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Photo courtesy

THE SKATE PARK is a safe place for kids – and their families – to practice the many varied and difficult skills in the sport of skateboarding. Funding for the Skate Park was cut last summer, and local businesses and individuals stepped up to keep it going last summer. Now, continuing funds are needed.

Grindin' it out

# La Sierra Skate Park holds on despite budget cuts

By **CORRIE PELC**  
Arden-Carmichael News writer  
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Unless you can perform an ollie or a 5-0 grind, chances are you don't know about La Sierra Skate park.

Located next to the La Sierra Community Center on Engle Road in Carmichael, the skate park was built in 2000 by Carmichael Recreation & Park District (CRPD) staff and volunteers. Then in 2007, the skate park received an upgrade – the original wooden park features that were deteriorating due to weather issues were replaced with steel features purchased from a closing skate park.

Since its start 11 years ago, La Sierra provided a free place for skateboarders and inline skaters to practice their sports seven days a week. According to CRPD Recreation Supervisor Elizabeth Crisante, in an average year the Skate park will see 3,500 to 5,000 kids, with 30 to 50 kids there each day during peak summer usage.

## Cut from budget

However, this all changed earlier this year, due to budget cuts the District was forced to make.

Crisante says in March 2011 it was proposed and approved by their Advisory Board to cut the skate park from the budget as of July 1, 2011 as a cost-saving measure.

## Local fundraising

Fortunately, skate park staff were able to do some fundraising and keep the skate

park from closing. For example, neighborhood thrift store R Thrift in Carmichael has provided monthly donations, which allowed the Skate park to remain open daily through the summer.

However, donations have slowed and in October the skate park moved to a modified schedule – open Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday – and charging a \$1 daily admission fee.

## Additional ideas for funding

Skate park staff has also come up with some other revenue generating ideas. According to La Sierra Skate park Attendant Bob Kerr – who has been working at the skate park since 2003 – staff has been holding some events such as skate competitions. Kerr himself has also created snack bar and has been promoting the Skate park on the Internet “trying to get people to understand the importance of it.”

Getting the community to realize the skate park is a viable institution they should invest in can be just as tricky as certain skateboarding moves.

“While skateboarding may not be baseball or football, it is certainly a sport that is to be commended and it has its array of difficulties, so it's also a skill level as well to master,” Crisante says. “I just want the community to realize that if the Park ultimately has to close for good, then we do have a very large population of youth that will be out on the streets and we'll

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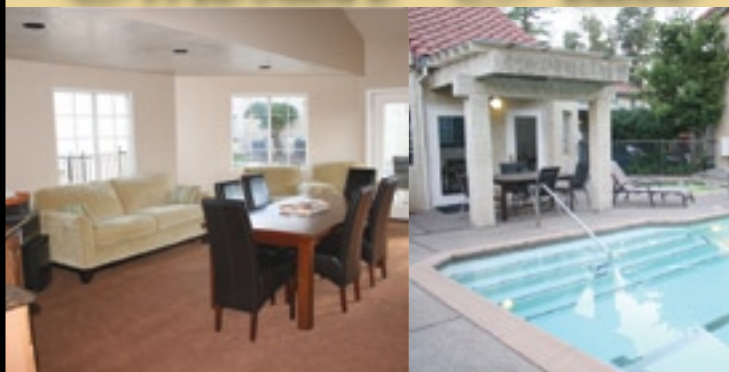
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# Performing artist brings 'Nutcracker' magic to Sacramento school kids

Special to Arden- Carmichael News

Ron Cunningham is a storyteller. As artistic director of the Sacramento Ballet, his most-often-used medium is that of dance – creating a story through the movements he gives to others. But several times each year, Ron steps out of the ballet studio and into the classroom, introducing hundreds of youngsters to the magic of his stories.

Earlier this month, he stepped into his costume of Dr. Drosselmeyer from *The Nutcracker*, and visited three schools – Crocker Riverside Elementary, Washington Elementary and William Land Elementary – to tell the story of America's best known ballet in a fun and interactive way – magic tricks and all.

Now in his 24th year as artistic director of Sacramento Ballet, Ron has a special affinity for working with kids. This is reflected in his casting of more than 500 youngsters each year in *The Nutcracker* – meaning that he must rehearse four and five casts for each role – far more work than would be normally necessary – just so more children can be part of the experience. This is, arguably, the largest *Nutcracker* cast in the country.

"Youngsters respond and remember far more when the experience is creative, imaginative and interactive," said Cunningham.



Photo courtesy, Sacramento Ballet  
*THERE'S MAGIC IN THE MASKS.* Ron Cunningham, artistic director of the Sacramento Ballet, explains the roles of the *Nutcracker* and the *Mouse King* to local school children. Cunningham's production of "The Nutcracker" with the Sacramento Ballet casts more schoolchildren than any other in the United States.

"They sit rapt during the programs and seem to understand and retain what they heard better."

Because of his commitment to youngsters, and the programs he has developed at the Company, the Sacramento Ballet was recently chosen as one of the designated participants in the region's Any Given Child program – an initiative of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. to bring the arts back into the classroom.

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# Seeking 1,000 new homes Sacramento animal shelters unite for 'Home for the Holidays' adoption campaign

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

The Sacramento SPCA, City of Sacramento Animal Care Services, Sacramento County Animal Care & Regulation and Happy Tails Pet Sanctuary are holding a joint "Home for the Holidays" pet adoption special which will run through Dec. 30.

The goal of the holiday adoption promotion is to increase adoptions community-wide and to ultimately find new homes for 1,000 homeless animals by the end of 2011. During "Home for the Holidays," adoption fees for all animals will be reduced by 75 percent.

The four participating shelters will take in more than 35,000 homeless animals this year alone. This figure represents an increase over previous years due to the poor economy and other factors. Sacramento animal shelters are overburdened with hundreds of animals seeking permanent homes. Through "Home for the Holidays," the shelters will work together to boost adoptions, and will strive to facilitate 1,000 additional adoptions before the end of the year.



*Photo, courtesy*  
ONE THOUSAND dogs and cats are seeking a fur-ever home in the Sacramento area. Three shelters are joining forces to find homes for these furry friends so they, too, can be "Home for the Holidays."

"We're hoping that when people are thinking of adding a furry family member to their household this holiday season, that they will visit their local animal shelters first, and give an animal a Home for the Holidays," said Rick Johnson, Sacramento SPCA CEO.

For more information on "Home for the Holidays," visit [www.sspca.org](http://www.sspca.org), [www.happytails.org](http://www.happytails.org), [www.sacpetsearch.com](http://www.sacpetsearch.com), or [www.SacCountyShelter.net](http://www.SacCountyShelter.net).



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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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# Know your neighbor

## Sac Metro's fire chief discusses his important role with local fire district

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

As the dust is finally beginning to settle from the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District's recent relocation to its new facility, which was featured in the last edition of this publication, it is timely to review another newer feature of the district: Fire Chief Kurt Henke.

Sure, Henke is not as new to his position as the district is to its recently-opened, two-story, 82,000-square-foot building at 10545 Armstrong Ave. on the former site of Mather Air Force Base. But that is exactly why the *Arden-Carmichael News* paid him a visit last week.

Henke was appointed to his present position eight months ago. He has had plenty of time to adapt to his important role with the district.

With this experience, Henke is thus better prepared to discuss what it is like to head the state's seventh largest fire department.

### 'High energy'

On several occasions during his interview with this paper, Henke referred to himself as a "high energy" person, which is quite beneficial for a man who dedicates 60 to 70 hours per week to his job.

In addition to his high energy level, Henke has a strong fire department background.

But simply reviewing the story of Henke's working experience with

whole story of his love for this profession.

Henke, who grew up in Napa Valley and attended St. Helena schools from kindergarten through high school, said that working for a fire department was the realization of his childhood dream.

### It's in the blood

It should come as no surprise that Henke was interested in becoming a firefighter at such a young age, considering that he said that he grew up around his local fire department.

"I come from a volunteer firefighting background, both my mom and dad," Henke said. "My dad (George Henke) was a volunteer fire chief (and) my mother (Beatrice Henke) was one of the first women volunteer firefighters in the entire United States, and actually, in the early 1970s, (she) was on an NBC nightly news special with about 12 other women in our little volunteer area. They ended up (receiving) from the California Assembly and the Legislature some award several years back."

When Henke was 16, he became a volunteer firefighter for the Napa County Fire Department.

He studied fire science at Solano Community College and received his first full-time job as a civilian firefighter at Skaggs Island Naval Communication Station in about 1984.

Henke said that it was interesting working at a military base that had such an important connection to the Cold War.



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Lance Armstrong  
Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District Fire Chief Kurt Henke describes himself as a "high energy" person who is living his childhood dream of working for a fire department.

"That base, if you read 'Blind Man's Bluff,' was the base that helped end the Cold War," Henke said. "It was responsible for tracking all the submarine movement in the Western Hemisphere and it tied in with Mare Island. Also, (it) was the intelligence gathering arm for the Soviet phone-tapping cables."

On Feb. 4, 1985, Henke was hired by the city of Vallejo's fire department as an apprentice firefighter. He was later promoted to a firefighter.

Henke became a fire captain in about 1992 and he worked in the training division as a training captain

for the department before eventually being promoted to the rank of director of training.

### Regional reputation

Concurrently with his other work, Henke, in 1992, was elected vice president of the International Association of Firefighters, Local 1186, which represented Vallejo, Benicia, Fairfield, American Canyon and eventually Cordellia and Rio Vista. Two years later, he was elected president of the

See Fire Chief, page 7



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# Fire chief: Sac Metro is state's seventh largest fire department

Continued from page 6

overall union and held the position for five years.

His accomplishments with the union included assisting in the development of the first paramedic public-private partnership in Solano County and negotiating contracts of various entities that belonged to the union.

In December 1998, Henke was appointed assistant fire chief, and he held this position until he left the department in 2009.

Toward the end of his time with the Vallejo Fire Department, Henke spent about a year managing the Fire Prevention Division.

Recalling this position, Henke said, "I was asked to go in there and get (the division) straightened up and I did so."

## Now at Sac Metro

With his previous fire department experience, Henke, who was hired by Sac Metro as its deputy chief of operations on Oct. 1, 2009, arrived at the local district with many skills, especially in labor management.

Henke said that he has an understanding of the political environment and what a fire department has to do to survive and present the best services.

"That really comes down to, you've got to get the best out of your employees and you have to do that through building trust," Henke said. "I inherited an exceptionally talented group of people and I look at it as my job to figure out how to get the best out of those people. Put them in the positions that they can do the best and then get out of their way and let them go to work."

Henke said that as part of his fire chief duties, he completes work that is normally performed by a city manager.

"At Metro, as a fire chief, you're basically the equivalent of a city manager," Henke said. "I report directly to the Board of Directors. Normal fire chiefs, if you look around us, report to a city manager who reports to a city council."

Having a role as a sort of city manager is quite fitting for Sac Metro's fire chief, considering that this 600-member fire department, which has a \$130 million budget, is like a city unto itself. The district includes such features as a finance department, a human resources department, operations, fire prevention, buildings and logistics.

## Fiscally wise

Henke said that he is proud of Sac Metro's success at balancing its budget and added that the district has a good model for working in difficult financial times.

"I think extraordinarily hard times and challenges bring out the best in people, so we're not looking at this terrible economy as a lot of people are out of work and there's a lot of destitution out there," Henke said. "We can kick back and cry and whine that we've lost all this money in tax revenue, but we more come to work as an opportunity to retool the way we have our business model. We look at the redesign of the system from top to bottom and we think that we're



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Lance Armstrong  
Fire Chief Kurt Henke was appointed as the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District's fire chief eight months ago. Sac Metro serves about 600,000 people in parts of Sacramento and Placer counties and in the cities of Rancho Cordova and Citrus Heights.

going to come out of this in a lot better position by a long shot than we were doing."

## Building relationships

During his time as fire chief, Henke has also headed a large public relations campaign.

"We had to go out and rebuild relationships that really had been neglected throughout the years with county officials, county Board of Supervisors, staff of the county, Citrus Heights elected officials and staff, Rancho Cordova and that," Henke said. "So, we've really, at the same time, been on this massive public relations campaign to tell people who we are, that we're here, how we can help them. Even on issues that maybe are not so much germane to us, but if we can help them, they can help us in other issues."

When it comes to reflecting upon the progress that the district has made since he was appointed as fire chief, Henke said that he is proud of the district's accomplishments thus far.

"It's been an action-packed eight months," said Henke, who enjoys hunting, fishing, traveling and cooking during his leisure time. "I've been told that the Board of Directors has been quoted as saying there's been more accomplished in the last eight months than in the last six years. I don't think that that's so much a reflection on the past as it is that sometimes you end up with that perfect team of people and the perfect timing and everything just comes together, and I think that happened in this case."

And of course, it certainly does not hurt to have a leader as passionate about his work as Henke.

Toward the end of his interview with this paper, Henke, with a serious, yet energetic tone to his voice, said, "I get up every day at 4:30, 5 o'clock in the morning and I can't wait to get (to work)."

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Special to Arden-Carmichael News

The non-profit organization, Necessities Bag Sacramento (NBS), invites members of the public to participate in its quarterly "Pillow Party" event on Monday, Jan. 9 from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Central United Methodist Church. Come, bring a friend and volunteer on behalf of Sacramento women with breast cancer.

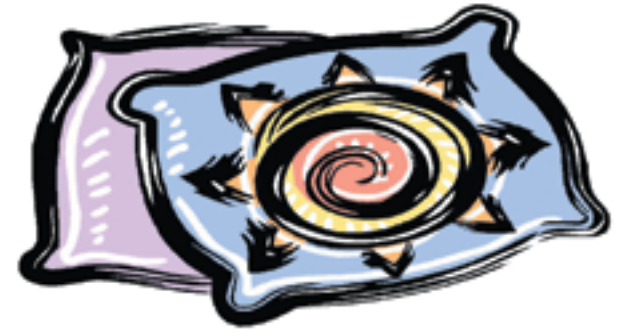
This is an opportunity for community volunteers to craft comfort pillows for local women undergoing mastectomies due to breast cancer. *You need not be skilled at sewing.*

Eight stations allow for work at any skill level.

NBS provides a free tote bag of comfort and wound care supplies to patients. The most beloved items in the bag are two small, soft pillows made from cheery cotton fabrics. The women use these as support for their arms after surgery. The pillows provide a buffer under seatbelts (to and from doctor appointments) and allow women to rest more comfortably, while still sensitive to draining tubes and stitches.

Women use the pillows throughout their recuperations and reconstructive surgeries. They are a comforting, valuable resource.

To learn more, and to read comments from Necessities Bag recipients, visit <http://necessitiesbag-sac.org>. RSVP to Joan Eddy at (916) 451-3831 or



eddyjk@comcast.net. Central United Methodist Church is located at 5265 H Street (corner of 53rd and H) in Sacramento.

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Food for all:

# Titanic's Pantry helps Sacramento families feed their four-legged family members

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

The last few years have been very rough for everyone economically – every day families struggle just to put food on the table. And for many families, that includes a struggle to provide food for their pets also.

That's where Sacramento's pet food bank, Titanic's Pantry, comes in.

"When you have to make a decision between paying your mortgage, your car payment or buying dog food, that's a real conundrum," explained Gina Knepp, acting manager of the City of Sacramento Animal Care Services. "It's a terrible dilemma for anyone to have to face. If you find yourself in dire straits where you need pet food, come get it from us because we don't want people to surrender their pets to the local shelters – that's the last thing we want to do."

The pantry is seeing an increase in need, just as local food banks for humans are seeing an uptick – at this time of year, especially. Every neighborhood in the region is affected.

Penny Cistaro, now chief operations officer for the Sacramento SPCA, started Titanic's Pantry in November 2009. She got the idea for the pantry while in Washington State.

"When I came back to California, there wasn't a (pet) food bank in the region, and having had a (pet) food bank up in Washington State at the shelter I had worked at and seeing the benefits there, I wanted to start one here," Cistaro said.

## A team effort

Now about two years later, Titanic's Pantry is a collaborative effort of the City of Sacramento Animal Care Services, Sacramento County Animal Care and Regulation, the Sacramento Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA), and Happy Tails Pet Sanctuary.

According to Knepp, those in need of pet food can visit the city, county, or SPCA shelter once a month for a donation.

The City's shelter has the biggest client base – more than 2,000 people come there each month and they distribute at least 3,000 pounds of food a week. Additionally, Titanic's Pantry provides a number of other supplies that people may need for their animals; everything from cat litter and litter boxes to dog biscuits, leashes, collars, beds and even toys.

## Who is eligible?

So who is eligible to receive assistance from Titanic's Pantry?

Anyone who needs it, according to Knepp. There is no application to fill out or proof of eligibility.

"If they're not registered with us, the first time they come in they show us a picture ID and we'll put them in our computer system to keep track of how many people we're helping," Knepp explained. "Then once a month they can come back if they need to and get food from us. We have some people that come back sever-



Photo courtesy, Titanic's Pantry  
*EVERY BIT HELPS.* Donations of bags of pet food – in 5, 10, 20, even 50 pound bags – can help to make a difference in the life of a family in your neighborhood. Grateful families often return months later with a donation of pet food...happy to return the favor for help during a "rough patch."

al times. And then we have some people that come back and bring us a bag of food to thank us because we helped them when they were in trouble."

## Bags of food needed

And it's those bags of pet food coming in to Titanic's Pantry that are so desperately needed right now.

"One of the biggest challenges is to keep the shelves constantly stocked because you rely on donations," said Shari Lowen, senior services coordinator for the Sacramento SPCA and volunteer that helped Cistaro start Titanic's Pantry. "You may get a huge truckload of donated food and that might last a few weeks and then somebody comes in and there's absolutely nothing to give them."

Donations of pet food – dry cat and dog food – are how the community can help support the Pantry, Cistaro said.

"Buy a 20, 30, or 40 pound bag of food and bring it to the SPCA or take it to the county or the city (shelters) – whichever shelter is closest or whichever one is closest to your heart," Cistaro said. "Just bring in food – even a 10-pound, 5-pound bag of dry food. It's easy to transport, it lasts, that's what will help."

## Participate in a pet food drive

According to Knepp, donations can be made on-site to the city, county, SPCA, or Happy Tails. She added that the community can pitch in to help by setting up pet food drives for the Pantry in their neighborhood.

For example, Knepp held a drive in Hollywood Park, raising 800 pounds of food for the Pantry. She then passed it on to Curtis Park – which brought in over 3,000 pounds of food donations – and now is trying to get Land Park "to take up the gauntlet."

Knepp said a pet food drive can also be a great project for groups, such as high schools.

## Help pets by volunteering

Titanic's Pantry is also always in need of volunteers to help with picking up donations of pet food. For example, a Save Mart store in Vacaville currently supplies the Pantry with donations of food from broken bags, which Knepp says can sometimes add up to about 7,000 pounds of dry kibble for the Pantry. Volunteers are needed to help bag the loose kibble for distribution using empty sand bags Knepp obtained from the Department of Transportation.

"Our volunteers will come in and fill the sand bags up with dog food and we tie the tops just like sand, but it's dog food, and (we) give that out," she explained.

Keeping Titanic's Pantry going will continue to help enable people to keep their animals, Cistaro said.

"Animals play a powerful role in someone's life," she said. "People lose so much, the last thing they should lose is a family member and an animal is a family member."

For more information on Titanic's Pantry, including volunteer and donation information, visit [www.sacpetfoodbank.org](http://www.sacpetfoodbank.org).

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# Skate park: Support needed from community to stay open

Continued from page 2

also have depleted a source of programming for families as well."

## Family friendly

Yes, she said families. While kids and teens may be the largest population the skate park sees, Crisante says the environment they have established brings a family element as well.

"We do have whole families that come and participate," she explained. "We actually have a very wide age range of participants that frequent the park. We serve anywhere from age five to age 40 because skateboarding has been around for so long, we have parents skateboarding with their children."

The La Sierra skate park is also unique in that the park is supervised, while most skate parks are not due to liability reasons, Crisante says. This

can cause the skate park to draw an "undesirable crowd" as there is no one there to implement any policies. Having supervisory staff on-hand at the La Sierra skate park, "makes families feel better, so it often becomes a family-oriented place that will bring their children there," she adds.

## A good influence

As one of those adult supervisors, Kerr says he's been able to help steer quite a few Skate park goers towards making good choices in their lives thanks to his own childhood experiences.

"Being a person that grew up skateboarding on the streets, as I've gotten older I've realized the importance of keeping kids inside a contained environment where they're supervised because there's a lot of trouble to be had,"

he explained. "A lot of these kids are really good kids, but when you're out on the streets there's too much room for bad influence and there could be destruction, fights, things like that. When they're there with me, I don't let any of that happen. I make sure they're wearing their helmets and they're staying focused on their skateboard. It gives them somewhere to be productive in a safe environment."

## Team Ninja Midget

Kerr has also brought a family element to those that frequent the skate park through the formation of a skating team called Team Ninja Midget. Kerr works to promote the team through Facebook and videos showcasing the members' skills on YouTube, and helps sponsor the team

through providing them with T-shirts and boards.

"I think it would have been cool to have somebody like that in my life when I was younger, so now I'm older and I can do that for them," he said.

## Support needed

With an uncertain future looming ahead, Crisante hopes the skate park will eventually become a self-sustaining program, and may even form a sports team to take on the road.

"There's a lot of ideas and options out there for us, but we have to be able to have the resources to expand (and) we can't do that without community support," she said.

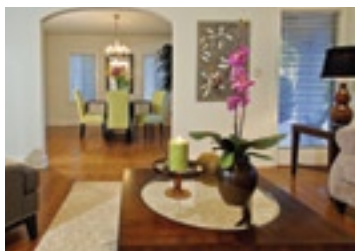
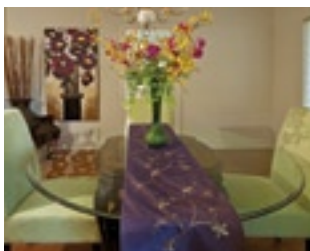
For more information or to donate to the La Sierra Skate park, visit [www.carmichaelpark.com/skatepark](http://www.carmichaelpark.com/skatepark).

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## Red Cross offering free disaster preparedness training in January

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

Throughout the month of January, the American Red Cross is offering a free disaster preparedness workshop at a number of neighborhood libraries around the capital city.

Each workshop is just one hour, and will help equip you and your family with the necessary knowledge and skills to Be Red Cross Ready. The workshop will focus on three important steps: Get a kit, make a plan and be informed.

The workshop will be offered on the following dates:

- Jan. 10, 6 p.m.: North Highlands-Antelope Public Library, 4235 Antelope Rd., North Highlands
- Jan. 12, 6 p.m.: Martin Luther King Jr. Public Library, 7340 24th Street Bypass, Sacramento
- Jan. 17, 6:30 p.m.: Colonial Heights Public Library, 4799 Stockton Blvd., Sacramento
- Jan. 25, 6:30 p.m.: Southgate Public Library, 6132 66th Ave., Sacramento
- Jan. 28, 1:30 p.m.: South Natomas Public Library, 2901 Truxel Rd., Sacramento

For more information, contact Amanda Barker at the American Red Cross at (916) 993-7065.

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches life-saving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization – not a government agency – and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. The Capital Region Chapter serves an eleven-county region including Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, eastern Nevada, Placer, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, Tuolumne and Yolo counties. For more information, visit [www.redcross-crc.org](http://www.redcross-crc.org) or follow on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/RedCrossCRC](http://www.twitter.com/RedCrossCRC).

## College entry workshops offered at Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven Library

Special to Arden-Carmichael News

The Sacramento Public Library will host two free workshops to provide useful information for college-bound students at its Robbie Waters Pocket-Greenhaven branch on Jan. 11 and 18.

Each program will present the basics of the four types of financial aid (grants, scholarships, work study and loans), plus the details of the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Stu-

dent Aid) -- the one financial aid application form all college-bound students should fill out.

**Wednesday, Jan. 11 at 6:30 p.m.:** Learn about the online FAFSA application, when to apply, and where you can go for help when filling it out.

**Wednesday, Jan. 18 at 6:30 p.m.:** The Scholarship Search workshop will help participants learn when and where to look for scholarships and the basics to include in any scholarship essay.

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# Compounding pharmacy, gift store & spa offer that unique 'something' for every one

By SALLY KING  
Arden-Carmichael News writer  
sally@valcomnews.com

It's hard to walk into Parkside Pharmacy in Sacramento without sampling a body lotion or perusing the many cards made by local artists.

Now open for two and a half years, Parkside was formerly known as Land Park Pharmacy. Ted and Georgia Econome opened the pharmacy in 1953 and are now retired. Current owner John Ortego worked for Land Park Pharmacy three years before the Econome's retired. When the pharmacy closed, Ortego saw the perfect opportunity to remodel it based on an idea he and his wife Michelle had discussed.

John graduated from the University of Pacific and had a vision of running a compound pharmacy. Compounding is the mixing of drugs by a compounding pharmacist to fit the unique needs of a patient. This may be done for medically necessary reasons, such as to change the form of the medication from a solid pill to a liquid, to avoid a non-essential ingredient that the patient is allergic to, or to obtain the exact dose needed. It may also be done for voluntary reasons, such as adding favorite flavors to a medication.

John wanted to run an independent, whole wellness pharmacy that included a spa.

"John entered a nationwide competition with the idea of having a whole wellness pharmacy that in-

cluded the compounding pharmacy, boutique and skincare and won," Michelle said. "He received a lot of recognition for his idea."

In addition to servicing the local community, he also makes compound medications for his neighbor, the Sacramento Zoo. Compound medications make it easier to treat the animals there.

John hired Gary Thomas to help him run the pharmacy. Thomas previously ran the Land Park Pharmacy for 35 years.

"Gary is a celebrity," Michelle said. "He reminds me of the old-fashioned doctors, who used to make house calls."

Michelle wanted a boutique where people could purchase jewelry, paintings and cards made by local artists.

"Our cards are provided mostly by Papyrus and a local artist known as Artey Mas," Michelle said. "Artey Mas is owned by Marisa Gutierrez, who happens to be my cousin."

Gutierrez also brings in featured paintings by local artists in the area.

Michelle said another popular item in the boutique is hand-stitched baby booties, made by a woman who lives in Land Park.

"Our biggest hit in the boutique is the jewelry, which is from all over the world and very unique," Michelle said. "We have a variety of price ranges too."

With a medical background in skin care, Michelle wanted to make



Arden-Carmichael News photo, Sally King  
JOHN AND MICHELLE ORTEGO are the owners of Parkside Pharmacy in Sacramento. John won a national award for coming up with a business concept for a whole wellness pharmacy that includes a compounding pharmacy, a boutique and skincare...all in one.

sure the spa had a medically trained aesthetician on hand.

Michelle has over 10 years experience working with dermatologists. She bought a medical grade machine for the microdermabrasion treatments and said it took her a while to find a good aesthetician.

"Everyone loves Marla, our aesthetician, and we even have Arden Park residents coming in for spa treatments," Michelle said. "I eventually want to add a massage therapist."

Michelle said her goal for the new pharmacy was pulling in the newer generation with the spa and cosmetics. With more light coming into the building now, it appears larger and warmly inviting.

Michelle promotes local business to the visitors who come to her store. She thinks it is important to support the local economy and said it is a big deal to her.

The store is set up with the compounding pharmacy located in the back and the boutique and spa in the front. Parkside has a website with a calendar listing their monthly events. A book signing at the store in early December delighted Wayne Thiebaud fans. Children recently had the opportunity to pose with Santa. Parkside is also presenting the "12 days of Christmas" that include spa specials.

An email is sent every second Saturday with daily specials to Parkside's email listing. Michelle said this has become quite popular.

Both John and Michelle say that running the Parkside Pharmacy has been a lot of work, but also a lot of fun in the making.

Parkside Pharmacy is located 4404 Del Rio Road in Sacramento. Call (916) 452-2200 or visit [www.myparksidepharmacy.com](http://www.myparksidepharmacy.com).

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# CALENDAR

For more Calendar entries visit  
www.valcomnews.com

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

## ONGOING

### 'Bingo: the Musical'

**Through Jan. 8:** 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:** 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:** Drawn from the largest private collection of Florentine Baroque painting in the United States, this exhibition 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:** 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

## DECEMBER

### Bilingual Toastmasters

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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.sacramentotoastmasters.com

### Bingo!

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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

### Open Art: Holiday Film Series - "It's a Wonderful Life"

**Dec. 22:** A seasonal favorite, Frank Capra's classic movie tells the story of how an angel helps a compassionate but despairing businessman by showing him what life would have been like if he never existed. Bring non-perishable food items to donate to Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services and be entered in a special raffle. 4 p.m. Free to Museum members, \$5 nonmembers in advance, \$10 nonmembers at the door.

Purchase tickets at crockerartmuseum.org, the Museum Admission Desk, or by calling (916) 808-1182. Presented in collaboration with Movies on a Big Screen. Open Art is part of the program series Thursdays 'til 9. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org.

### Rotary Club of Pocket/Greenhaven

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** 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.

### Open Art: Holiday Film Series - "Santa Claus"

**Dec. 22:** Discover the cult classic sometimes referred to as "Satan vs. Santa." Santa (with a little help from Merlin the Magician) battles Satan's efforts to make the children of the world engage in vandalism and other mischief. Originally filmed and released in Mexico, this screening will include the badly dubbed English soundtrack from the 1960 U.S. release of this enjoyably bizarre and low-budget twist on Christmas. Nationally syndicated late night horror host, Mr. Lobo of "Cinema Insomnia," will introduce the film and hold an audience contest with prizes as cheap as the film's production. 7 p.m. Free to Museum members, \$5 nonmembers in advance, \$10 nonmembers at the door. Purchase tickets at crockerartmuseum.org, the Museum Admission Desk, or by calling (916) 808-1182. Presented in collaboration with Movies on a Big Screen. Open Art is part of the program series Thursdays 'til 9. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org.

### Sacramento Downtown Plaza Farmer's Market

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** Sacramento Downtown Plaza Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, May-Sept. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 4th & K streets, Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Sutterville Heights Optimist Club

**Dec. 22, 29, Jan. 5, 12, 19, 26:** Come enjoy community speakers and community projects for youth. 12 noon., every Thurs. Golden Corral, 7700 W. Stockton Blvd., Sac. Charlie (916) 427-7136 or Mary-Jo at (916) 691-3059

### Ballroom Dances

**Dec. 23, 27, 30, Jan. 3, 6, 10, 13, 17, 20, 24, 27, 31:** Enjoy dancing to a live band every Tuesday and Friday. 1:15 p.m.-3:45 p.m. \$5/person. Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbons Dr., Carmichael



Season's Greetings!

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### Christmas Eve

3 pm - "A Kid's Celebration"  
4 & 10 pm - "Carols, Candlelight & Communion"

### Christmas Day

10 am - Service with Holy Communion

**The Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd**  
1615 Morse Ave. | 483-0451 | [www.goodshprd.org](http://www.goodshprd.org)

*Christmas Season at  
American River Community Church  
and Wonder-Land Pre-School & Day Care*

*3300 Walnut Ave., Carmichael (Next to the DMV)*



Next Event:  
Dec. 24th - 5:00 PM Christmas Eve  
"Carols and Candlelight"

Dec. 25th  
Christmas Day Worship Service  
11:00 AM only

[www.arconline.org](http://www.arconline.org) or 483-3465

## - EVENT LISTING SECTION -

Advertise your craft fairs, holiday bazaars, school fundraises, church events, etc. in your Community Newspapers.  
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[cmssacto.org](http://cmssacto.org) 443-2908

### Capitol Ballet Company

Creates Holiday Magic

Tchaikovsky's *The Nutcracker*

Dec. 17th - 7 p.m. Stockton  
See website for performance locations & tickets

[capitolballet.com](http://capitolballet.com)  
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Children's Chorus

Auditions in January  
Sign up today • Grades 2-12

Apres le Noel Winter Concert  
February 12, 7:30 p.m.  
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1701 L Street, Sacramento  
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# Festive neighborhood displays

Photos by **BILL CONDRAY**  
 Arden-Carmichael News photographer  
 bill@valcomnews.com

At this time of year, Arden and Carmichael residents dress up and decorate their neighborhoods. Here are a few local homes with their decorations of holiday cheer.



**SACRAMENTO CHILDREN'S CHORUS**

CALLING ALL

# Singers

AUDITIONS  
 JANUARY, JUNE & AUGUST

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 SIGN UP TODAY — openings available in five choirs, grades 2 - 12.

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Enhancing Children's Lives through Excellence in Choral Music

Save the date! **Don't Miss the Sacramento SPCA's WINTER BOOK SALE!**

**Thursday, January 12  
 thru Sunday, January 15**

**Thurs-Sat, 10am - 7pm  
 Sunday, 11am - 6pm**

**7935 Greenback Lane  
 (next to Marshall's)  
 For more info: 916-504-2802**

**Book donations welcome**

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Faces and places

# CHRISTMAS IS COMING...

Photos by **BILL CONDRAY**  
 Arden-Carmichael News photographer  
 bill@valcomnews.com

Hundreds turned out for the lighting of the Christmas tree in Carmichael Park on Dec. 8.

Santa arrived to listen to last-minute requests from little boys and girls who assured him that they had, in-

deed, been quite, quite good this past year.

The festive light display will remain up throughout the holiday season.

This was the 8th annual tree lighting, hosted by the Carmichael and Mission Oaks recreation and park districts, the Kiwanis Club of Carmichael and the Carmichael Chamber of Commerce.

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## Realtors



### CARMICHAEL TUDOR

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### CLASSIC ARDEN PARK

3 bedroom 2 bath with gourmet kitchen and breakfast nook opening to a spacious family room with fireplace. Master bedroom suite has a walk-in closet. Fabulous entertaining backyard featuring brick patio courtyard, pool, built-in BBQ center & covered dining area. Plus, a private guest house with full bath. See: [981coronadoblvd.epropertiesites.com](http://981coronadoblvd.epropertiesites.com) \$599,000

CHRIS BALESTERI 996-2244



### 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; most bedrooms have baths. Tennis, pool, spa & pavilion with fireplace. See: [www.3101adamsroad.epropertiesites.com](http://www.3101adamsroad.epropertiesites.com) \$1,599,000

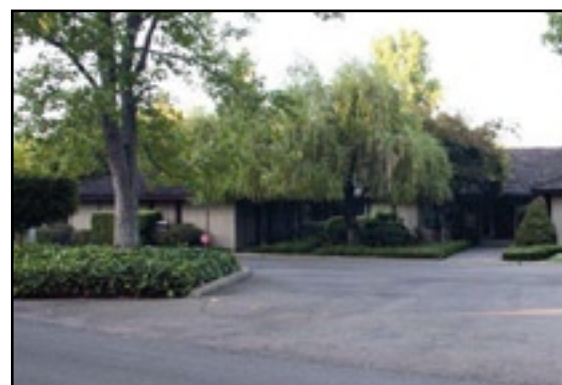
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Rare one story home on the American River w/outrageous river views! Private gated setting w/pool, boat hoist & retractable stairs to the river. Main house has 3 bedrooms and an office. Plus one bedroom apartment with living room and kitchen. See: [5740codalane.epropertiesites.com](http://5740codalane.epropertiesites.com) \$1,975,000

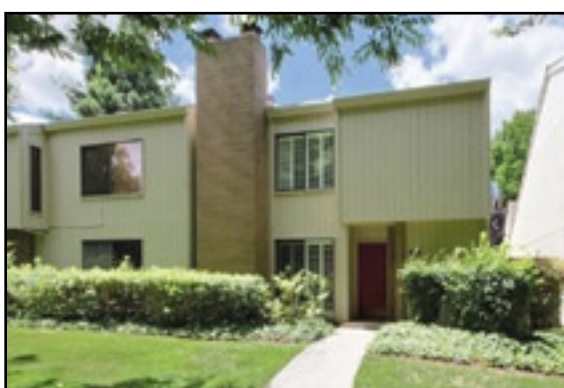
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### LOVELY ARDEN OAKS

Private setting on tree lined street. 4 bedroom 3½ bath; grand floor plan, large formal dining room and living room. Separate hobby room or office has full bath, heat, vaulted ceiling and storage closets. 3-car garage plus carport, circular driveway, sparkling pool. See [www.3521ArdenCreekRd.com](http://www.3521ArdenCreekRd.com) \$775,000

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### CAMPUS COMMONS

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### 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) \$249,000

TIM COLLOM 247-8048



### CARMICHAEL REMODEL

This amazing home was completely rebuilt in 2005, except for 2 walls. 3 bedrooms, 3 baths; features and upgrades include plumbing, electrical, stucco, roof, hvac, wood floors, stainless steel Boch appliances and Jacuzzi tub. See: [5400halstedave.ihousenet.com](http://5400halstedave.ihousenet.com) \$349,000

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4215 Freeport Blvd. | 916.454.5753 | [www.dunniganrealtors.com](http://www.dunniganrealtors.com)