



## Family fun at Chautauqua Playhouse

See page 13



## Parents want sites shuffled East Sac school proposal

By Elizabeth Valente  
THE EAST SACRAMENTO NEWS

Sacramento City Unified School District will once again hear plans from concerned East Sacramento parents to merge students from Sutter Middle School, located at 31st and I streets, to the Kit Carson campus, located at 53rd and N streets, and create a high school in the neighborhood.

Parents say this proposal will help the school district save cost and better utilize existing facilities.

“We want to combine the student population, faculty, and resources into a single, fully utilized campus,”

See High School, page 7

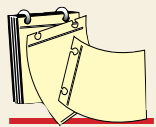


Photos by Kati Garner

## Synchronized Sacramentans

Sacramento's Synchronized Swim team, for swimmers ages 8 to 18, recently hosted the West Zone Junior and Senior Championships and an age 13 to 15 invitational, giving area fans a chance to watch an Olympic-style sport in action. Sac Synchro, a non-profit, year-round program competes all over the United States. For more information, see their website at [www.sacsynchro.org](http://www.sacsynchro.org).

### ◆ INSIDE ◆



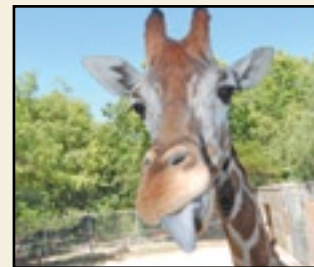
Community Calendar

page 16-18



Understanding the ancient art of bonsai

See page 2



A tall order for zoo's tall ladies

See page 19

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# The East Sacramento news

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[www.valcomnews.com](http://www.valcomnews.com)

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## All about bonsai

**B**onsai Sekiyu Kai of Sacramento holds its 32nd annual show from noon to 5 p.m. on Saturday, April 4, and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 5, at the Sacramento Buddhist Church, 2401 Riverside Blvd. Many extraordinary bonsai plants, some 50, 75 and 100 years old, will be on display and for sale. Sensei John Ushida will be doing bonsai demonstrations both days and club members will be on-hand throughout the two-day show to give advice on plant care and arranging. The show also features traditional suiseki, or rock formations. There will also be door prizes and raffle prizes. Admission is free. For information phone 396-3617.



Photos courtesy DW Birns

## - REMINDER -

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## Inside and Outside East Sacramento

### View 'The Homes of 38th Street'

Six beautifully renovated and remodeled homes will be open for tour from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, April 26, during the McKinley East Sacramento Neighborhood Association's annual East Sacramento Home Tour.

This year dubbed "The Homes of 38th Street," the tour will feature stylishly updated residences on 38th Street exclusively, making it easier for visitors to cover the entire route on foot.

Over the years, event proceeds have gone to such projects as the mini park at 48th and M Street; beautification at David Lubin and Sutter Middle schools; plants for McKinley Park; computers for Theodore Elementary school; picnic benches; the East Sac sign garden; and the like.

Tickets, \$15 in advance, are available at: Pulp Papery, 3020 H St.

William Glen, Town & Country Village Collected Works, 4524 Freeport Blvd.

Sutter Middle School, 3152 I St.

Theodore Judah Elementary, 3919 McKinley Blvd.

On tour day, tickets are \$20 and can be purchased at the ticket table on 38th Street.

For more information, e-mail MENA at [MENA@eastsac.org](mailto:MENA@eastsac.org) or go to [www.eastsac.org](http://www.eastsac.org).

### Arts in River Park returns

Performers and vendors are being lined up for East Sacramento's sixth annual Arts in River Park Festival that will take place on Saturday, May 30, at the Scottish Rite Masonic Center.

The two-stage festival is the creation of Brenda Jew Waters, who seeks to support Sacramen-

to's artists while showing off the diversity of the area's performing and visual arts.

Nick Toma, co-host of "Good Day Sacramento," will emcee a schedule that includes African Cuban dance ensemble Ebo Okokan, the Kennelly School of Irish Dance, Anderson-Gram folk singers, fiddler Cousin Jimbo, Argentinian folk singer Earl J Rivard III, and more.

Sponsors thus far include Sacramento City Councilman Steve Cohn, Farmer's Insurance, Hon. Lilian Shek, New Order Ink, Balanced Life, Parents' Monthly, Richard and Jennie Jew, Sam's Club, River Park Neighborhood Association, Healing Artists of Greater Sacramento, and The Craft Connection.

For more information, see the website at [www.artsin-riverpark.org](http://www.artsin-riverpark.org) or call Brenda Waters at 457-3337.

### Monarchs on motivation

Soroptimist International of Sacramento presents college scholarships and features Jenny Bouchek, coach of the Sacramento Monarchs and player DeMya Walker speaking on "Living My Dream," at a Casa Garden luncheon on Friday, April 17.

College scholarships will be presented to local students, who will also speak on their inspirations and dreams.

The inspirational luncheon begins at 11:30 a.m. at Casa Garden Restaurant, 2760 Sutterville Road, on the grounds of the Sacramento Children's Home.

Reservations are required. Tickets, \$20, are available by phone at 363-6927, or e-mail: [barbaramcdonald@comcast.net](mailto:barbaramcdonald@comcast.net)



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Photo by Kati Garner

## Boy Scout breakfast

East Sacramento's Boy Scout Troop 8 cooked up a \$5 pancake breakfast on March 7 to raise funds for their troop equipment and summer camp. River Life Church, 4401 A St., was the setting and Boy Scouts above, from the Duct Tape and No Name patrols, were doling out pancakes, sausage, fruit coffee and juice. Troop 8 describes itself as 'a small and involved troop that likes to help out our community, go camping and hiking, and anything else our scouts want to try.' This year the emphasis is on earning their hiking merit badge. For more information, see their website at <http://sactroop8.ning.com/>.

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Visual link for generations

# Pocket author's books puts a family's history and love 'In Grandpa's Hands'

**P**ocket resident Marlena E. Uhrik is a teacher of teachers.

Her 40-year career comprises educational, public and community service, with numerous awards for improving the quality of life for children and families. Today, she is a consultant for the California Department of Education.

So it was when she was sitting at her father's bedside, fearing his imminent death, she began to think in term of expression, sharing her thoughts, wondering what it all meant.

She had already written a couple of books, "A Guidebook for Family Day Care Providers," and "The ABC's of Home Improvement." Sitting with her father, then, sorting through her emotions, naturally guided her to another book.

"In Grandpa's Hands: A Child's Celebration of the Family," came out last year on Father's Day. It's a visual book, filled with exquisite pencil drawing and short comments for thought.

We asked her 10 questions about this latest book.

## 10 QUESTIONS

BY COLLEEN TRUELSEN

### 1. What was your inspiration for this book?

The inspiration for "In Grandpa's Hands" came to me one day as I sat at my Dad's hospital bedside. He was 85 years old and was recovering from life-threatening surgery. At that moment, I realized that there was a depth of love and gratitude for him in our family that he had never fully experienced and that it was time to express it. The concept for the book and much of the text were completed with simplicity that very day.

While my dad is still alive today, it was the long battle to recovery that had me reflecting on what my dad meant to me and the entire family—his children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Through his struggle to recovery, it became even more apparent who he was, not only to our family, but his friends, and neighbors and the world. "In Grandpa's Hands" was written to honor not only this Grandpa, but to

honor all Grandpas and who they are to the world.

### 2. This is a very visual book, with simple statements. How do you hope readers will use it?

"In Grandpa's Hands" is designed to promote discussion about the importance of the elderly and their role in our lives and our society. It is meant to honor the simple things in life that remind us of our gratitude for the people who bring us joy and happiness. Hopefully, the book will provide an opportunity for conversations that go deeper than, "Oh, that's a nice book."

This book is meant to provide a whole new level of communication, appreciation and connectedness between the generations.

It was also designed for early readers and to promote literacy. The constant theme throughout the book of 12 simple, yet poignant, illustrations shows my dad's elderly hands holding 12 different objects. The last page in the book has the most precious illustration of all and that will be something that your readers must discover for themselves (I'm not going to tell what it is)!



Sketch by Barbara Cervone

"It is meant to honor the simple things in life that remind us of our gratitude for the people who bring us joy and happiness."

**-Marlena E. Uhrik**

In many cases, the objects are common objects, such as a cup, a flower, a hat. On one page is the simple text and on the page facing it is a beautiful pencil drawing that goes with the text. With the use of repetition and many common objects it is hoped that early readers will learn how to read and to relate to the drawings and talk about their Grandpas or someone else that might be like a Grandpa to them.

### 3. What is your impression of artist Barbara Cervone's interpretations for your words? Did you two talk ahead of time?

It is interesting how Barbara and I worked on this book. I never met her before I wrote the book. I had the concept of the book in my head and devel-

oped the idea by taking digital photos of my dad's hands holding each object.

Once it was decided to convey the message through pencil drawings to give the book an "old" feeling, my publisher submitted a digital photo to about four or five artists that he works with. When the artists renditions came back to the publisher, my husband and I met to decide which artist did the best job. I knew instantly that the drawings that Barbara had done captured what I wanted -- the feelings of strength and gentleness in my dad's old, tired hands.

### 4. Talk about the illustration: "In Grandpa's Hands there is ... a hat."

The objects for the book were chosen by the fact they represent an important aspect of my dad's life. Gardening was everything to my dad. After my mom passed away, my dad would spend hours and hours out in the backyard taking care of his roses.

The hat that he is holding in the illustration is his favorite gardening hat. As you can see, that old straw hat has so much character. You can almost feel the smooth and rough textures of the hat as my dad is holding it. I actually have a print of this illustration in my home. It is one of my favorites.

### 5. "In Grandpa's Hands there is a ... ball." Why?

The illustration of the baseball reminds me of the times when dad would try to teach my sister and me how to catch a

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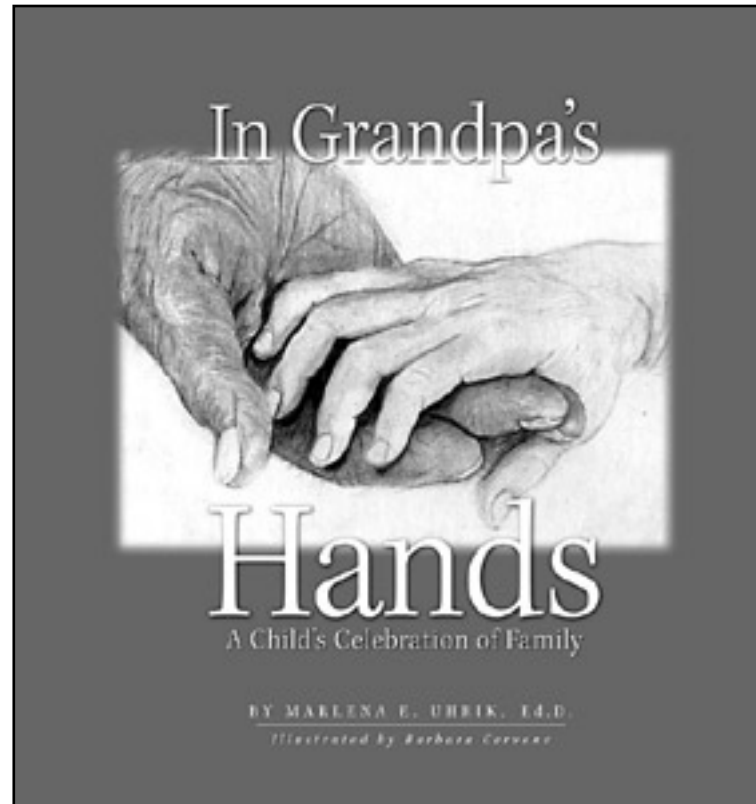
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In her new book, "In Grandpa's Hands: A Child's Celebration of the Family," local author Marlena E. Uhrik promotes the importance of the elderly. Sketches for the book were produced by artist Barbara Cervone.



## Questions

Continued from page 4

ball. My dad was a very patient man and I know he tried really hard to make it easy for us, but I think in the end, we all tried our best and just had fun.

### 6. The book's printing and paper is high quality. Was that important to you?

The book's printing and paper is high quality because this is a very special book. It is not like your ordinary children's book. It's almost more of a gift book, a book you would be proud to put on your coffee table. I think the presentation of the book lends to its specialness.

### 7. Tell us a little about your publisher.

My publisher is Robert Brekke and his company is called Publisher's Design Group Inc. "In Grandpa's Hands" is

published under a division of PDG called White Stag Press. Robert lives in Roseville with his wife and children. He has great ideas and is very rigorous in his screening process for books he chooses to publish. It was actually his idea to do pencil drawing illustrations. He has been an inspiration to me. He has made me stretch and grow in new ways so that I have accomplished things I did not know I could accomplish.

### 8. With your extensive experience in education and with working with children, what do you think should be of primary importance to those raising children?

Of primary importance is to know that you are your child's first teacher. What you say and do and how you act tells your child about you, about him/her,

See Grandpa's, page 7

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From diagnosis to diet

## A Chinese medicine perspective on the 'silent killer' in diabetes

**D**iabetes is a very common health problem. It's not a fearful disease in itself, but the complications from it are silent killers.

You may not feel the diabetic onset stewing in your body for years before your doctor discovers it. Most people don't know it can affect the eyes, kidneys, nerves, feet, heart and the teeth. None of this is good news:

**Eyes** – High sugar from diabetes can lead to blindness.

**Kidneys** – High blood sugar and high blood pressure can lead to kidney failure and other kidney disease.

**Nerves** – Among adults with diabetes, 60 to 70 percent

of them have damage to the nerves in their legs and feet.

**Feet** – Poor blood circulation and nerve damage will bring on infection in the legs and toes. In severe cases it leads to amputation.

**Heart** – Disease of the heart and blood vessels (cardiovascular disease) is the major cause of death in Type 2 diabetes, because it elevates cholesterol plaque in blood vessels, leads to high blood pressure, or both.

**Teeth** – People with diabetes most likely have teeth and gums problem.

### Early onset reports

You can see that we must work hard to control blood



**MAMIE WOO**

HEALTHY LIVING - THE CHINESE WAY

sugar, blood pressure and cholesterol development to help lessen this condition. That means we must control our sugar and fat intake and exercise regularly regardless of our age.

Recent reports from the Diabetic Foundation show that diabetes is attacking the younger generation -- from children to teenagers -- because of insufficient exercise and too much starchy and sugary food in their diet. Insufficient protein, mainly found in meat and nuts, hinders their mental development.

Since diabetes is a silent killer, how do we know the problem is stewing inside your body?

In Chinese medicine, we can detect it from the early symptoms such as a dry mouth, constant thirst no matter how many glasses of water you drink, always hungry and eating bigger portion often without weight gain, or urinating often during the day and night. Itchy skin and cracked heels are two skin symptoms that are hardly mentioned in many diabetic publications.

### Diagnosing diabetes

In Chinese medicine we see the causes and symptoms of diabetes as:

1. Heat in the Lung burns out the moisture so you feel thirsty constantly. (Remember when I capitalize the name of the organ,

I am talking about the organ's energy in Chinese medicine, not its organic function. It's different from Western thought).

2. High heat in the stomach metabolizes the food quickly, so you need to eat more often to satisfy the hunger.

3. Kidney Yang deficiency. Kidney controls the bowels and urine flow. When Kidney Yang energy is low, you need more bathroom trips to release the pressure in your bladder.

4. Yin deficiency results in insufficient body fluid, making the skin dry and cracked.

5. Yin and Yang deficiency leads to many dysfunctions of other organs in addition to diabetes.

Regardless whether you choose either oral or injection methods to control diabetes, the most important step is watching your diet. The right type of diet will elevate your cure; the wrong diet will create severe problem.

### Diet instructions

What herb or food is beneficial for diabetes? Let's talk about the food first.

High protein is needed. It's in all type of lean meat, egg and nuts. Walnuts are best.

High fiber, too. Eat plenty of dark green vegetables and multi-colors of fruit. Eat orange oranges, purple plums; red strawberries, blue berries, green grapes, and such, not just one type of

fruit. Avoid starchy food like white rice and white bread. Instead use brown rice, multi-grain bread and wheat flour.

Eat a low fat diet by avoiding deep fried food like french fries and fried chicken. Instead bake or broil your lean meat and fish. And eliminate completely sugary food like cake, cookies and even Diet Pepsi. Yes, including Diet Pepsi. Too many sweet-tasting foods make the Spleen lazy to help the pancreas produce insulin and the pancreas becomes insulin deficient.

There are many Chinese herbs that can help, too.

Korean or American ginseng can nourish Qi (energy) and lower blood sugar. Sang Bai Pi, or mulberry bark, Di Gu Pi, or wolfberry fruit tree bark, and Zhi Mu, or anemarrhena rhizome, reduce heat and lower blood sugar.

To nourish Yin and lower blood sugar try Yu Zhu, or polygonatum rhizome; Bai He, which is fresh or dried lily bulb, Shan Zhu Yu, or dogwood fruit; and Tian Men Dong, or asparagus root.

### Try yoga or tai chi

All forms of exercise are good for muscle flexibility and to elevate the heart beat and improve blood circulation. I personally strongly recommend yoga and tai chi. These two types of exercise are low-impact, slowly stretching your body and limb muscles, creating balance in the internal organs and coordination of mind and body movements, which in turn achieves ultimate health.

I am sure your doctor can provide tons of material and many websites you can check out for ways to control the problem.

These organizations are helpful:

- American Association of Diabetes Educators, 1-800-832-6874 or [www.diabeteseducator.org](http://www.diabeteseducator.org)
- American Diabetes Association, 1-800-342-2383 or [www.diabetes.org](http://www.diabetes.org).

- Medicare, 1-800-633-4227, or [www.medicare.gov/health/diabetes.asp](http://www.medicare.gov/health/diabetes.asp).

*Mamie Woo trained at China's Guangzhou College of Traditional Chinese Medicine. She is a Tai Chi instructor, Chinese herbalist and certified massage therapist. Contact her at 616-1688; website: [www.mamiechineseherb.com](http://www.mamiechineseherb.com).*

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# Grandpa's

Continued from page 5

and the world. Children will always be listening and watching and learning from you.

## 9. Where do parents make their biggest mistakes?

I think one of the biggest "mistakes" I made was not taking time to "be" present with my kids. By this I mean I was always in a hurry with something to do, something on my mind or someplace to go. For 10 years I was a stressed-out single parent and I was so focused on just surviving and making ends meet, working, and going back to school that I felt I had little time to just "be" with my kids and just hang out.

Throughout the years, I have taught parenting classes through Kaiser Hospital, adult schools and at the pre-school where I was the director. I have shared my stories with parents so that they have an opportunity to take a look at their lives to see what's important to them, what is working and what is not working as well as they would like.

Once, I invited the parents to come to a discussion that I

lead with their children. The parents sat in the back of the room and the children sat in front of the room. I asked the kids what they liked best about their parents and in every case, they all said that they loved being with their parents. They loved the times when they went to the park, or colored in their coloring books or went to the beach. I even asked them if they had a choice between getting a new pair of Nikes or going to the park with their parents which would they choose? They all agreed that they wanted to spend time with their parents. It seems like the simple pleasures count the most.

Today, more than ever I get to just "be" with my grandchildren -- with no place to go, nothing to do. I get to take the lessons from the past and just be with them -- for their tears and for their laughter and their smiles and for their lives.

## 10. Any advice for aspiring authors?

Just do it.

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# High School

Continued from front page

explained East Sacramento resident James Broderick. "Then use the former Sutter Middle School at Alhambra and J streets to provide a small-scale community high school serving the needs of Central City residents and their families."

The parents plan to present their proposal and answer questions at a public outreach meeting at 7 p.m., Tuesday, March 24, sponsored by the East Sacramento Preservation Task Force.

## Principal's thoughts

But Sutter Middle School Principal Chat Sweitzer has concerns.

He said it would take several years for the students and the neighborhood to get used to

the new setting and to keep the school culture running smoothly.

"We have 1,300 students currently enrolled at Sutter," Sweitzer said. "It would be difficult to uproot us from this school and put us on another campus that already has nearly 500 students. They would also have to adjust some of our students who do not live in our attendance area, like those coming in from the Greenhaven-Pocket Area."

With the current budget crisis and teacher layoffs, some parents believe that moving Sutter to Kit Carson could help the school district's financial strain.

"By providing an attractive alternative to private high schools," said Broderick, "the campus can win back hundreds of families who have fled SCUSD high schools, regain precious revenue and commu-

nity support, reduce administrative costs, and no new facilities need to be built."

"We are already slimmed down," said Principal Sweitzer. "You have myself, one assistant principal and four full time staff, plus our teachers, that are doing everything above and beyond to accommodate the 1,300 students and their families here."

## Miners turning 100

Sutter Middle School, home of the Miners, is celebrating its centennial anniversary this year. The school has resided at 3150 I St. for 50 years after spending 50 years in the downtown area off of 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

East Sac parents are collecting more data that supports their proposal, adding it would be more "pedestrian friendly" and will provide a "small school education."

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# The House of Mercy Gives Thanks Now It Continues to Give Back



Mercy Foundation and Mercy General Hospital would like to thank the following organizations and individuals who have made this House of Mercy renovation possible:

The House of Mercy, on J and 39th Streets, has been East Sacramento's little known heart of compassionate care since 1986, where nearly 10,000 families have found comfort in an affordable place of respite. Whether a Mercy General Hospital patient in need of a place to recuperate, or family members visiting a loved one who is receiving care, no one has ever been turned away based on inability to pay.

Recently the House of Mercy was on the receiving end of compassionate care—donors, volunteers and business partners provided contributions and in-kind services to give the House of Mercy a much-needed renovation, from fresh paint and new furniture, to improved plumbing and electrical work.

The House of Mercy re-opened in February and continues to provide a home away from home for more than 400 families a year, and will do so for generations to come.

PICTURED ABOVE: (Front row) Sister Virginia Sullivan, Sister Liaison; Sister Bridget McCarthy, Mercy Foundation President; Denny Powell, MGH President.  
(Back row) Cathleen Dougherty, Chair, Mercy General Community Leadership Council; Father John Healy, MGH Chaplain; John Orr, President, North State Building Industry.

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on Fluffy's paws all over the living room carpet?

- Houseplants are wonderful air purifiers. Granted, you have to water them and that takes a little effort, but they are so worth it. Not only are they miraculous at filtering out harmful indoor air pollutants, they are aesthetically appealing. Easy to grow and effective air purifying varieties include spider plants, peace lily, golden pothos, and the weeping fig.

- Air freshening in the home can be as simple as opening a window. If a fragrance is desired, do not buy those chemical laden commercial products that shall go unmentioned. A few drops of essential oils, available at the Sac Coop and other stores, mixed in water in a spray bottle and spray to your heart, or nose, content.

- Change your air filter on your central HVAC. This can prove diffi-

cult to do as the old adage "out of sight, out of mind" applies. It is an easy, inexpensive and effective way to trap many of the harmful indoor air pollutants, in addition to dust, that circulate in our air.

- How often does it need changed? When it is dirty. Check the filter monthly to access what works for your home. If it is dirty after a month, change it monthly. Three months should be the maximum time between filter changes.

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Dining alfresco in the Carmichael chill

# Winter's hungry hunters on the scrounge



(above) While a great blue heron licks his chops anticipating a fish lunch, (right) ornamental carp engage in their own feeding frenzy in the Atrium of Carmichael's fish pond.



Conservationists at the Effie Yeaw Nature Center protect young oaks trees from grazing black-tailed deer, though the metal cage is no barrier for Bambi.

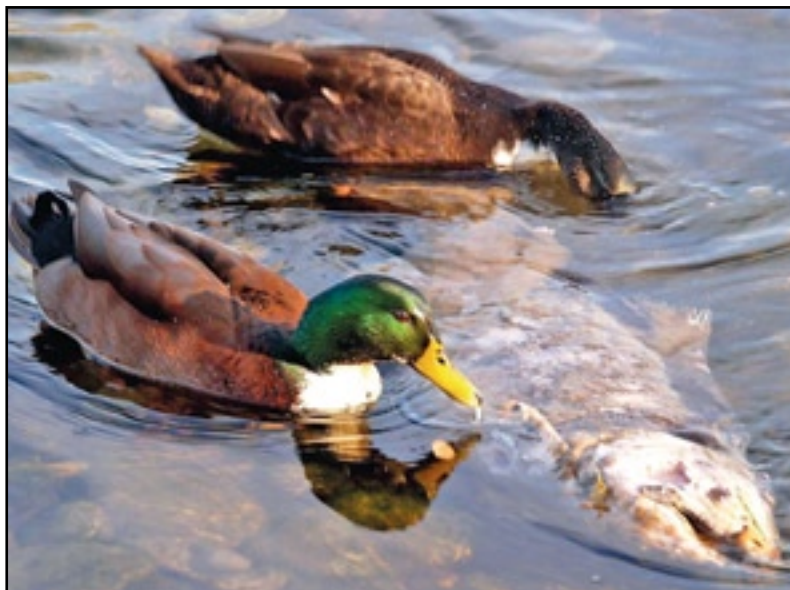
I would feel more optimistic about a bright future for man if he spent less time proving that he can outwit Nature and more time tasting her sweetness and respecting her seniority.

**E. B. White**  
Author, humorist

Photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner unless indicated otherwise



Busted! Trespassing in a Carmichael garden, raccoons find cat food to their liking. Note: nature experts caution against feeding wild animals that must retain foraging skills to survive.



(left) The recent salmon spawning season barred human anglers from Arden Carmichael reaches of the American River. Enjoying animal rights with impunity two omniverous ducks. (right) Near Jacob Way, a coyote races to his den to share his winter prize with a hungry family.



Photo by Guy Galante



# Umpire tells the other side Little League is about to start – let's hear from the front lines

By Matt O'Donnell  
THE EAST SACRAMENTO NEWS

Umpiring can be one of the most thankless jobs in baseball – make a great call or officiate a flawless game and it goes unnoticed. Announcers will drone on at length about the worst baseball calls of all-time, but the best? Well, that rarely happens.

Welcome to Alan McCullough's world.

McCullough is the umpire consultant for the nearby Pocket Little League. He's in charge of coordinating umpires, handling complaints and he ump's a number of games as well.

Pocket has 12 umpires signed up for the 2009 season, which is scheduled to begin March 21. McCullough would like to have 15 to 20 umpires to make sure there are two assigned to every game during the regular season.

The adults in McCullough's area work on a volunteer basis while high school kids are paid per game, between \$15 and \$30, depending on the division and their experience. McCullough said he tells his student umpires that family and school come first, but being an umpire should be third.

### Mandatory training

Every umpire is required to attend mandatory training classes, including a rules clinic and a mechanics clinic for proper positioning. The Northern Cal-



Little League umpire Alan McCullough said a good umpire needs proper rules, mechanics and judgment. Good fans, he said, do not get personal.

ifornia Officials Association offers those kinds of classes. The costs are provided by Little League as are umpire hats, shirts and facemasks.

"Umpiring is like a three-legged stool: You have to have the proper rules, you have to have the mechanics and you have to have judgment," McCullough said. "If one of those is lacking, you're not going to be a good umpire."

McCullough said the toughest area for an umpire to master is the strike zone. Generally, he makes it a rule of thumb to call plenty of strikes in Little League.

"No one has ever gotten a scholarship to college by walking, so I always tell them – you need to get the strike zone bigger," he said about assisting other

umpires. "I tell them if any part of that ball touches the plate, it's a strike."

McCullough to this day continually consults the Little League rule book. Other areas that can be tricky include obstruction calls, illegal pitches, interference and the infield fly rule.

### No-talking zone

Umpires are taught to never talk directly with fans. McCullough said unruly fans are often dealt with by a member of the Little League board of directors and field managers are occasionally asked to quiet parents of their team.

Field managers - not assistant coaches - are allowed to talk to umpires about calls. McCullough gives managers some latitude but they should know where the lines are drawn.

For example: "I can't believe you made that call," is OK.

"You're terrible!" is not.

"When you get personal, you're done," McCullough said.

McCullough said Pocket parents and coaches are very well behaved for the most part.

### A day for appreciation

Pocket Little League is holding an "Umpires Appreciation Day" on May 30. Umpires from the Bay Area and other regions are expected to attend.

McCullough umpires high school games, too, and enjoys that level of play, although there's certainly more scrutiny.

Asked whether he'd like to umpire college-level baseball, he said, "I wouldn't rule it out. I have a ways to go. I think it would be fun to have the opportunity to do something like that."

## East Sac's umpires 'adored' by league

East Sacramento Little League begins March 28.

Mark Reichel, the umpire coordinator for East Sacramento, said his area uses between four to six umpires, including the father-and-sons team of Ron Harlow, R.J. Harlow and Aaron Harlow.

Besides the Harlows, Dennis Cusick and Tony Flint are long-time umpires who have been in the East Sac area for years. Reichel called Cusick the "Rain Man" of the rule book in that he knows it backwards and forwards.

Reichel said it's a huge advantage having umpires stick around for so long because families appreciate them while players, managers and coaches know their strike zone.

"By and large, they absolutely adore our umpires," Reichel said.

For more information about Eastern Sacramento Little League, e-mail [mark@reichellaw.com](mailto:mark@reichellaw.com).

—Matt O'Donnell

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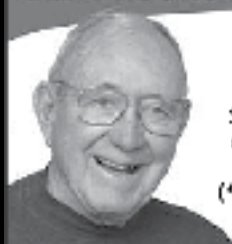


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Life is a stage...

# Mom finds Chautauqua the perfect Playhouse for molding tiny tots



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The Irish poet and dramatist J.M. Synge wrote: "In a good play every speech should be as fully flavored as a nut or apple."

Whether parents are most likely to pack a nut or an apple to keep their kids quiet and content, theater should be a must on everyone's list. It will bring delightful and enriching moments to the whole family.

As the parent of Sophia, 2, and Alex, soon to be 4, I've joined the ranks of other anxious parents, who seem to constantly push their kids to read by the age of 4, do sports, learn foreign languages, and so on, and have exposed my kids to different new playing and learning experiences as early as I possibly could.

Despite the fact most toys, games and other activities have an age recommendation, ever since I became a mom, I have disregarded these trivial details. While it's recommended to take your kids to see their first children's play around the age of 4 or later, I chose to take them at 22 months.

To me, seeing the lively actors on the stage dressed as a cat, a rooster, a reindeer and so on could only bring smile and joy to my kids -- as well as a little anxiety to me, while trying to envision escape and evacuation scenarios in case I had a crier on my hand.

Nonetheless, the temptation to test my kids' readiness was too big. I followed through with what my very cerebral and analytical husband, Catalin, called a ridiculous idea, only to dis-



'Mom' and theater-going children Sophia, 2, and Alex, almost 4, get a photo taken with some Chautauqua Playhouse actors.

Courtesy photo

cover that there was no place where my kids were quieter than at Chautauqua Playhouse.

My oldest saw his first play at 22 months; his sister followed his example at the same age.

Formed in 1975 by Rodger Hoopman, and originally called the Chautauqua Players, the name of the

company came from the traveling Chautauqua shows that toured the country in tents in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The group, now a non-profit organization receiving the support of the Carmichael Recreation

See Playhouse, continued on page 14



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## Playhouse

Continued from page 13

and Parks District, opened in the La Sierra Community Center in April 1985.

Chautauqua has produced a season of six plays per season (running from September through May), plus a six-show children's theater season under the direction of Marie Raymond. The theater also offers children's theater workshops in voice, drama and dance during their spring, fall and summer sessions.

Hoopman, the producer-artistic director, said that we can all support our community theater by attending their shows, after which we can bring all our friends with us next time.

"Our plan is to continue producing children's plays as part of our season commitment," Hoopman said. "We feel that by providing entertainment for children we are making theater part of their lives -- and hope theater-going will continue into their adult lives.

"We are preparing our audience of the future."

Terri Estes, the mother of a 2-year-old daughter and a 7-year-old son, received the subscription to the children's plays from her mother-in-law three years ago. Chautauqua

is quite appealing, she said, due to its small production group of people, and mostly because of its participating atmosphere.

Kids are invited to help and interact with the actors on the stage. Their birthdays are also acknowledged and celebrated, which is another aspect that Estes likes.

And if you come to see a children's show, don't be surprised to see the parents laughing heartily and having a good time, for the plays are a tapestry of silliness, appealing to the young audience, craftily mixed with subtleties and jokes that only adults can fully appreciate, such as a musing Santa dreaming of a white Christmas like the ones before the global warming.

The price for their regular plays is \$17, students and seniors are \$15; their season ticket price for all six shows is \$85. Regular admission to the children's plays is \$7, but the season ticket price is \$25 for all five shows, the option that I chose for the last two years. Also groups of 20 or more can get a special rate.

*For more information on Chautauqua Playhouse and season subscriptions, visit [www.cplayhouse.com](http://www.cplayhouse.com). For more information on real estate and Sacramento, please visit my website [www.CarmenMicsa.com](http://www.CarmenMicsa.com), or call 342-2446.*

## New editor on board

Ryan Rose has joined the Valley Community Newspaper group as the new editor for the East Sacramento News, taking over for outgoing editor Colleen Truelsen as she pursues a master's degree in anthropology.

Rose, a resident of Sacramento for 10 years, is the former managing editor of the recently closed Sacramento Union newspaper and a former community news reporter for the Gold Country Media newspaper chain.

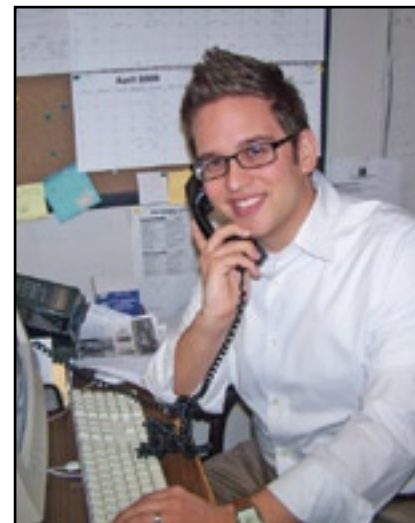
A graduate of Sacramento State University, Rose holds a B.A. in English and has worked as a news reporter in the Sacramento region since 2002, having provided freelance editorial support for the Valley Community Newspaper group, Prosper Magazine and the Sacramento News and Review among others.

In addition to his time as a reporter, Rose also worked as the director of communications for Sacramento's historic Christian Brothers High School.

Excited to lead the editorial department of the Valley Community Newspaper group, Rose is eager to reach out to local residents and report on the stories that are important to them.

"It's my goal that this paper continues its mission to report on the good news happening in our community every day," he said.

Rose is a native of California's Central Valley, growing up in Manteca. He lives in East Sacramento with his wife Vanessa, 16-month-old daughter Gabrielle and cat Lexie.



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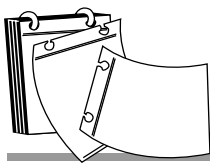
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# Calendar

There's always more calendar at [www.valcomnews.com](http://www.valcomnews.com)

## MARCH 19

### Alaska birding review

Meet a Bristle-thighed Curlew when Chris Conard revisits a trip last summer to some of the best birding spots in Alaska, 7 p.m., at the Sacramento Audubon Society's meeting, Shepard Garden and Art Center, 3330 McKinley Blvd. Free, public welcome. More information at 649-7600 or [www.sacramentoaudubon.org](http://www.sacramentoaudubon.org).

### Music Ensemble

Listen to the music of the Beatles, Sheryl Crow, Natalie Merchant, Don Henley, Bob Marley and more, presented by the Sacramento City College Commercial Music Ensemble, 7 p.m., in the SCC Little Theatre, 3835 Freeport Blvd. Free. Contact Kurt for more information at 558-2243.

### Hearing aid services

Atlas Hearing Aid Services will give a presentation at Primrose Alzheimer's Center, 7707 Rush River Drive, at 5:30 p.m. For information, call 392-3510.

### Volunteer training

Senior Peer Counseling, a nonprofit outreach program that matches volunteer visitors with isolated seniors, is offering a five-week volunteer training beginning today. Dinner is included at each training session. Call 855-5444 for information.

### 'Fall and Injury Prevention'

"Fall and Injury Prevention" health presentation for seniors, 1:15 p.m., Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Blvd. Free. Presented by the Sacramento County Department of Health and Hu-

man Services - Senior Health Education Program. Information at 875-6041.

## MARCH 20

### Taize prayer service

Taize prayer and worship, a lay person-led, contemplative and meditative service to end the week, 7 p.m., Greenhaven Lutheran Church, 475 Florin Road. Information at 428-3213.

## MARCH 21

### Victory Garden

A healthy garden begins with the soil. Learn how to evaluate your soil, improve its structure and feed it to grow the summer garden of your dreams, 9 a.m. at the Fair Oaks Horticulture Center in Fair Oaks Park, 11549 Fair Oaks Blvd. Free, public welcome. More information at 875-6913. In case of rain, call 875-6818 to hear a recorded message.

### Christian Brothers auction

Christian Brothers High School hosts its annual charity auction, 6 p.m., 4315 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Silent and live

auctions with dinner. Tickets, \$75 per person if purchased before March 3, \$90 if purchased after March 3, or \$700 for a table of 10. Visit <http://cbhs-sacramento.maestroweb.com> or call 733-3605.

### Dinner dance for FFA

Silent and live auctions, dinner, dessert and drinks, entertainment by The Jay Rolerz Band at the annual Delta Ag Boosters' Dinner Dance, 6 p.m. to midnight, at Thornton Hall, 29650 N. Sacramento Blvd. Donation, \$30, all proceeds benefit the Delta FFA. Must be 21. For tickets, call Elaine at 719-6655, Karen at 955-1133, or Laurel at 214-4683.

### Free loan counseling

HUD-approved NID Housing Counseling Agency offers free loan modification counseling, 10 a.m. to noon, American River Community Church, 3300 Walnut Ave., Carmichael. Reservations required at 483-3465 or e-mail [info@arconline.org](mailto:info@arconline.org)

### Composting class

U.C. Master Gardeners teach how garden clippings can be transformed into compost, 9 a.m., Fair Oaks Park, Fair Oaks Boulevard and Madison Avenue.

Free. Bring a lawn chair. Information at 875-6913.

### A day of French

Alliance Française de Sacramento hosts the annual "Journée de la Francophonie" celebrating the language and culture of the French-speaking world. Open to all, come learn more about the French culture in countries as diverse as Senegal, Tahiti, Switzerland, Rwanda, Belgium, Guadeloupe and Canada. Family event includes movies, dances and lectures. From 11 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., 1721 25th St. Cost, \$5, children under 14 free. Information at 200-9284 and e-mail [af@afdesacramento.org](mailto:af@afdesacramento.org).

### Spring Dance for singles

Christian Singles Network's Spring Dance for single adults, 7 to 11:30 p.m., Carmichael Presbyterian Church, 5645 Marconi Ave. DJ dance music of all types from 8 to 11:30 p.m., dance lessons in the merengue from 7 to 8 p.m. Ticket price, \$15 presale or \$20 at the door includes hors d'oeuvres and the dance lessons. CSN dances are non-alcohol. For more information, call the 24-hour event line at 658-0606 or the CSN office at 530-878-8606. Website is [www.christiansinglesnet.com](http://www.christiansinglesnet.com).

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**Sync swimming clinic**

Sacramento Synchronized Swim Team's Lady Bug Clinic, noon to 1:30 p.m., continues Saturdays through April 25. Learn a routine to fun music building confidence and teamwork skills. For ages 6 and up with the ability to swim 25 yards. Cost, \$125 plus \$35 registration fee. To register or for more information call 296-SYNC (7962).

**MARCH 22**

**Wine tasting and jazz**

Wine tasting and silent auction fundraiser for Discovery Montessori Preschool, an East Sacramento non-profit educational preschool, 3 to 7 p.m., Sweetwater Restaurant and Bar, J and 57th streets. Food, smooth jazz, silent auction items, raffle prizes. Tickets, \$30, available by calling 739-1462 or e-mail dmontessori@sbcglobal.net.

**Hina Matsuri**

Fairytale Town celebrates Hina Matsuri, the traditional Girls' Day Festival (Japanese Doll Festival), 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., 3901 Land Park Drive. The event will include a display of Hina Dolls with an accompanying oral history presentation. There will also be origami paper-folding activities and Ikebana floral arrangements to enjoy. General admission \$4.40, free admission for children under 2. For information, call 808-8886.

**All about the 'evil eye'**

Author Lawrence Di Stasi ("Mal Occhio: The Underside of Vision") discusses the ancient belief in the evil eye as practiced in his Italian-American family and its roots in Italian village culture, 1 p.m., Italian Cultural Center, 6821 Fair Oaks Blvd. Cost, \$10. Information at 482-5900, e-mail italy@winfirst.com.

**Big bands dance**

Eighth annual Camellia and St. Pat's Ball, 1 to 5 p.m., presented by the NorCal Big Bands Preservation Society, at the Sacramento Elks Lodge No. 6, 6446 Riverside Blvd. Features Buddy Harpham and his 13-piece orchestra, vocalist Lynn Steiner, and the advanced stage band from Pleasant Grove High School. Tickets, \$14 per person, \$12 each groups of ten or more. Information at 444-6148 or e-mail loucopola@macnexus.org.

**MARCH 24**

**How much is your art worth?**

Have your art informally appraised at the Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St. Jim and Karen Alkons, will appraise American and European paintings, and Arthur Prisco will appraise prints and works on paper. Make an appointment by calling Judy at 482-8351.

**Treasured memories**

Primrose Special Alzheimer's Living presents "How to Make the Most of Your Memory, Part 4," 2:30 p.m., at Mercy McMahon Terrace, 3865 J St. Third in a four-part Tuesday, 2:30 program called "Use It or Lose It," presented by Kim Winters, Primrose community education director. Free. Information, reservations at 733-6510.

**MARCH 28**

**Japanese roots workshop**

Connect with your Japanese roots during Lost and Found, 2 to 4 p.m., at the Asian Community Center, 7375 Park City Drive. Speaker Leo Goto, who has traced his ancestors back 36 generations to 645 AD, gives the necessary tools and information to begin or refine your own family tree. Donation, \$5 per person, reservations or information, call 395-2589 or e-mail jkpca21@yahoo.com.

**Early roses in bloom**

Enjoy early blooming rose plants on this Saturday morning tour at the Sacramento Historic City Cemetery, 10 a.m. Meet at the cemetery's main gate at Broadway and 10th Street; park across the street from the 10th Street gate. Free. Information at 448-0811.

**MARCH 29**

**Concert at La Sierra**

Bring the entire family to a concert featuring music from ballet, Big Band and Broadway, 3 p.m., in Smith Hall at the La Sierra Community Center, 5325 Engle Road. General admission, \$5; children, students and seniors are free. For tickets, call 489-2576.

**Ethnic dance class**

Free Introduction to Ethnic Dance class, 2 to 6 p.m., at the YLI Hall on the corner of 27th and N streets. Learn European and Middle Eastern dances, no partners needed. Call 961-6144 or visit www.folkdance.com/sacramentocouncil.

**Prayers for jobs, economy**

Christian community prayer service for your job and family, 10:30 a.m., Riverside Wesleyan Church, 6449 Riverside Blvd. Information at 391-9845, or see the website www.riversidewesleyanchurch.com.

**APRIL 2**

**Free concert at SCC**

Student soloists present popular vocal tunes at Sacramento City College's Spring Pops Concert by the Choral Department, 12:10 p.m., 3835 Freeport Blvd., Little Theatre, Room A6. Free. Information at 558-2496.

**APRIL 3**

**Pops concert at SCC**

Student soloists present popular vocal tunes at Sacramento City College's

Spring Pops Concert by the Choral Department, 8 p.m., 3835 Freeport Blvd., Little Theatre, Room A6. Cost, \$5. Information at 558-2496.

**APRIL 4**

**Elmhurst potluck, egg hunt**

Elmhurst Parents Group's fourth annual Spring Potluck and Egg Hunt, 9:30 a.m. to noon, Coloma Community Center, 4623 T St. Features an egg hunt for all ages, a visit by the Easter Bunny, arts and crafts, raffle prizes, face painting and fun. Bring a side dish to share. Information from Leslie Oberst at 206-1096.

**Backyard composting seminar**

Learn how to save money, reduce your waste and improve the quality of your soil in a free Backyard Composting Seminar hosted by The City of Sacramento Department of Utilities Solid Waste Services, 8-10 a.m., Fremont Community Garden, 14th and Q streets. Attend the seminar and purchase a compost bin for \$65. For more information, call 264-5011 or visit www.cityofsacramento.org/utilities.

**Greenhaven Easter Carnival**

Greenhaven Lutheran Church and Angel's Nest Child Development Center's Easter Carnival, noon to 2 p.m. rain or shine, with carnival house, bounce

house, Easter Egg hunt, craft activities, the Easter Bunny and refreshments. At the church, 475 Florin Road. Information at 428-8449 or on the web: www.greenhavenlutheran.org.

**Jensen plant, craft sale**

Friends of the Jensen Botanical Garden plant sale at the garden, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., 5930 Muldrow Road, Carmichael. Vendor tables available for \$10. Information at 338-2072.

**Conflicts and cooperation**

Sierra Arden United Church of Christ hosts a day-long workshop on conflicts in relationships, "Celebrating Conflicts and Cooperation," 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., for ages 14 and up. Cost, \$25 per person, \$40 for couples. Information and registration from Mark at 216-5700, or e-mail 3C!@newpowerlearning.com.

**Jensen Garden workday**

Volunteer Friends of Jensen Botanical Garden workday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Charles C. Jensen Botanic Garden, 8520 Fair Oaks Blvd., Carmichael. Bring work gloves, hand pruners and your lunch or beverage. More information from Tracy Kerth at 485-5322 x 23 or e-mail: tracy@car michaelpark.com.

See more Calendar, page 18

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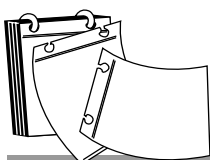
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# Calendar

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## APRIL 4, 5

### Bonsai Sekiyu Kai show

Annual Bonsai Sekiyu Kai show features sensei John Ushida demonstrations, door prizes and more, noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Buddhist Church, Riverside Boulevard at X Street. Free, public welcome. Information at 396-3617.

## APRIL 7

### How much is your art worth?

Have your art informally appraised at the Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St. Lee Kavaljian and Randall Abbott will appraise Asian art and artifacts, while Doug Scougle will appraise gold and silver coins, and vintage photographs. Make an appointment with Judy at 482-8351.

## APRIL 11

### County discussions

Residents can discuss issues with County Supervisor Susan Peters during her "Office Hours" at Carmichael Park, from 9:30-11 a.m. For information, call 485-5322, or visit [www.carmichaelpark.com](http://www.carmichaelpark.com).

### Pocket's spring egg hunt

Annual Pocket Spring Egg Hunt, 9:30 a.m., Parkway Oaks Park, next to Lisbon Elementary School, 7555 South Land Park Drive. Free. Sponsored by City Councilman Robbie Waters. Bring a basket - and a camera. Friendly bunny for posing with, arts and crafts. Information at 808-3821.

## MONDAYS

### Tai Chi at Hart Center

Chinese exercise combines specific movements and relaxation, 1:30 to 2:30 p.m., Hart Senior Center, 915 27th St. Instructor, Mamie Woo. Information at 808-5462.

### Hatha yoga class

Instructor Pat Shaw teaches students to align the body through breathing techniques, postures and deep relaxation, 3 to 4 p.m., Hart Senior Center, 915 27th St. Information at 808-5462. Repeats Wednesdays, Fridays.

### Gray Eagles meet

Gray Eagles, a social group for men and women, hears guest speakers on air shows, flying and warbirds, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., second Mondays of

the month. Visitors welcome. Free, at the Hometown Buffet (private dining room), 4300 Florin Road. Information at 421-0844.

### Newcomer's Buffet

The Widowed Persons Association of California invite any and all widows and widowers to attend their Newcomer's Buffet and Social at 5:30 p.m., every third Monday, at the Plaza Hof Brau, El Camino at Watt Avenue. The cost varies as the choice is from a no-host buffet menu. For more information, call 972-9722.

### Toastmasters meet

Guests always welcome at Kassy Talkers Toastmasters to have fun while improving speaking and leadership skills, 7 to 8:30 p.m., Executive Airport 6151 Freeport Blvd., 95822. Information: Jan at 284-4236 or [www.sacramentotoastmasters.com](http://www.sacramentotoastmasters.com).

### Co-Dependents Anonymous

Co-Dependents Anonymous meets, 7:30 p.m., Friends Church, Fireside Room, 41st and E streets. This 12-step group is for people whose common problem has been an inability to maintain healthy relationships. We support each other in developing fulfilling relationships. For more information, call 558-0448.

### Evening Tai Chi class

Sixty-plus minute class includes Yang style Tai Chi, Chi Gong exercises, and strength training using elastic bands, 6:30 p.m., Parkside Community Church, 5700 South Land Park Drive. Open enrollment - join anytime. Cost:

\$15 a month for members, \$20 for non-members. Information: 421-0492.

### Girls-only karate

Karate for girls ages 7 and older, 6:30 to 7:30 p.m., Elks Lodge No. 6, Riverside Boulevard at Florin Road. Meets Mondays and Wednesdays. Information at 470-9950.

### Community sing-along

Harmonize on old hymns and folk songs, just for our own pleasure. Shower singers are welcome. First and third Mondays, 1 to 2:30 p.m., Fahs Room, Unitarian Universalist Society of Sacramento, 2425 Sierra Blvd. Free. Information at 457-4527, daytime.

### Aviator interest

Gray Eagles, a social group for men and women to share stories of military or sport aviation -- for former air or ground crew, or anyone interested in B-17s, Reno races, and airshows. Free. Meets second Monday, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m., at Hometown Buffet, 4300 Florin Rd. (private dining room). Information from Lou at 421-0844.

## TUESDAYS

### Pastel landscapes class

Award-winning pastel artist Reif Erickson teaches a four-step process to creating art. Supplies provided for the first session and students provided with a materials list for further lessons. From 2:30 to 5 p.m., Ethel Hart Center, 915 27th St.; \$25 per lesson. Information at 808-5462.

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Bring on the boys

# Lofty female giraffes getting new digs at the Sacramento Zoo

During more than 40 years in Sacramento's South Land Park area, my wife and I have come to realize that we're indeed lucky to be living in a great location for making our way to the city's zoo. And this is certainly a destination that needs to be high on everyone's list.

Two houses north of our place on South Land Park Drive, we can board the No. 6 bus and get off two miles down the road directly across from the entrance to the zoo. There's no need for us to drive there if we don't want to. All in all, we've found the zoo to be a great and shady place to stroll during the sunny days of spring, summer and fall while renewing our acquaintanceship with nervous chimpanzees, doughty lions, skittish lemurs and fast-moving anteaters.

But in many ways, my favorite animals of all are the giraffes, which have always impressed me as very pleasant critters, seemingly content with their lot of quietly looking down from on high to ogle the people who pass by all day long.

**New giraffe generation?**

As it turns out, even happier days lie ahead for the giraffes as they crane their lengthy necks to contemplate the workmen and machines carrying out a \$1.75 million project to expand and improve their entire compound.

All this was described to me by Lara Kirkendall, the zoo's



**ART GERMAN**  
TOWN TALK

outreach coordinator, whose duties include public education involving the zoo and its worldwide animal population. She said that a public fundraising campaign -- still a bit short of its \$1.75 million goal -- made it possible to begin the giraffe project early this year. It's due to be completed before the close of 2009.

Highlights include replacing the 50-year-old drafty, wooden barn with a concrete structure that will include separate stalls

for as many as nine giraffes. That, Kirkendall said, will make it possible to arrange for the importation of one or more male giraffes Valyntine, Skye and Gudrun as the Sacramento giraffes are named are all females. As a result, a new giraffe generation may eventually become a reality.

How does one arrange for such a tryst among giraffes? It is done, Kirkendall explained, through the AZA, the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, with which the Sacramento

Zoo is affiliated. The construction project, she added, will raise the giraffe compound's breeding standards to the level required by the AZA.

Other improvements will include a new viewing ramp that will raise the vantage point for spectators to about 18 feet above the ground -- high enough for an eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation between people and giraffes. That is not likely to bother the giraffes, animals that Kirkendall said routinely radiate perpetual serenity.

**Carousel for kids**

Kirkendall also reported that another zoo project is being

planned for the near future on the site of a building near the main entrance that was occupied last year by a temporary penguin exhibit. She said the building will be replaced by a carousel that will carry children on wooden reproductions of endangered animals, such as pandas. The attraction hopefully will remind young people and their parents of the fragile nature of the animals' hold on earth, said Kirkendall.

*Art German is a veteran newspaperman and a 40-year resident of the Pocket. Contact him through this newspaper's e-mail: colleen@valcomnews.com.*

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