

# EAST SACRAMENTO NEWS

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Sutter Middle School student starred in local production of

## SHREK the Musical Jr. SEE PAGE 3

- On the Curbs.....2
- Janey Way Memories .....5
- Lance Armstrong Feature .....6
- Matías Bombal's Hollywood .....14
- Calendar.....17

Sutter Memorial Hospital to close in May

■ See page 6



River Park resident discusses his storied life as a former Israeli journalist and growing up in small town Ukiah

■ See page 8

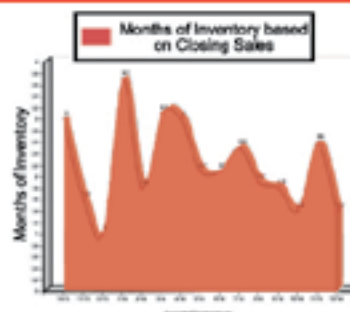


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Vol. XXIV • No. 3

East Sacramento News is published on the first and third Thursday of the month in the area bounded by Business 80 on the west, the American River on the north and east and Highway 50 on the south.

Publisher ..... George Macko  
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Distribution/Subscriptions ..... George Macko

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Courtesy

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Photo by Monica Stark

Compton's Market on McKinley Boulevard is getting a new roof but is open during construction. Soon, the location will be offering customers a full fledge deli, juice bar, and a more comprehensive outdoor patio and dining area.

## On The Curbs with Paula Peper, Theodore Judah first graders and Compton's Market



By MIKE SAELTZER

On Wednesday, Jan. 14, East Sacramento Preservation held the first of its speakers series inside of the East Sacramento Room of the Clunie Community Center. The guest speaker was the renown Paula Peper, a nationally recognized award winning ecologist, tree expert, historian, author, urban forest researcher, and retired United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service employee. It was standing room only for more than 60 attendees. Paula delighted the audience with a slideshow presentation featuring stories about our East Sacramento heritage starting from the days of the Native Americans, and ending in present time.

She captivated the audience by telling many stories related to our historic families, their businesses, and homes many of which still have lasting impacts on our lives today. Skillfully intertwined in this presentation were examples of tree care and planting done the right way (properly spaced and diversified), and the wrong way. Did you know that one storm wiped out more than 600 trees in Sacramento in one day? Next up in the speakers series will be Bill Burg, author and Sacramento Old City Association President. Visit [www.eastsacpreservation.org](http://www.eastsacpreservation.org) for details.

The umpteenth annual Theodore Judah First Grade Boat Float festival took place on Wednesday, Jan. 28. This is a tradition that goes back in time for who knows exactly how long. Every January each first grader is given 30 days to build a boat. Creativity and imagination are allowed to flow freely as the only requirements are that the boat float, and that it be no larger than the size of a cereal box.

Mrs. Hein, Mrs. Gonsalves, and Mrs. Brown did an amazing job commandeering the approximately 86 7 year olds who participated, with an equal number of spectators, on hand, many of whom had worked hard with their youngsters to prepare for the voyage. Three tubs were filled with water, and one by one the captains were called forward to float their boats for just enough time to snap a few photos and demonstrate that yes indeed their boat does float.



Photo courtesy

Paula Peper, a nationally recognized award winning ecologist, tree expert, historian, author, urban forest researcher, and retired United States Department of Agriculture Forest Service employee spoke on Wednesday, Jan. 14, at East Sacramento Preservation's sponsored event inside the East Sacramento Room of the Clunie Community Center.

There were pirate ships, luxury lines, rafts, frigates, fishing boats, speed boats, sail boats, floating islands, fire and police boats, houseboats and even some multi-hulled ships. Passengers included ducks, dinosaurs, monkeys, snowmen, princesses, pirates and miniature people, to name just a few. When asked what their favorite part of the boat float was, one first grader perhaps summed it up best when she said: "I liked seeing everybody happy, and that we all got to see each others neat boats!"

Other happenings in the community include construction work on the East Sacramento Town Hall, also know as Compton's Market. Neighbors are noticing the "Open During Construction" sign, the dumpster, caution tape and work crews up on the roof. So what's it all about?

Well, most immediately, the construction at Compton's is about replacing the roof of the market. But, what's in store a few months down the road is the big deal. Although still in the preliminary stages, the plan is to blow out the side of the store facing Meister Way to make room for a full fledge deli, juice bar, and a more comprehensive outdoor patio and dining area. Sounds pretty cool! On the Curbs will be sure to keep you updated as details emerge.

## Sutter Middle School student starred in local production of Shrek, the Musical JR

By MONICA STARK  
editor@valcomnews.com

Donning a green hat with ogre ears and his sister's pillow stuffed inside his shirt Jason L. Bradley II, a 13-year-old at Sutter Middle School, starred in the recent Runaway Stage production of Shrek, the Musical JR. Jason's voice carried flawlessly throughout the 24th Street Theater at the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts and Community on Wednesday, Jan. 21 and Thursday, Jan. 22.

Speaking about his lead role, Jason said Shrek "is a suitable character for me because when I watched the movie I acted the part out. You have to audition. So I walked like him, talked like him ... I like that Shrek is independent and that I can be independent too."

Enrolled in acting and singing classes, Jason has aspirations to be an actor. "I like to sing all types of things. I would say Michael Jackson is my idol."

For just being 13 years old, Jason has quite the acting resume. For the following productions, he's worked with Runaway Stage: He has previously played Willy Wonka in Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, the Lion in the Wizard of Oz JR, a lollipop guild member in the Wizard of Oz, the Caterpillar in Alice in Wonderland. He's also played Rock Lobster in the Young Actors Stage production of Alice in Wonderland. He is currently in a short film titled "Elijah's Silence." Produced by Jessica Kudlski, the film is about Elijah, an innocent young deaf slave who attempts to give his mother a present.

Speaking proudly of his son, Jason's father, also named Jason Bradley said, "(Theater) keeps him

busy, it keeps his mind busy. It builds confidence for him not only as he tries to be an aspiring actor, but also in school, giving presentations and stuff of that nature." Additionally, Jason has been seen at school singing the National Anthem in front of more than 1,200 students.

The local musical, which was held at the 24th Street Theatre at the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts and Community, featured a cast of about two dozen children many of whom played more than one role.

Patti Marcotte, mother of child actress Stella Marcotte who played the role of a Duloc performer and Dwarf, said she has enjoyed watching her daughter excel at acting with Runaway Stage Productions. "This is her third performance. She did Hairspray and Blue's Clues musicals. For her, this is her passion. She loves it. She's only 7 (years old) but she doesn't really dig sports. This is like the sport that she loves. It gives her great confidence. I don't have to ever have to ask her to practice. She just does it on her own. And I feel like she's made some great friends. I feel like the instructors are helpful and she's learned a lot."

After the opening night performance, actress Arianna Nevis spoke with this publication about her experience playing Pinocchio, a Duloc performer, and a knight. "It was really fun having the nose on the stage (for her part as Pinocchio). It was really sweaty having the nose, but I got used to it. I used a lot of hairspray in place so no one could see it. And I thank everyone for coming and it was really fun, getting in the quick changes. That was an experience I will never forget."



Photo by Stephen Crowley

Donning a green hat with ogre ears and his sister's pillow stuffed inside his shirt Jason L. Bradley II, a 13-year-old at Sutter Middle School, starred in the recent Runaway Stage production of Shrek, the Musical JR.

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## Janey Way Memories:

# Bobaloo



By MARTY RELLES  
marty@valcomnews.com

When I grew up on Janey Way in the 1950s and '60s, 40 children called it home. They came in all sizes: short, tall, big and small. One boy in particular stands out in my memory. His name was John.

John had a nearly 100 percent hearing loss, but he managed to forge a place for himself in our gang. He taught himself to read lips early on, so he could speak words that he couldn't even hear. But, the kids teased him a little though, because of the way he mispronounced some words.

He didn't let it get him down. Instead, he developed a sense of humor. Remember the old saying, "Make them laugh with you, not at you." John embraced that idea. He told jokes; he mimicked the other boys. And, sure enough, they began to laugh with him. They even gave him a nickname: Bobaloo. I don't know where that came from. I think Desi Arnaz used to sing a Cuban song of

that name. No matter, John became the Bobaloo of Janey Way.

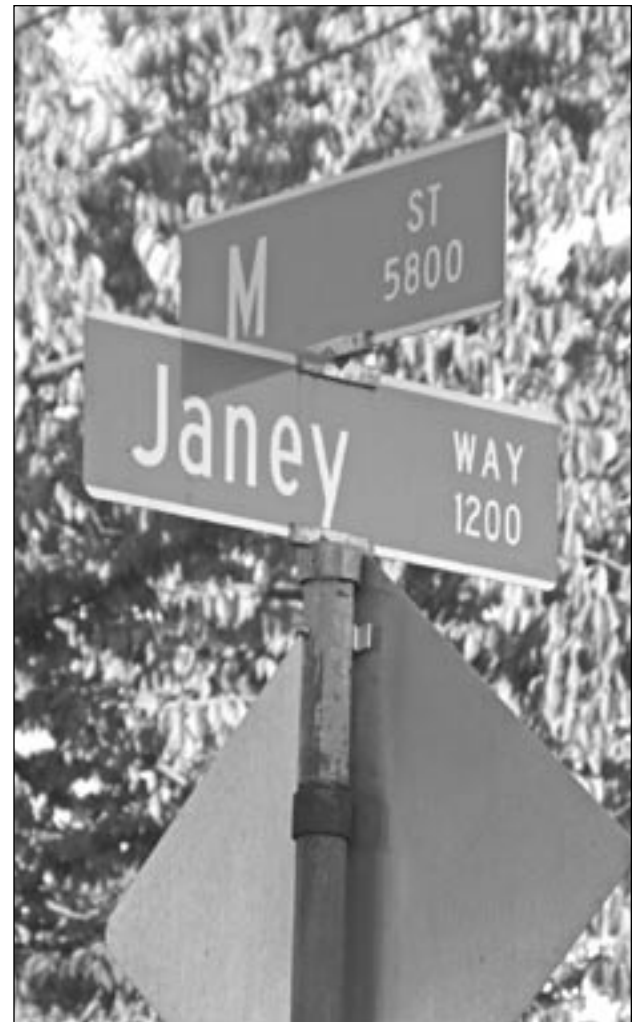
John did well in grammar school in the David Lubin special needs class. His speech improved, and he demonstrated a real talent for the arts. However, in junior high school and high school he floundered, but he graduated on time.

After high school, the kids of Janey Way went in all different directions; some joined the military, and others went to college or got jobs.

John tried several different occupations. He worked first for our neighbor Rick, in a liquor supply distribution warehouse. After that, he worked with his cousin Ron doing landscaping. Eventually, he took a job with Relles Florist, first delivering flowers, and then doing floral design. He taught himself to make arrangements, funeral sprays and even wedding flowers. He had found his niche.

John has worked at Relles Florist for more than 30 years. He has become my designated floral designer. When I order flowers for my wife, I always ask that he to do the work. That way, the arrangement is sure to be beautiful.

I think you can tell that John is more than just my friend. In fact, he is my younger brother. These days, John lives in our family home on Janey Way. He takes good care of our family home, and I help take care of him. They don't call John bobaloo anymore, he is just Johnny. Now, bobaloo is just another inspirational Janey Way memory.



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# Sutter Memorial Hospital to close in May

By LANCE ARMSTRONG  
Lance@valcomnews.com

*Editor's Note: This is the first article in a series pertaining to East Sacramento's Sutter Memorial Hospital, which is scheduled to close this spring.*

A chapter in local history will come to a close this spring when East Sacramento's 77-year-old Sutter Memorial Hospital ceases operation.

But as is generally the case, as one door closes, another will open.

And that is certainly true in this instance, since the services of Sutter Memorial Hospital at 5151 F St. are set to be transferred to the new Anderson Lucchetti Women's and Children's Center at 2825 Capitol Ave., next to earlier built Sutter facilities.

Because it has been known for many years which "door"

would open following the closure of Sutter Memorial, Sutter Health had plenty of time to place itself in a much better position for the future.

Its consolidation of its two campuses alone is a major improvement for Sutter Health, as the use of only a single location will increase its efficiency and production.

According to a Sutter Health document, the new, 10-story, 242-bed women's and children's center, which had its groundbreaking on Oct. 13, 2008, is an acute-care hospital that will feature "the highest level of neonatal and pediatric intensive care services, pediatric cardiac care, pediatric neurosurgery services, pediatric cancer services, and high-risk and conventional maternity services."

In an interview with this publication last week, Gary Zavoral, public relations specialist for Sutter Health Sacramento Sierra Region, spoke about the upcoming relocation of Sutter Memorial.

"Right now they're talking about the first part of May," Zavoral said. "It will be all patients (moved in a single day).



East Sacramento's Sutter Memorial Hospital will soon no longer be used as a hospital.

Photo by Lance Armstrong

"(At that time), we will be able to move from Sutter Memorial to the new campus in midtown, and all pieces will be moved in one day, basically. And at that point, Sutter Memorial will start being, for lack of a better word, decommissioned."

Zavoral added that in working toward that "decommissioning," some changes

will be made in advance at Sutter Memorial.

"As things get closer, we'll try to give fewer and fewer elective surgeries - elective C-sections and things like that," Zavoral said. "Of course, all the emergency type procedures will need to be done. Remember all the cardiac service line is over there at Sutter Memorial. They'll still be doing all the surgeries at that time for heart emergency situations and elective type things."

"So, we'll have fewer patients and start (caring for) them over at the new campus. And we will be able to have most of the equipment over at the extended campus at that time on that day, and then there will still be some

equipment that will need to be brought over."

Because of Sutter Memorial Hospital's reputation for providing a high level of service and care, it was important to Sutter Health to avoid certain unnecessary changes.

In explaining that point, Zavoral said, "A lot of what Sutter Memorial developed is about the wonderful services that the clinicians provide over there, and all that is being moved over there to the Anderson Lucchetti Women's and Children's Center, as well as into Sutter General Hospital, which is going to house our cardiac services. So, all the great care that people received will

See Memorial Hospital, page 7

## Memorial Hospital:

Continued from page 6

continue in the new campus. It's just it will be a newer hospital with the latest technologies, (and) mostly private rooms, the whole nine yards.

"It's basically moving all the care team over to the new facility, so it's not really adding employees. We've added a lot of employees, more for the construction phase and in planning and preparation of the move and things like that. But as far as everybody else, it's really not adding new employees to it. It's a hospital move."

A misconception about the new hospital is that it is larger than the present East Sacramento hospital.

But there is actually more square footage at Sutter Memorial than there is at the new facility.

However, the new structure was built more efficiently, as it makes better use of space.

Still the closure of Sutter Memorial will mean a loss of its attractive real estate with trees, grass and flowers.

In discussing that topic, Zavoral said, "The one thing we'll miss is all the lawn that's over there at Sutter Memorial. It's a lot of lawn. (But after moving into the new building), we could go over to (the lawns at) Sutter's Fort. We (would) have to go across the street for it."

Because there is much nostalgia associated with Sutter Memorial Hospital, Sutter Health will be inviting people to

share their memories and photographs through the website, [www.facebook.com, Zavoral](http://www.facebook.com/Zavoral) explained.

"What we're planning on doing is trying to get the community involved, those who have been born or given birth over there at Sutter Memorial," Zavoral said. "We're planning on having a Facebook program. It's basically to just have people post their baby photos of themselves or their children, that sort of thing."

"You've got to remember (certain) people just gave birth and the ones who are on Facebook are lots of the same people. A lot of the young mothers and stuff like that are on Facebook and, of course, that generation, they were born at Sutter Memorial and now they're children are born at Sutter Memorial. So, it's a great time to move, but it's also going to be a little sad to move from a place that's in the hearts and homes of so many Sacramentans."

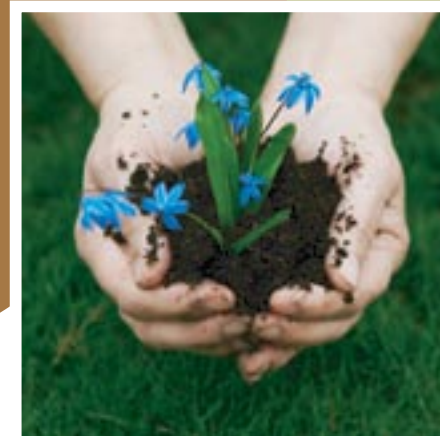
"It's been (Sacramento's 'baby hospital') since 1937. Almost 350,000 people have been born there, so there are a lot of people who have fond memories of Sutter Memorial."

"It's where the first open heart surgery happened, the first heart transplant, all these great firsts. And the heart service line also."

"Of course, there's going to be some sadness there when we move out. But we're moving to a facility that is for the 21st century, built for the 21st century. It's built to last for the whole, entire 21st century. So, we're pretty excited about that."

## Do you have a story? Tell it to us.

E-mail [Monica Stark](mailto:Monica.Stark@valcomnews.com) at, [editor@valcomnews.com](mailto:editor@valcomnews.com)



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Know your neighbor:

# River Park resident discusses his storied life as a former Israeli soldier and growing up in small town Ukiah

By MONICA STARK  
editor@valcomnews.com

When a youthful and handsome 24-year-old River Park resident John-Michael Kibrick enters the room, a feeling of familiarity and comfort fills the air as he smiles widely and introduces himself. On the surface, it's as if nothing terrible could have ever been experienced by such a gentle soul.

The short story is that John-Michael was born in Jerusalem, grew up in Ukiah (Mendocino County), moved back to Jerusalem fought for the Israeli military and just last October ended up living with his sister in River Park. He also recently took a position as a copyeditor at the Citrus Heights Messenger and North County Messenger, and an intern job at Fox40.

Prior to John-Michael's birth, parents Sondra and John fell in love with Jerusalem. While they met in a Mendocino County church on the coast, John (a Los Angeles native) took Sondra (a Humboldt County native)

to Israel several times and during one of their longer trips, John-Michael entered the world on April 11, 1990. A year later, they decided to return to California, settling on beautiful Ukiah, a town that sits in a deep valley surrounded by redwoods and that is full of vineyards and pear orchards and that includes a lively population of creative, community-oriented old time hippies.

However, that picturesque image cannot illustrate what it was like growing up in a small town as well as John-Michael can describe: "I think there's a lot of good people in Ukiah, but particularly among the youth, growing up in such a small place, the young people there don't set their sights really high. I think that's a shame. And most of my life was around the young people. I think I had a poor outlook on my future and America, in general, really. And, that was based on really small town living."

So setting his sights high, he did what many ambitious youths do when

they want to get out of town – he graduated early in 2008. That's not to say he didn't take advantage of what Ukiah High School had to offer him. He joined the student newspaper, the Ukihilite and became its editor his senior year under the advice of UHS' beloved journalism teacher, Tonya Sparkes (Dec. 8, 1963-Nov. 11, 2011).

"Journalism was big for me. Tonya Sparkes helped shaped (my passion). She was really encouraging and really helpful. She taught me a lot. She was one of the few teachers I had that was your friend even more than your educator. I think that earns your respect rather than demands it. I really appreciated it. I learned from her in a friendly way. She was very approachable." John-Michael recalls one project that took a "good month" to complete. Beating out the local daily newspaper, the Ukiah Daily Journal, the young reporter wrote about all the financial details regard-



John-Michael Kibrick.

Photo courtesy

See John-Michael, page 9

## John-Michael:

Continued from page 8

ing the construction occurring at the high school. He also takes pride in a story he wrote about a local man who served in Iraq. "It won a third place prize in all of California high schools for best news/feature story," he said in a recent interview with this publication.

In the summer of 2007-2008 before he even graduated from high school, John-Michael was the assistant sports editor at the Ukiah Daily Journal, covering local games as well as general community features like the Mendocino County Fair. "Back then I don't think I appreciated it as I should have. I don't know if it's your age, but at that period of time, I wanted to do national news. But even in the smallest little communities, there are great people to know. You can learn from any experience great or small. I have enjoyed getting to write."

Despite his academic success, during sophomore year, he thought a lot about college, but came to the realization he didn't have money to go to school, and secondly he didn't know what he wanted to go to school for. He didn't want to throw away money and follow the path that everyone else around him was taking. "I wanted to experience more than that small town mentality in Ukiah that I had a diversion to. And I didn't want to be stuck in Ukiah. I know a lot of people who get stuck like that."

But the cliché, life happens, happened for him in a short period of time. Where John-Michael's life began is where his mother's ended – in Israel. "She told us in the summer of 2007, (she had cancer). She waited quite some time to get proper medical attention. (Diagnosed) in about 2005, she was in pain for awhile. My family was breaking up at that point. It got rough at the end with my mother being ill."

Having graduated from high school and ready for a change, John-Michael went with his mother and one of his sisters, Jessica Frykman, to Israel where they could afford healthcare.

Born Feb. 4, 1952, Sondra died in Israel on Aug. 21 2009, despite having excellent doctors. "Medical in Israel is pretty good. They have the best doctors in the world. The bureaucratic side of it is a little problematic. I had the best healthcare in the country and I paid \$20 a month for it."

Living all over the Tel Aviv area and having moved 15 times over the course of seven years, John-Michael said he has no regrets over that period of his life. "I am not sorry I did it. I would do it again if I was in the same situation. When we went, we had basically nothing. My mother had a little bit of cash, but not too much."

So, to make ends meet, John-Michael took a variety of odd jobs, including bartending without tips at an event hall, to delivering telephone books for five months before joining the army for two and a half years. Joining the military is mandatory in Israel, but John-Michael actually signed up before they called him, and three months into his service, his mother passed away; so one of his initial reasons for coming to Israel – healthcare for his mom – was no longer needed, and yet despite a complete lack of pay, he still wanted to remain in Israel and finish his term.

"I think being in the army is what made me Israeli. It integrated me into the culture, as well as helping my mother. My goal was to become Israeli. They don't pay you to join the army, but I wanted to stay. I was disillusioned when I left America. In a lot of ways I did find what I was looking for. Something was in me and it wasn't something necessarily outside of myself. I found social acceptance there I never experienced in high school. The (Israeli) culture is very warm in that way. I had a hard time connecting with most kids I went to school with. In Israel, a complete stranger would act like your best friend in the whole world. There is a sense of community there that is lacking in a lot of ways in America and I think that disillusionment is based in reality. That was a

very real emotion, but it was wrongly based on my experience in Ukiah."

After the army, John-Michael was trying to think about what he wanted to do career-wise and he knew writing had to be part of the job description. So, after searching online, he found a demand for English writers. "I found a job pretty much right away at a high-tech place writing. They sold diamonds, jewelry and Jewish products. I stayed in that job for six months." During that time, he moved into a managerial role, but he found with the added responsibilities, the position lacked a better title and pay raise. So on the hunt again, he took another job, a quality insurance position, until he landed a job at YNETNews, the English-language edition of Ynet, Israel's largest news source.

Speaking about how he covered news for YNETNews, John-Michael said: "On one hand, the news site wanted to provide news objectively to foreigners. On the other hand, they are providing Jewish news to the Jewish community abroad, so everything had to do with Jewish news or something happening in Israel. But I strove for objectivity. It was really challenging and therefore it was one of the most important things for me – to be as objective as possible."

"Automatically you have a conflict of interest. I worked there during the last war in Gaza. You have friends in the army in the Gaza Strip. You are very much involved in the middle of this war zone. No matter what you do, the readership is part of the Jewish community. (We would get) push-back from readers to write more pro-Israel pieces. When we put stories in about Gaza, it was naturally difficult. Just because where we were located, we didn't have personal access to what was happening in Gaza. We were able to write every biography (of each dead Israeli soldier), but about 2,000 Palestinians died and we didn't know any of their names. On one hand, it's too bad that was the situation. I wish I could have published all the names of the Pales-

tinians, but when you cover news from one location, you could only cover news from that side."

"We didn't have reporters ourselves. If we had any information, it was from Hebrew reporters. We would take pieces of what they wrote, took parts from AP (the Associated Press). Sometimes we would call people (to localize the stories) and put our names on it. Sometimes we did opinion pieces. There was a lot of translation, but mostly it was a compilation from a lot of sources. Usually we'd come in, check the wires (AP and Reuters) and get a general update of what is going on."

An international news desk, John-Michael said YNETNews included one Israeli, one person from England, and people from other countries. "But you had to know fluent Hebrew. The army made me very fluent in speaking, but I still struggled with reading and writing. I communicate in text, but YNET improved my writing. I used a lot of 'Google Translator' but there were things I couldn't

figure out, but I got by. The pay was enough to get by on and it wasn't about the money. I got up and didn't feel like I was getting up and going to work. It was something that was stimulating. It challenged me. Everyday I would come into work and there was something that challenged me emotionally. A single article could make you question everything you believe in, including things you could take for granted."

After six months working for YNETNews, John-Michael moved back to the United States, landing in Sacramento, specifically in River Park with his sister Erika Frykman. Writing again for community news, John-Michael is excited to have accepted a copyeditor and writing position for the Citrus Heights Messenger and the North County Messenger.

Additionally, he has enjoyed running local events like the Sacramento Food Bank's Run to Feed the Hungry and blogging about local politics on the Wordpress site, "Politics from the Sac."

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 Verdi, *Tutto è dovuto / Il balio del suo vassallo (Il trovatore)*  
 Mozart, *Der Fingerringe ich ich ja (Die Zauberflöte)*  
 Mozart, *Finch'han dal vino (Don Giovanni)*  
 Schumann, *Symphony No. 1 in B-flat Major, Op. 38 (Spring)*

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# Arts & Activities

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## Website helps residents keep tax refunds: Partnership spearheaded locally by United Way aims to keep dollars in region

MyFreeTaxes.com is helping Sacramento-area residents save money this tax season, thanks to a national partnership between United Way, Goodwill Industries and National Disability Institute. The program is being spearheaded locally by United Way California Capital Region and aims to provide qualified residents with free, easy tax help they can trust so they can maximize their refund and receive credits like the Earned Income Tax Credit.

MyFreeTaxes.com helps people save an average of \$200 in tax preparer fees by filing for free. The website guides users through federal and state filing using software powered by H&R Block. Users qualify if their household income was \$60,000 or less in 2014, and will need a valid email address and income forms.

"We want our neighbors to keep more money in their pockets and make our community stronger by taking advantage of tax credits," said Stephanie McLemore Bray, United Way California Capital Region president and CEO. "This website is an easy and effective way to file your taxes and save your money for what matters most to you."

MyFreeTaxes.com was founded seven years ago and is now available in all 50 states. The website is sponsored by Walmart.

United Way California Capital Region is promoting the program locally as part of its financial stability initiative that is working to

ensure more households in our region are financially stable and self-sufficient – including foster youth. United Way's \$en\$e-Ability project is helping low-moderate income households and foster youth improve financial literacy, manage finances and increase savings. Eighty-eight percent of adults in the project are demonstrating better financial skills and have savings accounts, and 90 percent of foster youth are earning credits toward matched savings accounts. United Way also is leading the local Assets & Opportunity Network as part of the financial stability initiative, mobilizing a group of nonprofits, companies and volunteers to look at financial stability data in our community and increase the number of people thriving.

For more than 90 years, United Way California Capital Region has brought together nonprofits, businesses, donors, volunteers, community leaders and more to meet the community's greatest needs, give immediate aid and find lasting solutions for future generations. United Way mobilizes members of the community to be first responders in repairing the education level, financial stability and health of everyone in Amador, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties through donation and volunteer opportunities. To donate or volunteer, visit [www.yourlocalunitedway.org](http://www.yourlocalunitedway.org).

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## Unique Valentine's gift: Singing Valentines

By MONICA STARK  
editor@valcomnews.com

When love is in the air, a beautiful serenade from a Capitolaire Barbershop Chorus quartet might be the perfect surprise for your sweetie. Along with a performance of love songs between "Let Me Call You, Sweetheart" and "Story of the Rose: Heart of my Heart", members will present the lucky one with a silk rose, box of chocolates and a personalized greeting card from the sender. In the past, such gifts have come with marriage proposals, with future groups on bended knee.

Besides singing to the romantics, the Capitolaire have received requests to perform their Singing Valentines in schools, usually by the request of a teacher for her class and also in businesses where coworkers have gotten to enjoy the harmonizing of a tenor, baritone, bass and lead. Simply put, singer Joe Samora told Valley Community Newspapers: "We do songs for men and women."

Last year, the Capitolaire sold 47 valentines. One quartet had 16 valentines to sing in one day, with 12 being the typical amount. While they generally stick to the greater Sacramento area, Samora said last year they accepted a request from a military officer serving in Afghanistan for a Singing Valentine for his sweetheart who was living in Yuba City. Also in the past, the Mayor's office has asked the Capitolaire

to come to the Blood Bank and sing.

This year, the organization is hoping to sell 60 valentines and performed amongst the five quartets.

With more than 30 members of local singing phenomenon, the Capitolaire turns 70 years old in 2016. Formed in 1946, it is the second oldest barbershop harmony chorus along the Northwest coast with Reno being the first. Besides the annual Singing Valentines fundraising event, the group performs for children and their families each December at the Polar Express event where Santa and trains mixed with Christmas music gets visitors in the holiday spirit.

The Capitolaire is a nonprofit, sponsored by

the Metro Arts Commission and the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce. From events like the Singing Valentines and the Polar Express, they raise funds to help pay for teaching four-part harmony to high school boys at a camp in Pollock Pines each September. The boys memorize the words and the noets.

The quartets will deliver the Singing Valentines on Friday Feb. 14 and on Saturday, Feb. 15 between the hours of 8 a.m. and 10 p.m. with a four hour delivery window for \$50. If you're interested in giving the gift of song, all you have to do is call (888) 877-9806 or order at [www.capitolaire.org](http://www.capitolaire.org) and express where you want the quartet to show up.



## Places, not faces

Photos by GREG BROWN

Going block by block, writer and photographer Greg Brown documented many of the discarded Christmas trees in the East Sacramento. Many here are from the Fabulous 40s.



## Arts & Activities

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# Matias Bombal's Hollywood

## Inherent Vice

The MPAA has rated this R

Warner Bros. brings us director Paul Thomas Anderson's movie version of Thomas Pynchon's novel "Inherent Vice" and in doing so, brings back the world of film noir in rich color advancing the world of private detective tales for the screen from the 1940s to 1970.

Joaquin Phoenix is Larry "Doc" Sportello, private eye. Like many noir movies, the story starts with a woman from the detective's past who shows up unexpectedly and shares her plot involving her current billionaire boyfriend, his wife and her lover. Moments later she disappears and the search for her is on, leading us through many convoluted rabbit holes in a visually stylish way that will keep your eyes on the screen.

The cast includes: Benicio Del Toro, Reese Witherspoon, Eric Roberts, Josh Brolin, Owen Wilson, Martin Short, and Joanna Newsom.

This movie's writing and visual style had me completely engaged from the first frame to the last, remarkable, since I actually detest the 1970s having grown up in that era, and care little for the seamy side of police and detective work. Replacing the classic '40s noir detective gumshoe's vice of alcohol is marijuana, a subject I do not enjoy in the movies.

Yet, so engaging and detail rich is every frame you can't look away. The film's music is fantastic on two levels- the choice of popular tunes in the background, evocative of the period and the truly classic film score which tips a noir fedora to

film composers like Franz Waxman with his beautiful violin passages. Don't miss it!

## Big Eyes

The MPAA has rated this PG 13

The Weinstein Company brings us "Big Eyes" a labor of love from Tim Burton in which he honors one of his favorite living artists, Margaret Keane, who with her husband created and marketed an entire art movement centered around the paintings of small waifs with big eyes. Margret Keane was a single mother after leaving her husband and headed west to San Francisco in the late 1950s with her daughter, hoping to make it as a painter.

She meets Walter Keane who's selling paintings in a San Francisco park. He sees her talent and his smarmy charm seduces her first by flattery, but it becomes clear that it

is really her artistry he's after. They are married, and it is her paintings that begin to capture the attention of the public, not his.

It is here that Mr. Keane, played in this movie by Christof Waltz, begins to become unhinged. He takes credit for his wife's work and keeps her a prisoner in her own home, cranking out one painting after another while he uses his skills of self promotion to make money and promote a popular movement with her unusual paintings for which he takes credit.

Bruno Delbonnel's photography was very good. Other actors to enjoy in the picture include Danny Huston, who plays a San Francisco newspaper man. You'll also see a brief but enjoyable performance from the great Terrance Stamp as John Canaday of the New York Times. This is time well spent and Ms. Amy Adams is really good in the picture.

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

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## – EVENT LISTING SECTION –

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**Elks Lodge No. 6**  
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# CALENDAR

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

## FEBRUARY

**DIY Valentine's Floral Bouquet Class**  
Feb. 7: From 10 to 11:30 a.m., make your own Valentine's flora bouquet. Includes variety of Valentine's flowers, container and greens. Learn about floral design and flower care. Relles will provide the tools, but bring your own apron. It's a limited class size, so register in advance. The cost for the workshop is \$35. Relles Florist is located at 2400 J St. For more information, call 441-1478 or visit www.rellesflorist.com

**One-on-One Technology Help McKinley Library**  
Feb. 7: Are you curious about ebooks but not sure how to get started? Is your tablet or ereader a mystery? Do you need basic computer help such as creating e-mail accounts and using the internet? Come by the McKinley Library and meet with a Technology Assistant! Sessions are first come, first served and last 30 minutes. Tech help starts at 10 a.m. 601 Alhambra Blvd.

**Sabrina's Craft Corner at McKinley Library**  
Feb. 7: Learn a new craft technique every month, using simple household items and affordable materials. Craft of the day: Valentines on a stick. Crafts start at 12:30 p.m. 601 Alhambra Blvd.

**Friends of Sacramento Public Library Warehouse Sale**  
Feb. 7: Sheet music will be added to the more than 100,000 "gently used" books, videos, and audio books offered for prices from 50 cents to \$2 at the Friends of the Sacramento Public Library sale. The warehouse is at the rear of the Friends' Book Den at Suite E, 8250 Belvedere Ave., just south of 14th Avenue between Power Inn Road and Florin-Perkins Road. Plenty of parking is available, but be careful not to park between the "No Parking" signs on the south side of Belvedere. Sale hours will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will also be a preview for Friends members only on Friday, Feb. 6 from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. (You can join at the door for \$15). Income from the sale helps pay for programs, equipment, and materials local libraries need but can't afford. With most items priced individually from \$3 up, the Book Den will be open throughout the sale as well as weekly on Thursdays from

9 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Fridays and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call 731-8493 or go to bookden@saclibfriends.org

**SF Squared Book Club at McKinley Library**  
Feb. 7: Join the library for a discussion of this month's science fiction novel, starting at 1 p.m. 601 Alhambra Blvd.

**Free museum day**  
Feb. 7: To the delight of the greater Sacramento area community, nearly twenty-five local museums will offer free or half-priced admission from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. during the 17th Annual Sacramento Museum Day! During the highly anticipated event, most of the nearly 25 museums will offer free admission whereas two destinations located in residential areas — the Sacramento Zoo and Fairytale Town — will offer half-priced admission to offset traffic control and security costs. In addition to offering free or reduced cost admission, many of the destinations are offering special activities during Sacramento Museum Day. A sampling of the special activities include the following:

- The Aerospace Museum of California will offer an "open cockpit" day where most aircraft will be open for viewing (weather permitting), a children's art contest and on-site exhibitors such as the Tuskegee Airman;
- The Masonic Service Bureau will be on-site at the Discovery Museum Science & Space Center providing free electronic fingerprints of children for their parents;
- The Sacramento History Museum will offer hands-on gold panning activities for kids;
- The crowd-favorite Sacramento Children's Museum mascot "Leo" will make special appearances throughout the day;
- And, the Old Sacramento Schoolhouse Museum will serve cake to celebrate the birthday of Laura Ingalls Wilder and mark the anniversary of Sacramento's first public school in February 1854.

**WATERLEAF**  
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Lynda Shively is celebrating her first year at The Waterleaf as Community Outreach Director. You may call or email her for information & tours

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lyndashively@comcast.net  
www.TheWaterleaf.com

While admission is free at most of the participating museums during Sacramento Museum Day, admission to two destinations located in residential areas are half-priced as follows: Sacramento Zoo is \$6 for adults, \$4 for children ages 2-11 and free for children under two; Fairytale Town is \$2.75 per person and free for children ages one and under. The event is scheduled from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. but note the last guests will be admitted at 4 p.m. More detailed information about participating museums, addresses, limitations, suggested parking and public transit options is available at www.sacmuseums.org (click on "Events"), or by calling the Sacramento Convention & Visitors Bureau at 808-7777.

**Chinese New Year Celebration**  
Feb. 7: The Chinese New Year Celebration Association presents its annual event of dragon dancing, martial arts, cultural entertainment, community exhibits, arts and crafts, food vendors, children's games. The event will be held from noon to 5 p.m. at Hiram Johnson High School Auditorium, 6819 14th Ave. Tickets are available at the door: \$6 for adults, \$1 for children 11 years old and younger. For more information, contact Vicki Beaton 601-7511 or visit www.cnycanet.net.

**Steps to College fair**  
Feb. 7: Steps to College 2015 (Pasos a La Universidad 2015) is a university fair created to provide a one-stop educational event for students interested to pursue career training beyond high school. The fair features more than 40 colleges and universities, one-on-one assistance in applying for financial aid, college and immigration advising, all in a bilingual setting for members of the whole family. This will be held at the Consulate General of Mexico, 2093 Arena Blvd. To register, visit: http://stepstocollege2015.org/

**Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness presentation**  
Feb. 8: Neighborhood Emergency Preparedness for Nextdoor Groups with presentation given by Barbara Falcon and Jena Swafford from SacPD from 2 to 4 p.m., 6490 Harmon Dr. The first 50 RSVPs will receive a special emergency preparedness gift. Everyone is welcome to the NET

training. (You don't need to be a member of Nextdoor.) RSVP to Kathi Windheim at 392-0101 or online if already on Nextdoor.

**Baby Storytime at McKinley Library**  
Feb. 11: Babies from birth to 18 months old and their parents/caregivers can enjoy great books, lively songs, and rhymes, and meet other babies in the neighborhood. Fun starts at 10:30 a.m. Suitable for ages 0-5; 601 Alhambra Blvd.

**Start Smart Teen driver class**  
Feb. 11: From 6 to 8:30 p.m. in the Hall of Honor at the Sacramento Police Department Headquarters on Freepoint Boulevard, there will be a start smart teen driver class. To sign up, go to the department web page and open the community events link. There you will see a link to the Feb. 11 Start Smart class. Open it up and fill in the required boxes. Please only sign up one person (use your teen drivers name as we use this roster to create the certificates which will be emailed back to you). There will be a student and a parent. If you have more than one child, he or she will be added that night.

**Disney On Ice presents "Let's Celebrate" at Sleep Train Arena**  
Feb. 11-14: Feld Entertainment invites families to turn an ordinary day into an extraor-

dinary one at its new ice extravaganza, Disney On Ice presents Let's Celebrate! - Presented by Stonyfield YoKids Organic Yogurt, featuring more than 50 classic and contemporary Disney characters in a captivating compilation of favorite holidays and celebrations from around the world. Audiences will experience the ultimate celebration of celebrations as they join Mickey Mouse and friends on a delightful tour of festivities jam-packed with fun surprises, spectacular skating and vibrant costumes. The production's original storyline transports audiences to exciting events with their favorite Disney characters, including a Valentine's Day Royal Ball with Princess Tiana; a Very Merry Un-Birthday Party with Alice and the Mad Hatter; Jack Skellington's frightfully festive Halloween party with the Disney Villains; and a Hawaiian luau with Lilo and Stitch. "Let's Celebrate!" is all about experiencing the holidays through the eyes of the Disney characters. There are variety of celebrations from all over the world. With Mickey's Digital Global Destinator, you will travel to far-off places like China for the Chinese New Year and to Brazil for Carnival. One Sports Parkway. Dates and times are as follows: Wednesday, Feb. 11-Friday, Feb. 13 at 7 p.m.; Saturday, Feb. 14 and Sunday, Feb. 15 at 11 a.m., 3 p.m., and 7 p.m.; Monday, Feb. 16 at noon and 4 p.m. Price-

Calendar continued, page 18

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# CALENDAR

Continued from page 17

es range from \$17, \$23, \$42 (VIP), \$70 front row; kids tickets available for only \$10 on weekday shows. Opening night discount tickets are available for \$12. For more information, visit [www.disneyonice.com](http://www.disneyonice.com), [ticketmaster.com](http://ticketmaster.com), by phone at 800-745-3000 or in-person at Ticketmaster retail outlets or the box office.

## Writing with the Great 19th Century American Poets (featuring The Fireside Poets: Longfellow, Whittier & Holmes)

Feb. 11: In this module-based class, participants will hear a brief lecture about The Fireside Poets: Longfellow, Whittier & Holmes. They will read works by these poets together in class and write their own poems. Critiques are offered by the instructor and fellow classmates in a friendly and supportive workshop style environment. This is the third of six sessions. Each session is its own entity, so that a participant may choose to attend one class or all six (or any number in between) and never feel lost. Writers at any level are welcome. The classes are free and held in the lovely Reagan room of the Clinie Community Center at 601 Alhambra Blvd. All sessions are taught by editor and published poet Frank Dixon Graham and sponsored by the McKinley Library. Class will be held from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Contact Frank at [Frank.Graham@Goddard.edu](mailto:Frank.Graham@Goddard.edu) for more information.

## Toddler/ Pre-School Storytime at McKinley Library

Feb. 12: Songs, fingerplays and stories especially for ages 18 months to 5 years followed by playtime! Make new friends and play with toys. Storytime starts at 10:30 a.m. 601 Alhambra Blvd.

## Explore & More! at Colonial Heights Library (School Age (6-12))

Feb. 12: Looking for something fun to do after school? Join us for some homework help and fun with the Explore & More program, presented by the Colonial Heights Neighborhood Association! Each Thursday afternoon we'll have an hour of homework help, as well as an hour of arts, crafts, board games, Lego building, science experiments, and more! The program starts at 3:30 p.m. at Colonial Heights Library 4799 Stockton Blvd.

## Valentine's Craft for Kids at McKinley Library

Feb. 13: Come celebrate Valentine's Day by making your own play dough hearts! We will roll out large blocks of play dough in Valentines colors, then use cookie cutters to make Valentine hearts. We will then decorate our creations with sequins, glitter, and other art supplies. Come make your own Valentine masterpiece or other artistic play dough creation to give to your special Valentine. Crafts start at 3:30 p.m. at McKinley Library 601 Alhambra Blvd.

## Community PTSD awareness event

Feb. 13: The invisible wounds of trauma survivors affect not only the individual but their families and their communities. Whereas Sacramento County is home to more than 90,000 veterans, approximately 30 percent of women experience domestic violence, 1-in-3 women and 1-in-5 men have been sexually abused prior to age 18, and whereas heart attack and cancer survivors are at an increased risk for PTSD. Hear from guest speakers, Ben Palciouss a U.S. Marine Corps Viet Nam veteran and Bill Hart a community chaplain for the U.S. Army. The event takes place inside the large

fellowship hall at First Baptist Church Fair Oaks, 4401 San Juan Ave., Fair Oaks. Everyone is welcome to gather information and resources at this free-admission event. For more information email John Holmes, LMFT and Jan Sharp, LMFT at [2counselors@att.net](mailto:2counselors@att.net).

## Sacramento Guitar Society prespents Michael Chapdelaine and Motoshi Kosako

Feb. 14 - Sacramento Guitar Society prespents Michael Chapdelaine and Motoshi Kosako at the Harris Center, Folsom at Folsom Lake College 8 p.m. Chapdelaine is a National Fingerpicking Champion guitarist and Kosako is a Jazz harpist. For more information, visit [www.SacramentoGuitarSociety.org](http://www.SacramentoGuitarSociety.org), [www.HarrisCenter.net](http://www.HarrisCenter.net) or call 608-6888.

## One-on-One Technology Help McKinley Library

Feb. 14: Are you curious about ebooks but not sure how to get started? Is your tablet or e-reader a mystery? Do you need basic computer help such as creating e-mail accounts and using the internet? Come by the McKinley Library and meet with a Technology Assistant! Sessions are first come, first served and last 30 minutes. Tech help starts at 10 a.m. 601 Alhambra Blvd.

## Celebrate Chinese New Year with the River City Chinese Music Ensemble

Feb. 15: Starting at 2 p.m., join the Sacramento Public Library, central branch, located at 828 I St., for a musical performance by the River City Chinese Music Ensemble, a local group that specializes in traditional Chinese musical instruments. The River City Chinese Music Ensemble was established by a combination of local residents and overseas Chinese artists in 2009. The musical group is considered one of the premiere Chinese music groups in the region. Making up the group are Chinese musicians specializing in flute, erhu, pipa, guzheng, ruan, yangqin. The group has played at several events and locations spanning the Sacramento area to the Bay Area. This musical performance is the first of a four part series emphasizing the cultural contributions of Chinese and Chinese Americans in the Sacramento region.

## 13th annual American Heritage Day

Feb. 16: Come and see history come alive at Mount Vernon Memorial Park, FD 1154, 8201 Greenback Lane, Fair Oaks. Some event highlights include: Classic cars on display, Wells Fargo Stage Coach on display; the Delaware Regiment will set up camp, display and fire muskets; there will be the Red Circle Organization, featuring Percy Edwards; Old Time High Wheel Bicycle, Gold Rush Peppert Show, Consolidated Drum Band will march and play patriotic songs, there will be a walk through a "Gold Rush City" Red Barons R.C. Model Airplane Club will display and fly war planes; there will be a U.S. Army Huey Vietnam Helicopter on display; there will also be an opportunity to pan for gold at a price of \$3 to cover the cost of gold; visitors can meet with George and Martha Washington, Abe Lincoln, Amelia Earhart, Rosie the Riveter and others. It's a free public event.

## Camellia Embroiderers' Guild meeting

Feb. 17: The Camellia Chapter, Embroiderers' Guild of America will hold a meeting at 7 p.m. at the Arcade Library, 2443 Marconi Ave. Guests welcome. Free. For more information, call 223-2751.

# SCHOOL NEWS

## Open enrollment now available online for SCUSD schools

From innovative specialty programs to pioneering career-themed high schools, Sacramento City Unified School District offers a menu of educational options for families. "Our goal is to provide every student with a high-quality educational program that prepares him or her for college and the workplace," said Superintendent José L. Banda. "One of the ways we can do that is by offering parents options so they can select the program or school that best fits their child's needs."

Students who dream of a career as a nurse or doctor, for example, can learn about the medical field through classes, internships and mentorships offered at Health Professions High School in Upper Land Park. Students up for the challenge of project-based learning can enroll in SCUSD's East Sac International Baccalaureate Track programs at Caleb Greenwood and Kit Carson schools.

"This is an exciting time for Kit Carson," said Principal Charlie Watters. "With the addition of the International Baccalaureate program and the expansion to high school, Kit Carson now offers a rigorous, college bound pathway to college in East Sacramento."

Through IB, Kit Carson students are becoming active participants in their own learning because they are developing skills that will help them become strong communicators, reflective thinkers and engaged citizens. Watters added. Kit Carson offers tours for prospective students and their families every Wednesday at 9 a.m.

In the Pocket, the School of Engineering and Sciences offers two levels of

FIRST (for Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) robotics programs and ACE (Architecture, Construction and Engineering) and engineering classes during the regular school day.

SCUSD also offers dual-language immersion programs in Spanish, Hmong, Cantonese and Mandarin. These programs are aimed at creating global ambassadors with instruction in two languages and lessons that promote cultural literacy.

"Our students will move on from college to work in a global economy," Superintendent Banda said. "Preparing them with language and cultural skills will help them achieve their goals."

For convenience, SCUSD is offering two online Open Enrollment periods for the 2015-16 school year.

Open Enrollment allows families that live within SCUSD's boundaries to apply for available seats in schools beyond their neighborhood school or to apply for enrollment in specialty programs and schools.

Families of students who will be in middle or high school next year can now apply online. Online open enrollment for middle and high school ends at 5 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 3.

Families of students who will be in elementary school next year can apply online beginning at 8 a.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 17 and continuing through 5 p.m. on Tuesday, March 3.

Please visit [www.scusd.edu/open-enrollment](http://www.scusd.edu/open-enrollment) for walk-in dates and for more information.

## David Lubin Elementary School to host its 10th annual jog-a-thon

On Friday, March 20, David Lubin Elementary School in East Sacramento will host its tenth annual jog-a-thon.

The jog-a-thon is a school fundraiser that helps contribute to David Lubin's enrichment programs. Local businesses sponsor the event, and parents and friends pledge money for students to run laps while promoting a healthy lifestyle through exercise.

In past years, the jog-a-thon has raised over \$10,000 in pledges. These funds help support the school's art program with local artist Ms. Jane, the David Lubin After School Academy (DLASA), and the educational field trips offered to students each year.

The jog-a-thon has received support from these generous sponsors: Ginger Elizabeth Chocolates, La Trattoria Bohemia, Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, Cotton Shoppe, Brew Ferment Distill (BFD), Eyes on J, and Jennifer Hayes of Lyon Real Estate. Prizes have been donated by the Sacramento River Cats, Sacramento Republic Football Club, and Burr's. For their generosity, sponsor names and logos will be printed on T-shirts worn by the more than 600 students, staff and parents participating in the event.

The deadline for companies to include their logos on the T-shirt is Friday, Feb. 13. If local business owners wish to sponsor this year's jog-a-thon after that date, please contact Sarah Phillips. Company names can still be included in all electronic mailings and on the school's Facebook page.

For more information about the jog-a-thon, please contact Sarah Phillips at [sarahbeth-phillips@hotmail.com](mailto:sarahbeth-phillips@hotmail.com).

# Jessie Ryan: Born to be an activist

By KAREN DEVANEY

*Editor's Note: This is the first part in a two-part series about newly elected school board member, Jessie Ryan.*

There are people in the world born pre-ordained with destinies like Cesar Chavez, Margaret Sanger, and Harriet Tubman. They are people fated for a particular post in life achieving extraordinary feats out of ordinary or oppressive circumstances; those silent heroes that rise from the rubble of injustice daring to make a difference. In today's blizzard of I-ism, these types might seem fictional or non-existent in modern culture.

Thankfully, there are still people who are willing to tread the tenuous trails of democracy. Recently elected Sacramento City Unified School District board member, Jessie Ryan is one such champion rendered from an impoverished past that now fuels her fire to make a difference.

Being of Caucasian decent, Ryan's blue-eyes and blonde hair (all natural) masks her commonality with the marginalized communities of Sacramento. Raised by a single mother, Ryan and her step brother endured a hollowed out existence. The family clawed through the chaos of social services, living on food stamps and waiting in lines for government cheese. Ryan recalls the frequent moves, in order to keep a roof over our heads." Despite the nomadic existence, which honed an adept ability to read the climate of a community, Ryan's mother, the most definitive influence in her life, instilled a conviction that "your income level does not determine your destiny."

Armed with this shield of confidence, Ryan believed from a young girl, that she, like Scruffy the Tugboat, was meant for better things. Her mother reiterated time and time again, that Ryan would be the first in the family to graduate from college, pulverizing a vicious cycle of poverty. Frequent visits to the library fed Ryan's imagination. Being incurably curious, she read ferociously as literature served as a reprieve from a grim reality while glimpsing a plethora of possibility. Ryan recalls outings to the Capitol Building where her mother told her that she would not only graduate college but would be a force for equality; a mantra that Ryan tucked deep in her psychic.

Despite the poverty, Ryan grew rich in character, listening to traditional fairy tales that ended with a feminist twist. "My mother would say, and then Cinderella went to college and graduate school! I only learned the real story after I learned to read. The message was clear—I didn't need a man to validate me, I only needed an education."

Ryan recalls a remarkable event that she relishes to this day. Her moth-



Photos courtesy

er bundled the family up announcing with great enthusiasm that they were to go to listen to a woman who would change the face of history; Geraldine Ferraro, the first female candidate nominated for Vice President. "I was only 4 years old at the time. My mother said that if a woman could run for Vice President of the United States that I could do anything I wanted in the world."

The accomplishments, Ryan's mother spoke of, were prefaced with a purpose; to strike a dent in the inequities of society.

Ryan's deep alliance with communities living on the fringe, African Americans and Latino people, is a direct result of her experiences growing up. When her mother campaigned for Jesse Jackson, the family won a lottery (a marketing tool to raise money) and young Jessie was bestowed a puffy pink coat that she proudly wore for over a year.

While young women of the day donned their bedrooms with posters of rock stars, Ryan plastered her walls with images and quotes from Martin Luther King, and Cesar Chavez. She attributes her allegiance to change to her mother that insisted her family was made up of artists and free thinkers. But Ryan's proclivity to make audible the silenced voices of the under-represented came from her keen awareness and personal experience of the hardships low-income people suffer.



Shown left is Jessie Ryan being sworn into office standing with her two children.

When Ryan was about to enter high school her mother relocated yet again to a small space that allowed her daughter to go to El Camino, one of the better schools in Sacramento. After bouncing through eight different school districts, Ryan's mother was determined to have Jessie graduate prepared for college. But her freshman year proved to be an enormous hurdle. At that time, if you were a "free-lunch student" everyone knew it. There were no discretionary practices in place and amid the already awkwardness of teen years, being labeled a poor kid was devastating. Ryan coped by skipping lunch that entire year, often spending the hour curled up in a stall in order to avoid embarrassing questions.

Being savvy at assessing "the lay of the land" Ryan sought out a place to fit in and gravitated to the theater. It was El Camino's theater department that embedded a sense of belonging and like fertile ground, encouraged her to blossom. Growing up in financial dearth meant that outside activities were out of the question. But the theater arts program was free. Showing up early and leaving late to the theater became Ryan's trademark and a precursor to her staunch dedication to activist work. The encouraging words of her mother mantled with her own deep convictions, Ryan was ready to rise above the limitations of low income living and embark in a future where there would be no looking back.





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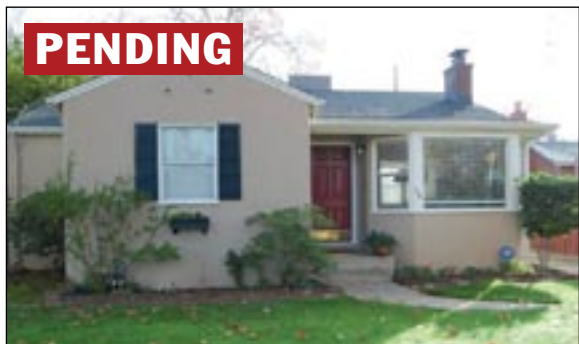
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