Year."

To further help support both the women and children that come to Wellspring, the Center offers its Safety Net Services, which includes occasional assistance with transportation, educa-

tion and health services. Through this program, Wellspring accepts and distributes donations of diapers and hygiene items.

"One of the Wellspring employees said it best I think – Wellspring is the safety net below the safety net for the people that fall through the cracks," Thielen said. "There are various programs out there to help people that fall on hard times, but sometimes that's not enough. So we're there to provide a welcoming environment and offer the food and support that these women and children that are going through tough times (need), especially for those that don't have anywhere else to go. They may get assistance from other government agencies, but sometimes that's not enough to really fulfill what they need, especially emotionally. I think that's a lot of it – women and children may be able to get food in other places, but a lot of Wellspring's benefits go to the women emo-

tionally that they get the support they need and a place to relax during their tough time."

Volunteers help to stretch dollars at Wellspring Women's Center, in addition to the many tasks they perform.

"We would not exist if it weren't for the volunteers," Sister Illig said. "Their energy and commitment is just unbelievable."

## Volunteering is easy.

"Anybody can volunteer, anybody can help, anybody can contribute, and it's amazing what a difference it makes in these ladies' lives," Martinez said.

## The Future...

Now in its 25th year, Wellspring is looking towards the future.

"Our goal right now is to make Wellspring a household name so that when people hear something about Wellspring it would be like hearing about the Red Cross or United Way, where most people have recognition of that name," Thielen said. "I think in the next couple of years things will really take off for Wellspring – it has gotten better each year and despite the economy, Wellspring does continue to raise the funds needed to support our programs."

Another future goal for Wellspring is to pay off the current mortgage for the Firehouse, Martinez said.

"We're going to try to have a pay off the mortgage major fundraiser this year to see if we can get the building paid off," Martinez said. "If we didn't have the mortgage on the building, that would be a considerable help to us."

Wellspring also plans to make sure it can continue to offer the services it offers now.

"Maybe build up just the whole area of the counseling and case management kinds of things, to keep that program going (and maybe expand that part of it)," Sister Illig said. "Keep our meal as nutritious as possible – we really try to focus on that. And really helping women to believe in themselves – we really want to keep doing that."

For more information on volunteering or making a donation to Wellspring Women's Center call (916) 454-9688 or visit [www.wellspringwomen.org](http://www.wellspringwomen.org).

*Editor's note: Some names in this article are changed to protect the privacy of the guests of Wellspring Women's Center.*

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Faces and places

# Where in Arden is that?

Photos by **STEPHEN CROWLEY**  
Arden-Carmichael News photographer  
stephen@valcomnews.com

There are lots of interesting things to do in the Arden area...and just as many interesting things to see.

Can you figure out where these items are, from just a snapshot?

Answers are on page 17.





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### WYNDGATE CUSTOM

Customized 2 story 2 or 3 bedroom 3½ bath, features His & Hers custom baths and walk-in cedar closets. Open floor plan with raised wood beamed ceilings in living and dining rooms. French doors to patio. See: [455wyndgaterd.eproperty.com](http://455wyndgaterd.eproperty.com) \$635,000

PATTY BAETA 806-7761



### DESIRABLE SIERRA OAKS

This 3 bedroom, 3 bath has it all! Impressive Master Suite has a sitting area, walk-in closet, changing area and access to the backyard. Family room opens to the outdoor patio, pool and gazebo. Updated kitchen and breakfast nook; extra large garage. See: [2585MorleyWay.eproperty.com](http://2585MorleyWay.eproperty.com) \$599,000

LEIGH RUTLEDGE 612-6911 • BILL HAMBRICK 600-6528



### SIERRA OAKS VISTA

Wonderful custom built 2 story home in very private setting on park-like grounds. Grand spacious home with huge rooms, high ceilings and wide hallways. 4 bedrooms, 5 full baths and 2 half baths. See: [www.3101adamsroad.eproperty.com](http://www.3101adamsroad.eproperty.com) \$1,599,000

PATTY BAETA 806-7761



### GARDEN HOME

Campus Commons garden home! The one you've been waiting for! 2 bedrooms 2 baths, 1884 square feet; beautifully updated single story in Village Four. Spacious - open and bright! Two patios, front and back. Great new Kitchen! See: [www.2319AmericanRiverDr.com](http://www.2319AmericanRiverDr.com) \$348,000

SHEILA VAN NOY 505-5395



### TUDOR STYLE

Custom three bedroom, two & a half Bath Tudor style home located on a private lane off of Fair Oaks Blvd. Large master bedroom suite on the first floor w/a walk-in closet. On second floor, two bedrooms, one bath & loft. See [www.5242fair Oaks Blvd.view24hours.com](http://www.5242fair Oaks Blvd.view24hours.com) \$430,000

LIBBY NEIL 539-5881 • MONA GERGEN 247-9555



### FANTASTIC RANDY PARK

4 bedroom 2 bath home located in a great neighborhood. This very spacious home includes a vintage fireplace, immaculate hardwood floors, completely landscaped front and back yard, and a very open kitchen. See: [www.4619laurelwoodway.ihousenet.com](http://www.4619laurelwoodway.ihousenet.com) \$259,000

TIM COLLOM 247-8048

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