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retires from Sac Ballet*
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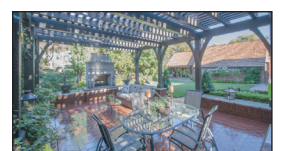
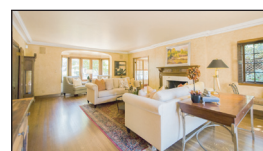
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Cap'n Mitch shares special live theater, early television memories

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Lance@valcomnews.com

Editor's Note: This is part two in a series about Mitch Agruss and other kiddie show hosts, who brought joy to many young television viewers in the Sacramento Valley.

As presented in the previous article of this series, Mitch Agruss – better known in East Sacramento and throughout the valley as Cap'n Mitch – had a lengthy career in live theater long before he donned his seaman's cap for Sacramento area television audiences.

The former children's cartoon host established himself in the theatrical world, as he performed on and off-Broadway.

These experiences not only gave him much joy in his life, but also allowed him to become a man who could, if he so desired, perform exercises in legitimate name dropping.

And in creating a short list of such famous people, Agruss spoke about several of these related memories.

Howie Morris

One of Agruss's earlier theatrical memories was touring around the nation with (an affiliate of) the United Service Organizations camp shows shortly after World War II.

In recalling that time of his life, Agruss said, "We were gone for several months. We went to every state in the country. We visited veterans' hospitals and we set up rudimentary sets and we did the play ('John Loves Mary'). My roommate was a person by the name of 'Howie' Morse (1919-2005). Howard Morris later became one of the Sid Caesar's 'Your Show of Shows' foursome. (It was an) early television show with Carl Reiner. Howie went on and he was a director and actor in Hollywood and he was also famous (as) the crazy, little hillbilly, Ernest T. Bass, in (The) Andy Griffith (Show). (The Morrises) were our closest friends for many years. They raised puppies – he and his wife – in New York. We had puppies from them and we brought one of our puppies all the way out here from there, and we lived next to each other. We were very close friends. I would hang around at the rehearsals for 'Your Show of Shows,' too, which was fun. That was the time of Mel Brooks and all those people, (playwright and screenwriter) Neil Simon. So, you'll notice that I was always on the fringes. I wasn't at the heart, core of these things."

John Houseman

"(Film actor and live theater producer) John Houseman (1902-1988) was an interesting character in himself, because he was Orson Welles' (1915-1985) partner in the Mercury Theatre during the



Photo courtesy of Mitch Agruss

Mitch Agruss performed at the American Shakespeare Festival Theatre in Stratford, Conn. more than 60 years ago.

1930s, with the Federal (Theatre) Project. He was the director (of a production of Shakespeare's) 'King Lear,' so that's how I met him. A few years later (in 1956), when he became artistic director for the newly built American Shakespeare Festival Theatre and Academy in Stratford, Conn., he hired an associate director who was a friend of mine who I was working with. So, I just became a member of that very distinguished company."

Katharine Hepburn

As mentioned in the previous article of this series, Agruss performed in a Shakespearean play with Katharine Hepburn (1907-2003).

And in discussing another moment with Hepburn, Agruss said, "One of my major memories in my life is a whole hour of time with just Katharine Hepburn, my friend, (theatrical and television director) Jack Landau (1924-1966), and myself. She was at Stratford doing two plays there in the summer of 1960. The highlight was her secretary came in and interrupted at a point and said, 'Miss Hepburn, Spence is on the phone.' So, Spencer Tracy was calling and I was sitting in that room and I heard it."

Harpo Marx

In telling about his interaction with Harpo Marx (1888-1964), Agruss said, "As members of the theater staff, we had work to do, and for some silly reason, Harpo wanted to have his celebrated horn secured to his dressing room table by lock and chain. And he wanted me to take responsibility for its safety. I had the key. I thought I had the only key until that awful moment when it was half-hour and I went to his dressing room to find him staring bug-eyed at an opened lock and a dangling chain, but no horn. My God, I was petrified."

After some silence, Marx made an odd expression, laughed, slapped Agruss's back, held

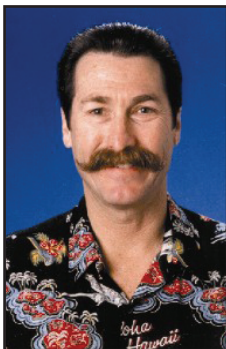
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The U.S. Military calls



By **MARTY RELLES**
marty@valcomnews.com

In January of 1969, a letter arrived in my mailbox. It read "On April 15, 1969, you are hereby instructed to report for duty in the U. S. Army" My life was about to change dramatically.

So, on the prescribed date, a friend dropped me off at the front door of the U. S. Army Induction Terminal in Oakland. After partying pretty much all of the night before, I was hardly prepared for the day ahead of me, which included: a day of taking tests, filling out forms and following yellow lines. However, I somehow made it through the day and,

at 4 p.m., they marched us into a room on the second floor where we took the oath of admission to the U. S. Army.

After swearing us in, they sent us down to the street to board buses headed for Oakland International Airport. I have to say, that was the quietest bus trip I ever took. Soon, we arrived at the airport where we drove straight out to the tarmac to board a Boeing 707 destined for SeaTac Airport and ultimately Fort Lewis, Washington. Ironically, it was the first time I ever flew in an airplane.

When we arrived at SeaTac, we disembarked and boarded a bus for what seemed like a long bus trip to Fort Lewis. When we arrived there, the gravity of our new situation became abundant-

ly clear. Drill sergeants stood outside the bus as we exited yelling at us to get into formation, then they marched us one half mile to our new barracks: a two-story rectangular building large enough to accommodate 40 men.

There, they issued us our bedding and showed us how to make a bed up to U.S. military standard. That proved tough for some, but it didn't challenge me. At 22, I had lived on my own for some time, and making a bed was well within my skill set. I found myself helping others to get their beds made.

The next day, they cut our hair off, issued us our uniforms and began training us in earnest. Soon, life took on a routine pattern for us trainees. We arose at 5 a. m. daily, showered, dressed and got into formation. Then we ate, mustered, and marched off to a day of training. We did everything you would expect soldiers to do: marched, shot weapons, used a compass, learned to read maps, etc. After eight weeks, we

graduated from Basic Training. Then, some trainees went off to other bases for training as military police, artillery men, tankers, etc. I marched across the base to enter Advanced Infantry Training not a good omen.

As it turned out though, my ultimate purpose in the U.S. Army would not be to be an infantry man in Viet Nam. My brother had already shipped out to Viet Nam, and Army policy mandated that I serve in some other zone, so I received orders to serve in West Germany. After all that training, the infantry would not be my military occupational specialty.

The next day, I flew home to Janey Way. After four months of intensive military training, it never looked better. Dad seemed very proud of his oldest son. Mom was just happy to have me back.

A new life in West Germany awaited me. For now, a few weeks on Janey Way seemed like the best vacation ever. This is truly one of my happiest Janey Way memories.

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McKinley Village update

By **MONICA STARK**
 editor@valcomnews.com

If all goes according to Riverview Capital Investment's plan, McKinley Village will have the first phase of homes up for sale as early as April 2015 if approved by the City Council early next year.

The proposed project consists of development of 328 residential units, a neighborhood recreation center, parks and other public spaces on about 48-acre site located along the south side of the Capital City Freeway, north of the Union Pacific rail lines, largely east of Alhambra Boulevard and largely west of Lanatt Street in the northeast area of downtown Sacramento.

A variety of residences are proposed on different lot sizes. The proposed project includes three parks that total about 2.4 acres, including about 1-acre neighborhood recreation center and pool. The overall density of the project is about 10.9 units per acre and access to the project site would be provided from A Street and 28th Street to the west of 40th Street to the east.

It has been hailed as well as dismissed as a smart growth, infill community project.

The long awaited Environmental Impact Report was released in early November and concluded that the project would have "less than significant impacts on traffic." The City of Sacramento's recently completed traffic study looked at the effects of McKinley Village on local traffic and, as part of the study, analyzed 16 streets and 25 intersections east of the Capital City Freeway. The study evaluated the traffic Level of Service (LOS) when McKinley Village traffic is added to existing traffic conditions. All 16 streets analyzed in the study will operate at LOS A (free flow conditions with no congestion) during peak drive times even with the development of McKinley Village.

Twenty-three of the 25 intersections east of the freeway that were analyzed will operate at the same level of service during peak drive times with or without McKinley Village. The new intersection at C Street between 40th Street

and Tivoli Way will function at LOS A even during peak drive times.

McKinley Village will contribute funding for traffic signal and other improvements at three local intersections (Alhambra Boulevard/H Street; Alhambra Boulevard/E Street; and 33rd Street/McKinley Boulevard.)

In spite of the results, some neighborhood organizations are organizing around how to "effectively comment" on the EIR, one of which is the East Sacramento Preservation. The group has its December meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 10 from 7-8 p.m. in the East Sacramento Room at Clunie Clubhouse where the topic will be addressed. According to the group's website, the organization opposes the design of homes.

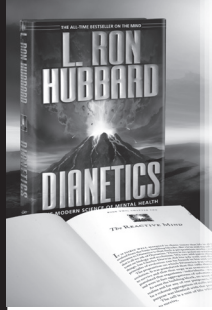
Included in the petition on the website is the following: "(The) project does not fit within the character of existing neighborhoods and threatens to impact traffic, cause congestion and threaten safe pedestrian and bicycle access to Theodore Judah Elementary School. As proposed, this is a private, isolated community project that would negatively impact adjacent neighborhoods, schools, roads and residents. The proposed McKin-

ley Village will exist as an isolated car-based community that lacks urban-style access to public transportation, shopping and entertainment. The only community connection will be increased car traffic on existing neighborhood roadways. The proposed McKinley Village location would expose future residents to poor air quality, noise pollution and potential flood risk.

"The proposed McKinley Village is not infill. It is an expansion of East Sacramento and not an East Sacramento style neighborhood. The proposed construction of 328 new homes will result in additional burdens on neighborhood schools, particularly Theodore Judah Elementary School and Sutter Middle School and may alter the current school boundaries. Access points at 28th Street, Alhambra (Boulevard) and Lanatt Street would provide for a more seamless community."

In speaking about the design of the project, Phil Angelides, in an interview with the East Sacramento News, spoke on how the project is intended to fit in with the feel of McKinley Village homes as well as neighbor-

See *McKinley Village*, page 6



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McKinley Village:

Continued from page 5

hood landmarks with homes ranging between 1,295 square feet to 3,100 square feet.

"The recreation center's plans have been modeled after McKinley Park's Clunie Center and the roof-forms modeled after the Shephard Garden (and Arts Center)," he said, adding that it would be suitable for receptions, weddings, family and neighborhood gatherings.

A recreation center owned and maintained by the homeowners association will serve as the community's civic center, offering a neighborhood pool, indoor and outdoor spaces for community gatherings and events and space for retail use such as a cafe, restaurant or yoga studio. Bikeways and walkways will stitch together the neighborhood and connect McKinley Village, McKinley Park, Midtown, Sutter's Landing and the American River Parkway. The rec center will have a swimming pool of 75 feet long, spreading six lanes across, which

will enable the development to have a swim team if desired by the homeowners association. He said McKinley Village will be doing an art in public places program.

Angelides said they have carefully selected which homes go where, so no two homes that look similar to each other are near. "That's an unprecedented level of variation within the community," he said.

As far as the homes near the railroad, there will be a 25-foot engineered sound wall that supposed to prevent the same type of train noise that you might find in River Park or Curtis Park.

Before the EIR was released, at the Oct. 24 City of Sacramento's Planning and Design Commission meeting, neighbors from both sides spoke in favor and against the project.

Bob Reid, a lifetime Sacramento resident who grew up in East Sacramento at the corner of 40th Folsom and who attended such schools as David Lubin, acknowledged Angelides' contributions to the community and said he was drawn to the project because of its design,

which includes tree lined streets, large porches, an easy commute for workers. Included in his statements, he said: "This project is an opportunity to carry on the feeling of East Sacramento, so to speak ... I simply support this because the style and feel of the neighborhood reminds me of the childhood home I grew up in."

Terry Kastanis, who lives on 41st Street and who is a former city councilmember, asked to consider one principle: Is this site appropriate for housing? "I am well aware of long hours and controversies and in no doubt will receive more in weeks to come." Speaking about the location of the project, Kastanis asked the commissioners if they are willing to take a chance on flooding and disaster. Commenting on the design, he asked rhetorically, how would people exit the area to safety. "I am aware of the economic gain of this project but is this site appropriate for housing? Is this the last piece of land available for housing?"

Rosalyn VanBuren, executive director of Our Kids' Community

Breakfast Club, a program that offers breakfast, arts and crafts and educational activities at the Oak Park Community Center has since the age of 6, lived in Sacramento, attending Sacred Heart Elementary School and Bishop Manogue High School. She said the project would give more options for housing to those who would want to live in the central city, adding that the project seems consistent with Sacramento Area Council of Governments.

Rob Finley of the group Neighbors United for Smart Growth, which is comprised of neighborhood association leaders, PTA members, neighbors instrumental of saving schools from closure, principals of the McKinley Rebuild project, said the group believes something will be built on this plot of land, but they want something that would be built that the neighborhood supports. While the group is sympathetic to what other groups have issue with (ie: the site being near railroad tracks, con-

See Update, page 7

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Update:

Continued from page 6

gested freeway), Finley said NUSG is focused on traffic concerns.

"Instead of using major existing arteries, the project inappropriately relies on narrow, neighborhood streets where children play, ride their bikes and walk to school."

"As the 2008 traffic study for the previous subdivision displayed, approximately 6,000 daily additional car trips will be realized by both each the 28th Street crossing and the Lanatt Street crossing. At this volume, one does not have to wait until the 2013 traffic study to know there will be traffic impact on midtown and East Sacramento," Finley said.

He commented on the 28th Street access point that will that will force people to cross the street that has 41 trains cross on a daily basis, some that often sit idle. Finley said Union Pacific has plans to increase the amount of trains coming through. He said NUSG

has met with the developer, but that the developer won't change those plans.

Resident Michael Murphy suggested the developer add 78 additional units (or 20 percent more housing) to the project to offset the cost of making Alhambra Boulevard an access point. That increase, he said, would not only generate on average \$500,000 per home, it would conform to SACOG standards. He asked the planning commission to require the developer to add the bike tunnel in the first phase of development, as opposed to the third. "If you did it in the first phase, you would teach them to use bicycles and to walk and not use their cars."

Marie Booth and Dave DeGmilla presented the commission with 419 letters of support. Booth said her children are excited they will be able to purchase a home large enough for their growing families with modern amenities.

Pamela Milchrist said had she known signatures were being collected at the meet-

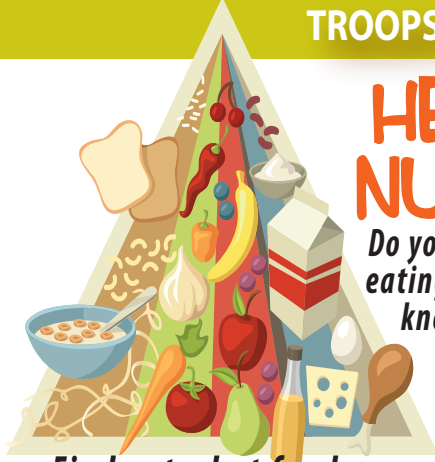
ing, she would have 100 signatures from 40th Street alone. She questioned whether there would be any consideration of residents' mental and physical health especially with the increase of train traffic.

Patty Kleinknecht, executive director of the River District, said the group supports the project's mixed housing options, which are close to Sacramento's urban centers with reasonable density. "As we look at adding housing, we welcome McKinley Village."

Jim Brown, executive director of Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates, said the key to bikability is to accommodate all kinds of bikers. He also suggested the bike tunnel be built in the first phase of development, as opposed to the third.

Ellen Cochrane, president of the East Sacramento Preservation, said the organization came out with a statement "opposed as proposed". Speaking about the design of the project, Cochrane said the organization objects to the two-car garages and lack of mass transit to service the homes.

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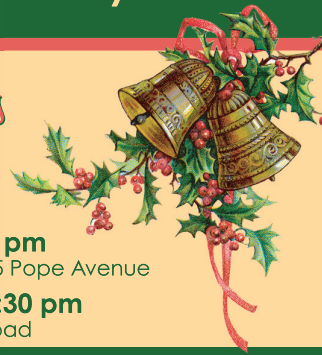
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Wickedly funny, ARC presents Alan Ball's "Five Women Wearing the Same Dress"

"Five Women Wearing the Same Dress," a hilariously honest comedy, opened Nov. 22 for a three-week run at American River College's Stage Two Theatre. Alan Ball wrote the play a decade before winning an Oscar for writing "American Beauty," and even longer before creating HBO's "True Blood" and "Six Feet Under," but his hand at comedy-with-a-twist was clearly already well-honed. Irreverent and touching, "Five Women" is a celebration of the women's spirit and a fascinating look at the intricacies of friendship.

Set at a society wedding in Knoxville, Tennessee, the action of the play takes place during the ostentatious wedding reception when the five reluctant, identically clad bridesmaids attempt to hide out in an upstairs bedroom. As the afternoon wears on, these wildly different women joyously discover a common bond. Initially that bond involves a universal frustration with the bride whom they've all been called to serve. Ultimately, though, the women develop a cautious respect for one another and even come to have each others' backs when plot twists turn matters dark. From the small-town Christian, to the cynical outsider, to the outspoken lesbian and the world weary man-eater, each woman brings wit and wisdom to the table to share for the greater good. In the end, even the cameo of a handsome groomsman won't keep these women from being there for one another.

Directed by theater professor Nancy Silva, the show features a six-person cast of student actors, sets and lights by Elly Award-winner Kathy Burlison, and costumes by Gail Russell whose work can

also be seen on local stages from Sacramento Theatre Company to Capitol Stage. "Five Women..." contains adult language and subject matter.

"It's amazing that the first thought I had is that a man writing a play gets to the heart for what women yearn for or desire but he really does," said Silva who likened the script to "Sex in the City" for its youthful and sassy touch.

Unlike the darkness found in "American Beauty" or "Six Feet Under" there are a few moments of darkness in "Five Women Wearing the Same Dress." "For a good 80 percent of the play it's very lighthearted," Silva said, who added that she's found it interesting that all five women could be parts of the same woman.

When they're all wearing the same dress and all look alike, you can put them together and create a woman who embodies all the traits that are important to us.

All performances of "Five Women..." will be at the American River College's Stage Two Theatre, 4700 College Oak Dr. On Saturday and Sunday, parking is free in Lot D. Thursday and Friday parking is \$1. Ticket prices are \$12 for general, and \$10 per student/senior/sarta. For information, visit ARCtheatre.org or call the ARC Box Office at 484-8234.

"Five Women..." performance days and times are as follows:

Thursday, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, Nov. 30 at 8 p.m., Friday, Dec. 6 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 1 at 2 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 7 at 8 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 8 at 2 p.m.

Local Youth Shine In The Sacramento Ballet's The Nutcracker

By GINA LORENZO
gina@valcomnews.com

Sacramento Ballet productions, Ron Cunningham's The Nutcracker has been seen by hundreds of thousands of people over the years and is a great holiday tradition for many. This year's The Nutcracker production at the Sacramento Community Center includes local girls who have a long history with the Sacramento Ballet.

When asked about their initial involvement, Clara McNatt, an 11 year old Land Park resident said "People told me that it would be fun when I moved here. That was four years ago. I tried out every year for Clara and last year I finally got the part." Her sisters Louise (Loui) and Anna (twins) who are age 8, joined with them were five.

Abigail Fitzpatrick, a 15 year-old East Sacramento resident and Christian Brothers High School student who plays Rich Girl in the prologue says, "It's a lot of fun because I am not much of a dancer but I love to act. I have been acting since Kindergarten. The good thing about the Nutcracker is that you don't have to be a total ballet dancer. You are learning a lot like how to be with other kids." And for younger dancers like Loui McNatt, "Dancing as a mouse I am only on stage for a minute at a time," she states. But as she and Anna explained, when children get older, the characters spend more time performing.

Regarding the audition process, Mariah Hill, a 10 year-old Pocket-Greenhaven resident said "They measure your height, you get a number and wait in line to try out. They choose people for call backs". Abigail Fitzpatrick, added "They will play a movie because you are here for hours. There is a line out the door." In fact, over 900 aspiring performers tried out, roughly 150 per part. Children from all over the area were cast. For some, they have performed several characters like Abigail Goehring, a 10 year-old Arden-Carmichael resident, who has played such roles as Baby Blue Party Child to Clara and has been in ballet classes since age 3.5.

When it comes to balancing ballet with other priorities in their daily life Clara says, "We always remember that when ballet is busy, school still comes first." "Clara had to quit soccer because she got the role of Clara," her sister Anna added. And Abigail Fitzpatrick adds "At Sutter Middle School, they taught us time management skills last year. I find time to do homework, even backstage before performances."

When asked what advice they would give other children who dream of performing in The Nutcracker or a similar role, Mariah advises, "If you want to do ballet, start at a young age to get used to it." Abigail Fitzpatrick said "If you don't get auditions, keep trying every year and eventually you will get the part." Abigail Goehring advised, "Follow your dreams and never give up even when sometimes you feel like it." And there are admitted struggles; late nights rehearsing, school projects due during the busiest rehearsal weeks, but they all agree that it is worth it. In fact some are considering career in ballet.

You can see these girls and many other local children performing at the Sacramento Community Center Theater, Dec. 7- 23. Tickets are \$19 - \$90 (children's tickets are for ages 12 and under). For more information about The Nutcracker and other Sacramento Ballet productions visit www.sacballet.org.

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Long-time ballerina retires from Sac Ballet

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Sacramento Ballet dancer Montana native Isha Lloyd has announced her retirement from her first career. Spending nearly seven years with this “incredible family of professional artists”, as she describes her fellow dancers, Lloyd has unfortunately accumulated an incredible amount of injuries that have caught up with her, ending a memorable career. “(The injuries) are finally physically preventing me from enjoying or being able to perform,” she told Valley Community Newspapers.

The first dancer in her family besides her grandfather who was a can-can dancer, Lloyd said she is not sure where she got her passion and dance ability from, though she said she got the ballet bug when she was little.

Forced into ballet when she was 3 years old, along with baseball, soccer and swimming, she hated it until she was 9 and started taking classes in Montana. One of the few states with a residence in ballet program, Lloyd “absolutely loved” ballet. She quit track, swimming and all of the other sports she played up until then.

At that young age, Lloyd began her ballet regimen of dancing six days a week and that drive was an impetus for her to graduate early from high school. But days before the commencement ceremony (as well as her prom and SAT examinations), she got into a terrible, life threatening car accident. Her doctor said she would never dance again, but she proved otherwise within weeks, despite being in a coma for three days and suffering brain trauma, a broken pelvis and leg. Doctors put a titanium rod in her femur. Her first goal toward dancing again was to walk across the stage at graduation. Because she knew if she put herself on a recovery fast track, she would be more likely to fulfill her prior commitment to the Seattle Pacific Northwest Ballet Company, where she danced prior to joining Sac Ballet.

“I made it a goal to walk at graduation. I ditched the crutches. My brother was there to catch me if I

fell, which I didn’t do. Getting back to ballet was hard,” she said. That’s when she took Pilates seriously. Her dance teacher in Montana was certified in Pilates and came up with a regimen and brought her back on her feet. Time passed quickly from then on, starting in Seattle where Carinne Binda Cunningham of the Sacramento Ballet happened to watch a random Saturday class. “She picked me out and offered me an apprentice contract. I said why not? I was going to be a ballerina. I am so glad I did it. I spent seven years here. I wouldn’t trade it for anything else.”

During Lloyd’s first month of dancing for the Sacramento Ballet, she contracted mononucleosis. “I started on the wrong foot, but they stuck with me,” she said. And, despite being injury prone, the company embraced her talent and passion, giving her leads in such productions as the Sugar Plum Fairy in the Nutcracker.

Because of the surgery, she can feel the cold weather coming during Nutcracker season. “I feel old. My bones get stiffer. It’s harder to move the hip joint and I have a harder time warming up. But Pilates have helped me get warm.” For Lloyd, this additional physical work became “muscle memory” but it was something that made her feel a lot better. “When I don’t do it, I can notice a difference,” she said.

Having a lead in the Modern Masters in the spring, Lloyd decided to dance through her pain, warding it off with pain killers and holding off on a surgery until three days after the final production. Lloyd has decided to stay in Sacramento and focus on her education toward a second career in Sports Medicine hopes to organize the Sacramento Ballet into a better dance health care program.

She also teaches a Pilates class at Pipeworks, where she took up rock climbing and met her boyfriend. “Ballet dancers make for the perfect rock climber,” she notes. “Your legs are strong. You’ve got the muscle memory and are smart enough to know the choreography of the route. I use that to my benefit. It’s a different kind of release and you are connected by a rope. It’s a lot of fun. It’s a good transition from pretty, pretty ballet to climbing up rocks. I am



Photos by Keith Sutter

lucky to find something out of ballet that makes me so happy.”

Earlier in the day when Lloyd sat down with this publication on Nov. 8, she had taken a ballet class at the Sacramento Ballet. Depending on who is teaching the class, she said, it could be anywhere between 1 to 3 hours long. Considered the warm-up class for the ballet company, Lloyd said she has been told by the Cunninghams that she is always welcome to come by, though she has retired.

It’s because she cannot give up the art completely. Realistically

she commented on how quickly one can get out of ballet shape. “We have a joke in ballet that after missing one day of practice, your body feels it, two days off your boss knows it and after three days, everybody knows it,” she said.

Asked how many performances she has done for the Sacramento Ballet, Lloyd tried to add it up aloud. “Normally we do three ballets per rep and there’s about five reps per year. And then there’s four ... I would have to look at my resume to see.”

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Cap'n Mitch:

Continued from page 2

up the key, pulled the horn out from under the table and said, 'Gotcha!'"

Agruss said that as an 18-year-old kid, he was "ready to melt into a pool of fear."

Nancy (Davis) Reagan

Long before she became an East Sacramento resident or the nation's first lady, Agruss kissed Nancy Davis, who would, of course, marry future California Gov. and U.S. President Ronald Reagan.

In telling that story, Agruss said, "I played the role of Warren Cramer (in the production of 'The Late Christopher Bean'). (Cramer) indeed kisses the character of Susan Haggett, whom Miss Davis portrayed in this play, and that, my friends, is all I remember about the whole darn thing. I never saw her after that, nor did I ever try to contact her when she was here in Sacramento. Don't know why. Her children probably watched my TV show."

Television pioneer

And on the topic of his involvement in television, Agruss described his pioneering moments in that medium.

In speaking about the earliest of those moments, he said, "I got a job doing a show in (Cambridge, Mass.) – a closed circuit television show, especially for business magnates to see the value of television as an advertising medium. In other words, they were not sure

about it in those days. That was in the fall of 1947. So, we rehearsed (about a 20-minute) small play. We were set up in a classroom with (the Massachusetts Institute of Technology) and they telecasted across the (Charles) River to a big hotel in downtown Boston, where the bigwigs were there. It was a small, little drama with commercials built in to try to show corporate America that television was worth advertising on. And that's how early it was that we were involved with (television)."

The majority of Agruss's early television work, however, occurred from 1950 to about 1957. And at that same time, he continued with his stage work, which included his appearances in two Broadway plays.

Agruss noted that 1950s television actors in New York generally had very little time to rehearse and perform their parts.

"In the heyday of live, New York television programming in the 1950s, you only had a week to do a show at the most," Agruss said. "You had to rehearse a show and put it on and when you did it, that was it. And it went nationwide. Nowadays when you talk to theater people, actors, they say, 'How the heck did you do that? How can you do such a complicated thing in less than a week's time? It was all live, and the only reason that we had the recordings is that they did kinescope recordings, which were taken off of photographic television sets. The networks save those in large measure, many of which are in the film and television archives, both in New York and Los Angeles.'"

In continuing the story of his involvement in early television in a chronological fashion, Agruss began sharing details about his first experience as a children's cartoon host.

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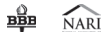
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Nutcracker in One Act

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Crockett-Deane Ballet Co
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Saturday, December 14, 7 p.m.
Sunday, December 15, 2 p.m.

The Center at 2300 Sierra Blvd.

Tickets at the door and
at Deane Dance Center
3385 Lanatt Street (916) 453-0226

Find that special gift for the holidays at...

An "Old-Fashioned" HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIR Saturday, December 7th

10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Waterford Cove Clubhouse, 7650 Windbridge Drive, Sacramento
(Corner of Windbridge & Rush River Drive)

There's something for all ages, homemade candy and sweets, orna-
ments, dolls, hand bags, NFL lap quilts, jewelry and much more.
Including a Holiday Gift raffle.

35th Annual "Holiday Show of Hands" CRAFT FAIRE

Friday, Dec. 6th, 5-9 p.m. (\$3)
Saturday, Dec. 7th, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
Sunday, Dec. 8th, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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CALIFORNIA WATERFOWL

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Thursday, Dec. 5, 2013

Cocktails 5:30 p.m. - Dinner 7:30 p.m.

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CALL AND PLACE YOUR EVENT TODAY!

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CALENDAR

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

Editor's note: City Councilmember Kevin McCarty told the East Sacramento News the city council has likely postponed the vote for the controversial student housing project, Campus Crest, to Jan. 14. It was previously scheduled for the Dec. 10 meeting.

ONGOING:

BloodSource and East Sacramentans geared up to save lives:

The East Sacramento Rotary Club is sponsoring the month-long blood drive as a way to help ensure a safe and plentiful blood supply during the upcoming holidays. Bob Deering, East Sacramento Rotary Club states, "Rotary is passionate about helping our community. Blood donation is just one of the ways we support families, neighbors, co-workers and others who find themselves in challenging medical situations that necessitate blood. Whether it's cancer treatments, accident injuries, heart surgeries or childbirth complications, this is something that affects young and old, usually suddenly and unexpectedly. Working with BloodSource to ensure a safe and plentiful blood supply is very important and we hope our community will join with us to make a difference." The two closest BloodSource Donor Centers in the East Sacramento area are the Sierra Oaks Donor Center (3099 Fair Oaks Blvd.) and Midtown Donor Center (1608 Q St.) Use Donor Club No. 6564 when you register (wherever you donate with BloodSource!) and let's see what East Sacramentans can do! Blood donors receive MyBloodSource Rewards that can be redeemed for fantastic items. For information or to schedule an appointment, please visit bloodsource.org, call 866-822-5663 or contact Shirley at 453-3027.

AARP tax aide seeks volunteers for 2014

The nation's largest free, volunteer-run tax assistance and preparation service is seek-

ing volunteers for tax assistance/preparation and leadership coordinators. Volunteers of all ages and backgrounds are welcome. Each year from Feb. 1 through April 15, AARP Tax-Aide volunteers prepare federal, state, and local tax returns for low and middle income taxpayers, with special attention to those age 60 and older. Volunteers are especially needed to assist with electronic filing of tax returns. You do not need to be an AARP member or retiree to volunteer. For more information on how you can join the AARP Tax-Aide team in Northern California, contact Ron Byrd at NoCalTaxAide@Outlook.com or visit website at: www.aarp.org/taxaide

Attn. students: Submit now for water efficiency video contest

High school students can win cash prizes and the chance to view their video on the Raley Field Jumbotron by entering the 2014 Water Spots Video Contest. The contest, sponsored by the Regional Water Authority (RWA) and the Sacramento Bee Media in Education (MIE) program, challenges teens to create compelling and original 25-second Public Service Announcement (PSA) videos on a select water efficiency topic. The 2014 water efficiency theme is: Don't be a gutter flooder: Prevent overspray and runoff. Judging will be based on creativity, entertainment value, accuracy, originality and incorporation of the water efficiency topic. Finalist videos will be displayed on the Raley Field Jumbotron screen and winners announced at a Sacramento River Cats game in April 2014. Winning students and their teachers will also get cash prizes. The grand prize winner's spot may become part of RWA's 2014 television ad campaign. Submissions due Feb. 28. Visit www.BeWaterSmart.info for more information and tips on using water more efficiently and to submit entries or get more information about contest rules, judging and prizes, visit www.sacbee.com/water-spots

The Sacramento Capitolaire meeting

A men's Barbershop Harmony group, meets every Tuesday night at 7 p.m. at Pilgrim Hall (Sierra Arden United Church of

Christ), 890 Morse Ave., Sacramento. Info: www.capitolaires.org, call 888-0877-9806, or email info@capitolaires.org

Elks Lodge No. 6 Toys for Tots drive going on now

The Lodge has officially kicked off the annual Toys for Tots drive. They are collecting new, unwrapped toys for military families in need of our help. Donation barrels are stationed around the Lodge. The final drop off date is Saturday, Dec. 7. This year, more than ever, military families need help. If you are uncertain about what to donate, you can make a donation to the Lodge Christmas Bicycle Fund (by check or cash to the Lodge office).

Artisan holds Food Drive

Artisan Salon is participating in the Spirit of Giving Food Drive. Over the last 17 years, the Spirit of Giving (SOG)

drive has helped Sacramento Food Bank collect and distribute over 4.6 million pounds of canned and non-perishable food items for local families in need. Help support families in need by participating in this year's drive! Artisan Salon is located at 3198 Riverside Blvd.

Soroptimist International of Sacramento South meetings

A service organization dedicated to insure the status of women and girls, the group meets at Aviator's Restaurant, 6151 Freeport Blvd. for lunch and to discuss the day's topic. Meets the second and fourth Tuesday of each month at 12:15 p.m. The meetings discuss our fund raising Projects and Community Service, often with speakers from our community.

See more Calendar, page 18



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CALENDAR

Continued from page 17

Adopt a child for the holidays

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DECEMBER

Sacramento City College Annual Holiday Art Sale

Dec 4, 5 & 6: Buy unique handmade gifts and support the SCC Art Department and Kondos Gallery. Dec 4 and 5 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 to 6:45 p.m. Dec 6 from 10 a.m. to noon. Fischbacher Art Building: Kondos Gallery: room 123, 3835 Freeport Blvd 95822. 916 558-2559 or www.kondosgallery.org for information. Parking is \$1 (you get a parking slip from a vending station)

Rotary Club of Pocket/Greenhaven

Dec. 5: Guest speakers address local, regional and international topics. Visitors welcome. 7:30 a.m., every Thursday. Aviators Restaurant, 6151 Freeport Blvd. (916) 684-6854.

Rotary Club of South Sacramento meeting

Dec. 5: Guest speakers address local, regional and international topics. Visitors wel-

come. Every Thursday from noon to 1 p.m. at Iron Steaks Restaurant, 2422 13th St, Sacramento, CA 95818.

Bi-Polar Anonymous

Dec. 6: Free 12-step program/support group, for people who have Bi-Polar and those who love them. Meets every Friday, 7-8:30 p.m. 4300 Auburn Blvd., Room 106. (916) 889-5786.

Kiwanis Club of East Sacramento-Midtown

Dec. 6: Visitors Welcome, weekly breakfast meeting on first, second and third Fridays at 7:00 AM and Dinner meeting on fourth Thursday at 6:00 PM. Topical weekly speakers and first meal for visitors on us. Meet at The Kiwanis Family House, (at UCD Med Ctr/ 50th St & Broadway) 2875 50th Street Sacramento, CA 95817. www.eastsacmidtownkiwanis.com, Meeting/Membership info: 916-761-0984, volunteers always welcome!

Roseville Craft Fair

Dec. 7: Photo greeting cards, photo glass cutting boards, photo aprons, photo giclee canvases, photo 8 x 10 matted prints and more from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Maidu Center, 1550 Maidu Dr.

Santa's East Sac Adventure at Theodore Judah

Dec. 7: Santa's East Sac Adventure at Theodore Judah Elementary will be held from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Take a picture with Santa for \$7 anytime during the event. Visit with Santa and his petting farm (\$3); get your picture taken and partake in a gingerbread house making workshop (\$15 per house) and holiday boutique featuring local businesses! Plus, there will be a jazz band playing at noon. Here is the link for buying tickets for the event: <http://goog.gl/z9CFLU>

Messiah Holiday Concert

Dec. 7: The Camellia Symphony Orchestra, the Music Society at Cathedral Square, and the Valley Choral Society join together to present Part I (Christmas) of Handel's beloved Messiah starting at 7:30 p.m. Featuring The Camellia Symphony, three choirs totaling more than 90 voices (Choir of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, Capella Antiqua, and the Valley Choral Society), harpsichordist Faythe Vollrath, and additional masterpieces by Telemann and Galuppi, this concert will celebrate the Christmas season in full Baroque glory. The up-

coming Christmas concert will take place in the beautiful and resonant Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, 1017 11th St.

Book Sale and Bazaar at Ella K. McClatchy Library

Dec. 7: Fill a bag with books for \$6 and shop on the patio for cards, Christmas items, jewelry and more. The event goes from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. and the library is located at 2112 22nd St.

Advent faire and Christmas gift boutique

Dec. 7: Come One—Come All to the Advent Faire in the Social Hall of the Northminster Presbyterian Church from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Join in for a fun day of free crafts to make for all ages, something for everyone. A light lunch will be served at noon. One can decorate a Christmas house, make Christmas decorations, create a Christmas wreath and many more fun projects, with the assistance of Santa's helpers. You can also shop for gifts at the Gift Boutique in the Chapel, where you will find many and varied types of beautiful handmade items including Christmas stockings, table runners, pot holders, necklaces, pillows, lap robes, and scarves. (A great opportunity to do your Christmas shopping) Raffle tickets can be purchased to win a unique quilt fashioned by NPC quilters. All monies from sales will go to provide financial assistance to children and youth to attend camps at Westminster Woods, which provide an outstanding spiritual experience and growth for young people. For more details call 487-5192 or visit northminsteronline.org. The church is located at 3235 Pope Ave., Sacramento.

Holiday Fun for All at the Holiday Fair and Marketplace the Brickhouse Art Gallery

Dec. 7-8: The Brickhouse Art Gallery will host a two-day holiday fair and marketplace on Dec. 7 from noon to 6 p.m. and Dec. 8 from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Brickhouse Art Gallery, 2837 36 St. The holiday marketplace will feature local and regional artisans and vendors selling a variety of items such as: unique handmade dolls, quilts, jewelry, books, ethnic clothing item, ceramic items, and art work. \$5 suggested donation to benefit the Brickhouse Art Gallery's youth summer arts program. For additional information, call Barbara Range, 475-1240, extension 413 or visit: www.thebrickhousegallery.net/.

Holiday Boutique at Parkside Community Church

Dec. 7-8: Do your Christmas shopping early at the Parkside Community Church Holiday Boutique. The event will be held Saturday, Dec. 7 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sunday, Dec. 8 from 11:30 p.m. to 2 p.m. Purchase unique items from local artisans and vendors including hand-crafted pottery, turned wooden gifts, jewelry, knitted and crocheted items and much more. In addition, UNICEF items along with reusable SSIP tote bags and t-shirts promoting the South Sacramento Interfaith Partnership food closet will be on sale. A food court will offer delicious soup, bread, homemade desserts and baked goods for lunch or to take home. Bring nonperishable food donations for the SSIP food closet and receive a free raffle ticket for amazing prizes. Parkside Community Church is located at 5700 South Land Park Dr. (one block south of Fruitridge). For more information, call the church office at 421-0492 or e-mail parksideucc@sbcglobal.net.

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

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DECEMBER 8

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Faces and Places 20th annual Run to Feed the Hungry

Photos by MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Run to Feed the Hungry, one of Sacramento's greatest family traditions held annually on Thanksgiving Day, raised funds and awareness for families in need in our community. Nearly 30,000 people came out this year for the event that benefits the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services.





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One of East Sacramento's finest homes! Wake up to the tree tops filtering the morning sun or entertain in rooms that invite the outdoors in. Unique features, a spacious artist's studio, guest wing complete with kitchen and an apartment over the 3 car garage. \$1,299,000

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Lovely remodeled 4 bedroom and three bath home features high quality appliances and finishes in the gourmet kitchen; connected family room has French doors that open up to the backyard with Sago and Queen Anne palms. Plus a back gate into the Sutter Lawn Tennis Club. \$1,149,900

BETH HARNEY 995-4120



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Spacious 4 bedroom 2 bath, home has been meticulously remodeled with all the charm of yesterday and all the modern amenities of today. Large living room with vaulted ceilings and exposed beams, a gourmet kitchen with stainless steel appliances and marble countertops. \$725,000

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The "Didion House" in Poverty Ridge! 4 bedrooms 2 full baths and 2 half baths with 3rd floor media room that features state-of-the-art equipment. Turn of the century woodwork and detailing; new kitchen and full basement. Beautifully updated while reserving the home's original quality and style! \$1,650,000

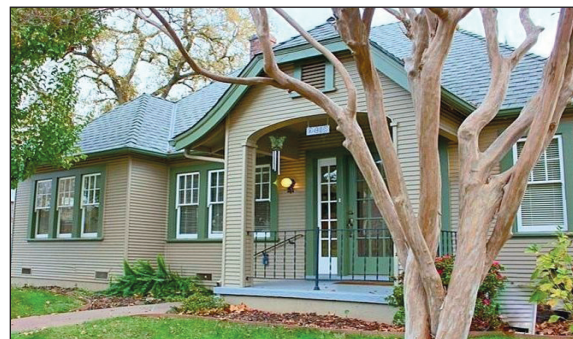
SHEILA VAN NOY 505-5395



STUNNING NEW HOME

4 or 5 bedrooms 3½ baths in the Fabulous 40's! Great for entertaining with formal living room and fireplace, dining room, large chef's kitchen with island and prep sink, breakfast bar and open great room with built-in's and wine fridge. 9' ceilings, 8' doors, lots of arches, open and bright; spacious yard! \$1,250,000

NATHAN SHERMAN 969-7379



CUTE BUNGALOW

Beautiful hardwood floors and a unique ceiling in the living room; lounge by the fireplace this winter and invite friends for a get together! Three bedroom home has 2 full baths, large closets, built-in cabinets in the breakfast nook and a spacious kitchen. The laundry room sink and the washer & dryer are included. \$430,000

TIM COLLOM 247-8048



MIKE PARIS BUILT HOME

Fabulous new home being built in the heart of East Sacramento!!! This 3 bedroom 2½ bath will have all the classic signatures of a Mike Paris home... high ceilings, large rooms, open floor plan, indoor/outdoor living, gourmet kitchen, and an old world style and charm. \$765,000

TIM COLLOM 247-8048



NEW HOME ON SANTA YNEZ

Newly completed home by Dyer Trolio Homes right in the heart of East Sacramento. This craftsman bungalow exudes east coast charm, architectural detail throughout, and a simple, spacious, open floor plan. The details: 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2190sf, and a 1-car detached garage. \$699,000

CHRIS BALESTERI 996-2244



SPACIOUS HOME & YARD

Beautiful 4 bedroom 3 bath home has gorgeous kitchen, spacious living area and a large yard; all great for comfortable living and entertaining. Downstairs bedroom and full bathroom. HVAC system replaced recently. Lots of extra details, including crown mouldings. \$589,000

ALLISON BELL 248-1060
ALEXIS JONES 715-0237

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