

Local family turns tragedy into opportunity for charity

Second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive Event is Dec. 13

See page 8

Holiday Greetings
Section inside

See insert

COMMUNITY CALENDAR, PAGES 24-25 • KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR, PAGE 6 • FACES AND PLACES, PAGE 26

Inside This Edition



Channel 10 station
celebrates 40 years

See page 6



Land Park resident shares
magic of 'The Nutcracker'

See page 26

At a crossroads

Special Commentary: What to do about the Sierra-Curtis railyards

See page 5



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Season's Greetings: See special holiday insert How the season changes Sacramento

By **RYAN ROSE**
Land Park News Editor
ryanrose@valcomnews.com

It's chilly out, and temperatures have reached record lows. At dusk, as the malls and shopping centers fill, the streets of Sacramento are bare and empty – residents scurry about to fireplaces, blankets and warmth. The sun, too, seems timid in the winter weather, dipping below the horizon earlier each day. Sometimes gray, often freezing, the region has undergone its winter transformation, slowly becoming a refrigerator that chills its warm-weather-loving denizens to the bone.

Yet, this season offers a space and time for connection and interaction; bundled-up for warmth and huddled together around heater vents, we are all more likely to stay inside than go out, spending more time socializing with friends and family members. As noted author (and one-time Sacramento news reporter) Mark Twain once said,

“The Xmas holidays have this high value: that they remind Forgetters of the Forgotten, & repair damaged relationships.”

Twain was as correct then as he is now: The holidays are a prime opportunity (if not an excuse) to connect with those around us.

In an effort to drum-up some Christmas cheer in the midst of these cold days, the Valley Community Newspaper group has developed a special “Holiday Greetings” section featuring members of the community wishing well their fellow Sacramentans. This special eight-page insert can be found in the middle of this paper.

In that “season’s greetings” spirit, allow me to wish all of you readers out there a very special (and safe) holiday season; we here hope that all of you receive those things that are the most important: peace, love and goodwill.

Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah and Happy Holidays.

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New look for www.valcomnews.com

The Valley Community Newspaper, Inc. Web site, www.valcomnews.com, has received a massive makeover, providing for a new and interactive experience when searching for your local news or downloading your favorite community newspapers: the Arden-Carmichael News, the East Sacramento News, The

Land Park News, The Pocket News, The Valley Shopper quarterly publication and the California Kids! monthly magazine.

We appreciate your comments on these developments. Send your thoughts, comments and news tips to ryanrose@valcomnews.com.

Sue Olson

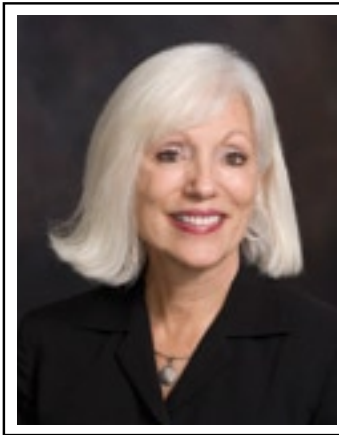
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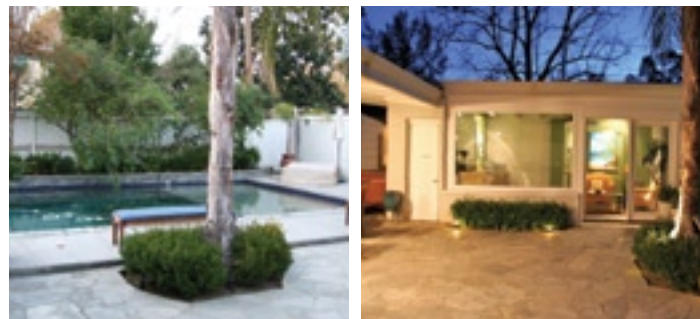
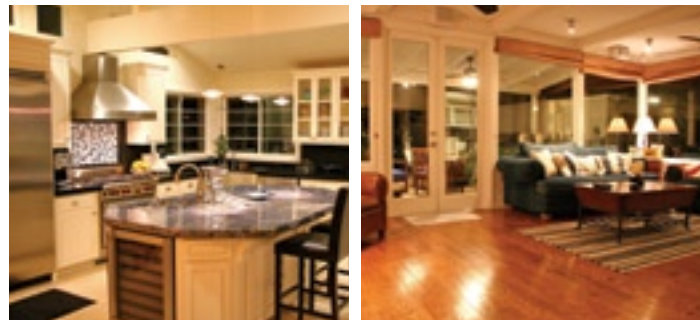
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Land Park Girl Scouts brighten holiday season

Special to The Land Park News

Girl Scout troops in the Land Park Service Unit open their hearts to brighten the lives of families this Christmas season. Girl Scouts rolled up their sleeves in October of this year, began decorating 500 Christmas stockings and decorated each one with caring thoughts.

Additionally, each troop purchased a variety of items such as warm socks, scarves, coloring books and crayons for stocking sufferers. The various fundraisers that Girl Scouts participate in throughout the year help support events like the Christmas stocking project.

Stone Soup Can Food Drive

On November 21, Pocket, Greenhaven and Land Park area Girl Scouts participated in a "Stone Soup" canned food drive at the Parkside Community Church located at 5700 S. Land Park Dr.

Girl Scouts donated 75 canned foods to the church's food drive and brought cut-up veg-



Photo courtesy Pocket, Greenhaven and Land Park area Girl Scouts participated in a "Stone Soup" canned food drive at the Parkside Community Church located at 5700 S. Land Park Dr.

etables for the pot of stone soup. While the soup simmered, Girl Scouts listened to a presentation by Chef Alan Wada, who is also a Girl Scout co-leader.

Chef Wada's presentation covered helpful tips for healthy eating and smart cooking as well as sharing the Stone Soup fairy tale. Before the evening concluded, Girl Scouts sat down to break bread and enjoy a meal of soup.



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Not in my backyard — Curtis Park Village Project derailed?

By **KATY GRIMES**
Special to The Land Park News

Editor's Note: The following is a special commentary by local political columnist Katy Grimes, publisher of the online political journal "The Sacramento Citizen" (thesaccitizen.squarespace.com). Grimes is a well-known Sacramento political analyst, having been published in The Sacramento Union and The Sacramento Bee.

One of the bigger problems with social "do-gooders" is that they always think that their solutions are good for everyone else. Affordable housing, water restrictions, solar power, healthy eating, bicycling to work, public transit are all great ideas — for other people. The satirical newspaper The Onion exemplified this syndrome years ago with their own headline: "A study released Monday by the America Public Transportation Association reveals that 98 percent of Americans support the use of mass transit by others."

Usually we see this occur on neighborhood association boards where a few like-minded bullies can prevent developments, impose unrealistic traffic calming measures, randomly decide land use, and even impose remodeling requirements and restrictions on homeowners.

Local developer Paul Petrovich has been working for more than 5 years and invested more than \$40 million in his proposed Curtis Park Village development, currently home to the unsightly, old Union Pacific railyard located behind Sacramento City College, be-

tween the neighborhoods of Land Park and Curtis Park.

The proposed development appears to have all of the necessary elements that concerned citizens say they want: A mixed-use project, urbanized community structure, in-fill development (utilizing land within the city limits); a public transit oriented development with two light rail stations, while being pedestrian-friendly offering a pedestrian foot bridge to connect the neighborhoods and City College; neighborhood retail (no big-box stores); office space; a health club; a 7-acre park; tree-lined streets; and 240 affordable, subsidized, multi-family housing units, 184 single family homes, and 90 senior housing units, all utilizing a design that integrates with architecture in the surrounding neighborhoods.

What's the beef?

The project has turned personal. Area residents have made the Curtis Park Village project about Paul Petrovich the man, instead of focusing on the project, which takes a blighted piece of land and gives it life, turning it into homes, businesses, parks and pretty streets.

With most of the 32 design changes that Petrovich made to the plan at the behest of five vocal members of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, it appears that they are now requesting changes to their original requests for changes. This can only lead one to believe that they are nothing more than attention-starved obstructionists who should take up a hobby instead. The space-efficient street grid Petrovich originally designed was



"... A few Curtis Park activists could still chase away this developer, leaving behind the unsightly toxic wasteland..."

—Katy Grimes

replaced with meandering streets and a traffic-calming roundabout; now the opponents of the development want a street grid again. The cries about increased traffic are based on three-generation-old plans that included a hotel; even the Draft Environmental Impact Report showed a minimal traffic increase at major intersections and no traffic increase on most Curtis Park streets.

Support for Petrovich's development seems to cut across socio-economic, political, philosophical and environmental lines and has received support from some unlikely sources: The Smart Growth Leadership Council, Friends of Light Rail, Assemblyman Dave Jones, state Sen. Darrell Steinberg, Mayor Kevin Johnson, and even the once contentious Land Park Community Association.

Given that area residents have to get in their cars and drive to other neighborhoods for most services, for a residential area of more than 10,000 households, the Curtis Park, Land Park and Hollywood Park neighborhoods are underserved in retail services when compared to other Sacramento areas. This seems to defy the environ-

mental green movement as well as Petrovich's development plans, which presents a mix of residential, retail, office, park space, even a health club for residents, and will be pedestrian friendly.

Four of the five vocal opponents are on the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association board of directors and several of the project opponents write for the neighborhood newspaper, "The Viewpoint." Three of the five opponents are attorneys. With the Curtis Park neighborhood made up of 2,500 households, and neighboring Land Park with 7,000 households, the neighborhood association should take a poll of the area if they are truly interested in taking the pulse, in order to sincerely represent the neighborhood. The Land Park Neighborhood Association offered support for the project as well as some suggestions.

Ironically, when the need for multi-family low-cost housing came up, the opponents of the project insisted that the low-cost housing be removed from the original prominent locations nearest Curtis Park, and placed instead, in the rear of the development by the

railroad tracks, demonstrating that their involvement is not for the greater good, but instead the Not-In-My-Backyard attitude — living in low-cost housing and riding the bus is good for other people.

Petrovich has made clear that while he has a great deal of time, money and emotions invested in this project, it is already zoned industrial. Opponents disingenuously have tried to claim that he threatened to rezone it industrial and build warehouses on the land. If the land does not become a lovely, welcoming neighborhood, it still needs to have the toxic dirt removed and something eventually built, and no developer or city can afford to put another park on land that can generate income and property taxes. There are already two large parks in the vicinity — William Land Park and Curtis Park.

The city requires that a certain percentage of high density and low income or senior housing be built into all projects of this scale. Petrovich has melded the city's requirements, neighbor input as well as his own, to come up with a project that appears to have a good balance. But a few Curtis Park activists could still chase away this developer, leaving behind the unsightly toxic wasteland, ripe for any national developer specializing in big box stores or warehouses.

Have an opinion on Katy Grimes' article? E-mail your thoughts to the editor at ryanrose@valcomnews.com.

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Know your neighbor

Land Park's KXTV Channel 10 television studio hits 40-year mark

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Land Park News Writer
lance@valcomnews.com

For more than a half-century, the Land Park-based television station Channel 10 has provided the Sacramento region with daily local news, national event coverage and a variety of other programming. And for 40 of those years, the station has aired from its current Land Park studio.

The station debuted as KBET Channel 10 on March 19, 1955 at 2:15 p.m.

Four years later, the station changed its call letters to its current and more recognized KXTV. The "X" in the call letters KXTV represents the Roman numeral "10," while the letters "BET" in KBET stood for the station's slogan that it was the "Best Bet in Television."

Getting on the air

Although the station first aired in 1955, the roots of Channel 10 date back to May 7, 1948, when the McClatchy Broadcasting Co., a subsidiary of McClatchy Newspapers, applied to the Federal Communications Commis-

sion for a permit to construct the television station.

Four years later and just a day prior to the FCC's lifting of its freeze of TV permits, which lasted from Sept. 30, 1948 to July 1, 1952, a group of local investors, known as the Sacramento Telecasters, applied for the same license.

A legal case between the Telecasters and the McClatchy Broadcasting Co. eventually occurred, posing the question whether the ownership of newspapers could be the legal grounds for the denial of a television station construction license.

Peter Onnigan, one of the original owners of Channel 10, explained the Federal Supreme Court's decision that ruled in favor of the Telecasters.

"They didn't want to have the newspapers, for example, owning the only TV station in town, and so we fit into that area because we had no affiliations with radio stations or television stations or newspapers," Onnigan said.

The station was constructed within an old California Highway Patrol building at 601 7th Ave., near Riverside Boulevard in Land Park, and



Land Park historic Channel 10 television station, which is widely recognized by its iconic, 300-foot-tall weather tower and is committed to its slogan of "Connecting with our Community," appears to be heading strong into its next half-century of existence.

Channel 10's first transmitter was erected in early 1955 in El Dorado Hills.

Had the Telecasters fulfilled their previous plan, Channel 10 would have opened in February 1954 in a newly-built studio and office building at the northeast corner of 30th and L streets.

To celebrate the first airing of the CBS-affiliate, KBET Channel 10, the station held a large community party that was emceed by Johnny Carson.

At the time of the station's 1955 debut, few people in the capital city owned their own television sets,

since this technology was still considered an expensive luxury.

Local programming

Committed to fulfilling its promise to the FCC that it would provide local programming, Channel 10, which was the first VHF station in Sacramento, hired its first anchorman Hank Thornley.

Featured on the station's 50th anniversary celebration special, which first aired on March 19, 2005, Thornley, who worked for Channel 10 from 1955 to 1960, described the primitive nature of the early newscasts.

"I honestly think that management at the time felt that all they needed was a radio newscast on television to suffice the requirements," Thornley said.

Along with the station's first photographer, Paul Meeks, Thornley assisted in bringing a greater dimension to Channel 10 news reporting, as he worked with Meeks to add related film footage to the local newscasts.

Remembering his pioneering days working with Thornley, Meeks said in

See 40 years, page 7



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40 years: This historic Land Park-based station is committed to its slogan of 'Connecting with our Community'

Continued from page 6

about 2005 for the station's anniversary program, "We put together a news department that was unprecedented in those days."

Meeks added that his first days working for KBET were probably the most exciting times that he experienced in his television career.

Among the major events covered by Thornley and Meeks was the station's first coverage of a major disaster – a 1955 levee break in Yuba City.

At the time, news and various other programming were presented live without the use of Teleprompters.

Unlike today's 24 hours a day television stations, the earliest years of television was a 12 hours per day operation.

Early shows

Very early in the station's history, Channel 10 aired local talk and entertainment shows during the day and programs such as Gunsmoke, The Honeymooners and I Love Lucy at night.

Later early CBS programs were Perry Mason, Leave it to Beaver, The Twilight Zone, Lassie, the Ed Sullivan Show, Father Knows Best and the Andy Griffith Show.

The popular children's show, Captain Kangaroo debuted on Oct. 3, 1955 and ran for 30 years.

The station also aired early locally-produced children's shows such as Ranger Roy and the Anna Banana Show, featuring country music's Tiny Moore as Ranger Roy and a little monkey, named Anna Banana.

Another early local children's show was Diver Dan and O.U. Squid, which featured Norm Bales as Diver Dan and H. Alan Simms, who operated a squid marionette-type figure from the top of a ladder.

And long before the advent of cable television's Cartoon Network, Channel 10 offered Kartoan Karnival to local children.

Station sells, brand builds

Major changes in Channel 10 history occurred in 1959 with the sale of the station by its original owners to the Corinthian Broadcasting Corp., the aforementioned change of the station's call letters to KXTL and the beginnings of a project to renovate the 7th Avenue studio.

By this time, television had made many advancements, as 42 million American homes had television sets and RCA, which had introduced color television five years earlier, had sold 90,000 such television sets.

During the 1960s, KXTV aired coverage of major news events such as the announcement of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy, the Watts Riots and the Apollo 11 moon landing.

After about a decade at its 7th Avenue location, Channel 10 was informed that its studio lied within the area of a future extension of Interstate 5.

On Sept. 5, 1965, The Sacramento Bee reported that KXTV had purchased the site of the former office and distribution warehouse of the Nulaid Egg division of the Pacific Growers cooperative on Broadway, between 3rd and 5th streets, in Land Park.

A year later, The Bee announced that architects Starks, Jones and Nacht had designed a new KXTV headquarters and studio with 33,000 square feet of floor space at the Broadway site.

Built by the Lawrence Construction Co., the industry award-winning structure, which continues to house KXTV, was first occupied by the station in 1969.

In the same year, KXTV hired Dick Cable, who worked as an anchorman for the station for 29 years. His tenure with Channel 10 marked the longest run by any anchor at a single television station in Northern California.

Other longtime familiar faces at Channel 10 were the station's first full-time sports reporter Creighton Sanders, who worked for KXTV from 1960 to 1980, Alan Frio, an anchor from the 1970s to 1997, Mark Hedlund, a reporter from 1981 to 2009, Dan Adams, a reporter from 1981 to 2008, and Stuart Sadow, the sports anchor from 1980 to 2002.

Many other notable anchors and reporters contributed to the success of the station and helped pave the way for such current Channel 10 personalities as Dale Schornack, Cristina Mendonsa, Dan Elliott, Jennifer Smith, Dana Howard, George Warren, Kelly Jackson, Bryan May and Monica Woods.

Speaking about several of the station's longtime anchors and journalists in 1995, Schornack said, "In sports, you'd call them franchise players. Every one of them is just gold and it's part of what makes this such a great station."

The station's newscasts have been known by a variety of names throughout



Photo courtesy KXTV Channel 10

Committed to fulfilling its promise to the FCC that it would provide local programming, Channel 10, which was the first VHF station in Sacramento, hired its first anchorman Hank Thornley, pictured here.

Channel 10's existence, including Shell News, The Wilson-Gray Report, Eyewitness News and currently News10.

In addition to the station's award-winning news coverage, Channel 10 has been home to a variety of other offerings throughout the years, including soap operas such as The Guiding Light and As the World Turns, game shows, including the Price is Right and Wheel of Fortune, a local educational, travel program known as California Postcard with Jonathan Mumm, and talk shows such as The Phil Donahue Show and The Late Show with David Letterman.

On March 6, 1995, after 50 years as a CBS station, KXTV became the third Sacramento television station to be affiliated with ABC. The others were Channel 40 and Channel 13.

In 1999, Channel 10, which was sold for its third time in 1971 and again in 1983, was acquired by its current owners, the Gannett Co.

Today, this historic Land Park-based television station, which is widely recognized by its iconic, 300-foot-tall weather tower and is committed to its slogan of "Connecting with our Community," appears to be heading strong into its next half-century of existence.




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Chance for charity: Second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive Event is December 13

By SUSAN LAIRD
Land Park News Writer
susan@valcomnews.com

Christmas is for children. Whether one is a tiny tot, or young in spirit, it is a time of hope. Christmas is a time to focus on those things that bring beauty and goodness into the lives of each human being. In the Christian tradition, it is a time to remember God's great love for all humanity, and to look forward to His promises of redemption through Christ.

One year ago, a grieving Arden Arcade family decided on the spur of the moment to turn their personal tragedy into something that could give hope to others.

In 2004, little Rosalia Ann Carollo lost her battle with a devastating childhood illness. She was almost two years old. Rosie's parents, George and Nicole Carollo, were devastated.

Rosie came into the world on June 27, 2002. She was a beautiful eight pound, two ounce bundle of joy – the expression of her parent's greatest hopes. She developed normally for the first five months of her life. Then Nicole noticed that their little girl wasn't making the progress a six-month-old child should be making.

"I noticed that Rosie hadn't yet started to roll over," Nicole said. "I asked our pediatrician about that. He told me, 'Oh, there's a range of normal,' and said that she would eventually roll over."

Soon after the visit to the pediatrician, on Dec. 15, the Carollos' world changed. Rosie started to have strange spasms. Additional trips to the doctor's office brought forth a devastating diagnosis: one of the most serious childhood epilepsies, called "infantile spasms." Rosie had thousands each day.

Infantile spasms are a serious form of epilepsy because each seizure causes an "electrical storm" inside the child's brain. It is the equivalent of crashing a computer and resetting it – with each seizure. When the brain "crashes" so violently, it is impossible to retain skills previously learned – or to continue to learn.

Despite the grim outlook of this condition, the Carollos remained hopeful for a positive outcome as they started treatment for their daughter right away. Multiple medications, therapy, special diets and trips to clinics as far away as Detroit were unable to stop the



Photo courtesy
Little Rosie Carollo was known for her smile and her ability to bring smiles to others. Her family is holding the second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive in her memory. Donations benefit the children at the Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital.

seizures. Yet, in spite of all this suffering, Rosie seemed to have a strength and resolve that amazed the adults around her.

"Her only goal seemed to be able to smile," Nicole said. "She brought smiles to everyone around her. She was amazing."

Rosie's brain never had enough recovery time from the daily seizures to make further development. Little by little, she slipped back...eventually losing muscle tone, developing

See Rosie, page 9

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Rosie: 'Without a doubt, this is the most joyful night of the year for me'

Continued from page 8

breathing problems and other health issues.

On April 10, 2004, Rosie lost her struggle and left this life.

"At that time, I was four months pregnant with our daughter, Claire," Nicole said. "And thank goodness, I was. It gave us something to focus on, because the grief (of losing Rosie) was so great."

The Carollo family has grown to include three more children: Claire, age five; Grace, age two; and Lily, age one. Rosie remains very much included in the family, as the "big sister in Heaven."

Life has continued on, as it has a way of doing. Easters came and went. Christmases came also.

"Then, last year, as George and I were walking through the neighborhood, looking for ideas on light decorations for our new house, and idea came to us," Nicole said. "We noticed that some families had barrels in their front yards for food donations by those who would come by to enjoy the Christmas lights. We thought, 'Let's do something for Rosie. Let's do toys and give them

to the children at Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital."

The Carollos spent a lot of time at Sutter Memorial. Rosie spent one month there, including one Easter Nicole will never forget.

"I had always wanted to do one of those big Easter baskets for Rosie," she said. "But there was never any time to do one because we were so busy with her medical situation. Then, one day at the hospital, the Child Life Program came by Rosie's room with this huge Easter basket filled with toys and wonderful things. I've never forgotten it. We were so appreciative and amazed by their generosity. The idea of a toy drive seemed perfect: here was something we could do to honor the memory of our daughter and help other families at the same time."

So, with just a sign on the lawn and one e-mail, the Carollos started their first Christmas light show and toy drive in 2008. The results were astounding.

"We had over 700 items donated that one night," Nicole said. "And near-

Event Details:

The Second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive event is Sunday, Dec. 13, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital. Cash and check donations for the Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital are also welcome. The Carollo home is located at 3961 Fair Oaks Boulevard, at the corner of Fair Oaks and San Ramon Way.

ly \$300 in cash donated also. George and I looked at each other and said, 'Wow, look at what Rosie has done!'"

Toy Drive 2009

This year, George and Nicole are putting more lights up for the Dec. 13 event. Volvo Rents on Silica Avenue is generously donating a boom lift to help George to put up many of the Christmas lights in the tall trees on the property. Sam's Club on El Camino Avenue is helping out by donating hot chocolate and cookies. Family members and friends are also helping to make the second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive an event to remember.

If everything falls into place, George hopes to include a Thomas the Tank

Engine train set this year, and perhaps a gingerbread house with smoke.

Santa Claus will be there for the little ones, and the Sacramento Fire Station on Eastern Avenue will be sending a fire engine (complete with firefighters) for the enjoyment of inquisitive kids and parents.

The Second annual Rosie Carollo Christmas Lights and Toy Drive event is Sunday, Dec. 13, from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. Bring a new, unwrapped toy to donate to the Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital. Cash and check donations for the Sutter Memorial Children's Hospital are also welcome. The Carollo home is located at 3961 Fair Oaks Boulevard, at the corner of Fair Oaks and San Ramon Way.

The entire Carollo family will deliver the gifts

to the hospital after the event.

"This is great for our children," Nicole said. "Even though they can't visit with the children who will be receiving the gifts - because of the danger of passing on illnesses - it's still a great way for them to learn how to give back."

And to connect with a big sister who would have been in second grade this year.

Nicole has no regrets, however. She believes that Rosie's brief life on this earth continues to have great meaning and purpose, especially through the annual light show and toy drive.

"Without a doubt, this is the most joyful night of the year for me," she said.

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Connecting need and generosity

Local man helps bring Thanksgiving to the homeless

By **BENN HODAPP**
Land Park News Writer
benn@valcomnews.com

Call it a hand up, not a hand out.

Faith and Homeless Families is an organization that works to get homeless families into a home of their own. During the Thanksgiving Holiday week, some of the families involved in the Faith and Homeless Families program were invited to take part in a good old-fashioned Thanksgiving meal thanks to the generosity of a local restaurant owner.

Joey Madrid, owner of Hangar 17, opened up his restaurant's doors to some 40 homeless people who might not have had the chance to enjoy the holiday the way the rest of us do.

"We used to do a friends and family Thanksgiving dinner at the restaurant every year. The last year that we did it there weren't many people there, so I thought it would be nice to do something different."

Joey Madrid, owner of Hangar 17

"He did such a wonderful thing for our families," said Nora Benavides, director of the organization. "It was very festive and the families were waited on hand and foot."



Hangar 17, located at 1630 S St., opened up its doors to some 40 homeless people who might not have had the chance to enjoy Thanksgiving. *Land Park News Photo/Ryan Rose*

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The idea to open up for the community stemmed from a tradition that Madrid used to take part in years ago.

"We used to do a friends and family Thanksgiving dinner at the restaurant every year," Madrid said. "The last year that we did it there weren't many people there, so I thought it would be nice to do something different."

Madrid has a friend who works for Sacramento City Councilmember Rob Fong, who alerted Madrid to the homeless organization.

"I just thought it was the right thing to do," he said. "They are going through some tough times and they might not have the chance to have the restaurant experience."

The feast featured all the standard Thanksgiving fare: turkey, ham, stuffing, mashed potatoes, cranberry sauce and pumpkin pie.

To explain the nature of the tough times these families are indeed facing, Benavides provided some information on the organization and its goals.

"The program is based on a new approach called 'Rapid Re-Housing' where families are quickly found homes of their own after leaving a shelter," she said. "We ask the families what area they would like to live in and what school district they would like to put their kids into and then we try to find vacant apartments in those areas for the families."

The program is funded by Lutheran Social Services, which recently received money to support it. According to Benavides, the Obama Administration is trying to expand the rapid re-housing program. She explained that there are approximately 18 programs nationwide that are working to get families without homes into their own places.

After a family leaves a homeless shelter they are evaluated and have a background check performed. Then they are matched with appropriate mentors who help them to find jobs and manage finances.

"Every family has unique challenges," Benavides said.

She spoke of a family with a child afflicted with Down syndrome. The family was paired with a mentor who had experience working with special education children, and now the child and family are thriving. Another mentor is helping to build a resume so the father can hopefully find a full-time job.

The organization is working hard to grant a normal life to those without a home. Thanks to the generosity of Madrid, several families got to forget their hardships and enjoy some good food with family.

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Sacramento State University gallery unveils Thiebaud collection

Special to *The Land Park News*

All 150 items in Sacramento State's Wayne Thiebaud collection will be exhibited publicly for the first time from Dec. 3 through March 6 in the Sacramento State University Library Gallery. Gallery hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday. The exhibit is free.

A Sacramento State alumnus, Thiebaud is one of the most respected contemporary artists in the world, said gallery Director Phil Hitchcock.

The collection, from a pair of anonymous donors, covers Thiebaud's works from 1948 to 2004, when the collection was donated to the university. The project was inspired by the Destination 2010 initiative launched by university President Alexander Gonzalez, Hitchcock said.

Thiebaud is most often associated with the pop art and photo realism movements, but Hitchcock said the artist's work goes beyond that.

"Wayne has always, in my opinion, kind of floated in his own category," Hitchcock said.

The exhibit also shows the process Thiebaud used. One finished painting will be accompanied by 16 preliminary drawings leading up to the finished piece.

The exhibit will be something of a family affair. Thiebaud's son, Matt Bult, will exhibit his paintings in the adjoining annex gallery Dec. 3-Jan. 23, and the two artists will share the Dec. 3 reception.

For more information, call (916) 278-4189.



Photo courtesy Sacramento State University

Wayne Thiebaud (pictured) is one of the most respected contemporary artists in the world, said Sacramento State University Library Gallery Director Phil Hitchcock.

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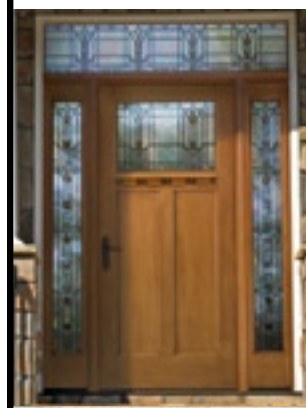
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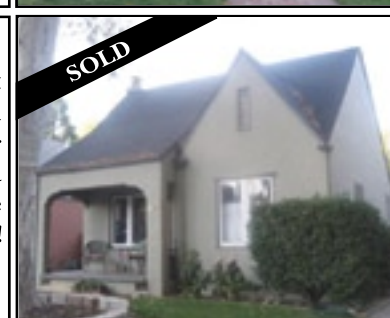
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You and your teen

Coping with cutting

By STEVE DEBENEDETTI-EMANUEL
Land Park News Family Columnist
steve@rivercitycounseling.com

Not long ago, "Dave," a 15-year-old boy, came into my office for his regularly scheduled appointment. Almost immediately, I noticed that he had about a two inch, vertical cut on his left wrist, and I asked him about it. At first he told me that he'd brushed up against something and accidentally scratched himself, but when I challenged his story he eventually told me that he'd cut himself with a knife.

When I asked what was happening in his life, he told me that the academic pressure from both his teachers and parents was really getting to him. He felt horrible and hadn't known where to turn. Without giving it much thought, he'd cut himself, and the bad feelings went away for a little while. But before long, the feelings returned.

When I asked Dave if his parents noticed his cut, he told me that he wasn't sure because they hadn't said anything. As the cut was hard to miss, this left me feeling more concerned. After talking it through, Dave decided that it was a good idea to have his parents join him for his next appointment.

At the family meeting, I helped Dave talk about his feelings and what led him to cut. I also asked his parents if they'd noticed the cut. They admitted that they had and wanted to help, but didn't know what to do or say, so they kept silent. This admission helped open up the conversation, and Dave got the support he needed. He hasn't cut since.

Talking about it

I know there are times in which it's tempting not to talk about difficult issues like cutting with our teens. Rather than having what could be a heated, emotional conversation, parents choose to stay silent. That way they don't have to deal with difficult feelings that might surface because their teens struggle. It's easier to hope the problem goes away on its own. And sometimes it does.

Unfortunately, cutting is often a sign of something more serious and doesn't just stop on its own. Sometimes, talking about what hurts deeply is too overwhelming, so teens use cutting as a way of getting out these feelings and showing others just how much pain they're in. Other times, teens feel numb on the inside, so they cut as a way to feel something on the outside, even if it's pain.

Either way, teens are communicating that something isn't right and they want someone to pay attention. They're shouting and waving their arms in hopes that you'll notice and do something before the avalanche hits and problems get worse.

This doesn't mean that you'll have any easy conversation. Your teen is probably going to get defensive and deny that there's a big problem. At the same time, he or she is also going to be relieved because you've noticed that things aren't OK and you want to help.

It's important that you let your teen know that he or she isn't in trouble. Tell them that you're worried, not angry. Tell them that you want to hear how they're feeling, and try to be open to what they say. Do your best to remain calm throughout the conversation. If you get defensive and angry and threaten to do things like taking their door off its hinges and grounding them indefinitely, you'll probably leave your teen feeling that he or she never should have said anything. Help your teen seek the support of trusted adults, including a counselor, when necessary.

In the end, it's scary for parents to learn that their teens are injuring themselves by cutting. Fortunately, I've found that if parents provide necessary support when they notice that their teen has started cutting, rather than ignoring it or getting angry, teens often are able to cope with their strong feelings without hurting themselves further.

Steve DeBenedetti-Emanuel is a licensed marriage and family therapist based in the Sacramento area.

Ask Officer Michelle

Answering questions from the community

By OFFICER MICHELLE LAZARK
Sacramento Police Department
Special to The Land Park News

Editor's Note: Ask Officer Michelle your question by emailing her at mlazark@pd.cityofsacramento.org or visit her online blog at <http://blog.sacpd.org>.

Bikes on sidewalks

I ride my bicycle around downtown a lot. I just heard from a friend of mine that while he was riding his bike downtown, an officer stopped him and told him to get off of the sidewalk and ride in the street. Are bicyclists not allowed to ride on the sidewalk? I am not very comfortable riding in the street without a bike lane.

Posted by chriso

Dear chriso,

The truth of the matter is that the sidewalk is meant for pedestrians. In other words, it is illegal to ride on the sidewalks. Bicyclists must follow the same rules of the road as other "vehic-

cles" and must ride as close as "practicable" to the right. Sacramento strives to be a bicycle friendly city with many bicycle routes, so people are encouraged to ride their bikes, however bicyclists are always encouraged to exercise caution.

California Vehicle Code Sections 21200-21212 cover the rules of the road and what bicyclists can and can't do. There is also a City Code section pertaining to riding bicycles on the sidewalk. City Code 10.76.010 states: Except as authorized under subsection B of this section, no person shall ride a bicycle on a sidewalk except within a residence district or where a sidewalk is designated as part of an established bicycle route. Pedestrians shall have the right-of-way on sidewalks.

Sacramento Transportation Management Association has an excellent segment on bicycle commuting including insight on other biking tips as well. Be safe.

Officer Michelle

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Coaching champions

Kennedy High names new varsity girls' basketball head coach

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Land Park News Writer
lance@valcomnews.com

Kennedy High School physical education teacher Dave Parsh is no stranger to the game of basketball and he undoubtedly has a firm grasp on what it takes to lead a successful basketball program. And this ability, as well as his experience, was certainly no secret when it came time for the school's athletic director Heidi Pierson to select a new girls' varsity basketball head coach.

Speaking in regard to Parsh's capability of taking on the duties of leading the girls' varsity bas-

ketball team, Pierson said that the decision to hire Parsh was partly due to his head coaching experience with the Kennedy girls' freshmen basketball team and his assistance with the varsity team.

"I've known Dave for six years and he is one of the most knowledgeable coaches that I've ever met and he's a pleasure to work with on a daily basis," Pierson said. "He is fully invested in our athletes and he knows what type of caliber of team we need to have in order to become a Division I championship team again. His knowledge of the game, as well

as his knowledge of our players, has helped us out tremendously in the past. He helped out on the varsity team during the playoffs, too, and he was there at practices and things. Because he knows the girls and he's invested in our program, we wanted to give him a chance."

Pierson added that she is very impressed with Parsh's overall coaching resume, which includes his experience as a very successful head coach at St. Francis High School.

Scholar and athlete

While at St. Francis from 1992 to 1998, Parsh led the girls' varsity team to the state championship, two section championships and three league championships.

Parsh, 45, also served as the head coach of the men's basketball team at American River College for two years and the women's basketball team at Yuba College for one year. And while coaching at A.R.C., Parsh led the team to the Elite 8 or in other words, to the status of one of the top eight junior college

See Coach, page 19

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Coach: 'I still am excited to be taking over such a successful program'

Continued from page 18

teams in the state tournament championships.

Basketball predates Parsh's time as a coach, since he began playing basketball in the 1970s, while he was a student at Caleb Greenwood Elementary School in the River Park area of Sacramento.

He later played basketball for four years at Sacramento High School – an experience that included playing on a team that competed for a section championship and featured then-future NBA star and current Mayor Kevin Johnson.

A resident of East Sacramento, Parsh began teaching at Kennedy High 11 years ago.

Throughout this time, he has been involved with the school's athletic department in a variety of ways, including serving as the school's athletic director for four years.

Off to Kennedy High

Parsh, who has also coached various community youth sports including basketball and soccer and in his spare time enjoys singing in his church's choir and playing the piano and guitar, said that the road to his position as the Kennedy girls' varsity basketball coach began in a way with a phone call last year.

"I called the previous girls' (varsity) basketball coach (Brandon Yung) just to keep in touch and see what the plan was for the upcoming year and he notified me that he had resigned from the job just a few days earlier," Parsh said. "He and I talked about me taking over the program and being the coach. I was interested in doing that, but before I pursued it, I had to make sure that things were okay on the home front (with the Parsh family), because of the time commitment involved. My family (which includes his 12-year-old daughter, Sophia and 10-

year-old son, Jack) and my wife (Bridget, a professor of nursing at Sacramento State University) were very supportive, so I started talking with the athletic director and the ball got rolling."

When Parsh eventually received the offer from Pierson to become Kennedy's varsity girls' basketball coach, Parsh said that it was a very exciting experience.

"I was then and I still am excited to be taking over such a successful program," Parsh said. "I was looking forward to working with the returning players on the varsity team who are very good players and I'm also excited about the new players coming in."

Parsh, who is taking over a varsity girls' basketball program that in the last decade has won a Northern California championship, four section championships and about six Delta Valley Conference championships, believes that it is a careful process taking a quality team and blending in the styles of a new coach.

"I just started thinking a lot about how we were going to try to do things and what changes, if any, we were going to make" Parsh said. "I think taking over a successful program like this is different, because I don't think you want to change too much, but I needed to do things that I'm comfortable with, as well."

Coaching champions

With the new season in progress, Parsh is anticipating continued success for the team, which enjoyed a championship season last year, which included winning the conference title, the section title and losing the Northern California championship game.

"We have three returning starters, so there's definitely optimism there, because of that experience," Parsh said. "By the same



Land Park News Photo/Lance Armstrong
Dave Marsh, who was the head coach of St. Francis High School's 1993 varsity girls' basketball Division III state championship team, was recently named the head coach of Kennedy High School's varsity girls' basketball team.

token, there is some doubt, because four of the seniors who graduated last year are all playing college basketball now. It was a very talented group that left with the senior class, but in basketball there are only five (starting) players. So, if three of the five (players) are that experienced and once our very good young players learn what we're trying to accomplish, I think we're going to do very well.

Altogether, this year's varsity team includes six returning seniors.

In commenting about what level of success this year's team might achieve, Parsh said that if everything falls into place, he believes the team is capable of winning a section championship.

"The goal is always a league and a section championship and I see no reason to change that," Parsh said. "It's always a challenge to go through the conference and be on top, and in the section, it's going to depend on a lot of factors, but I think we're experienced enough and good enough to challenge again for that championship."

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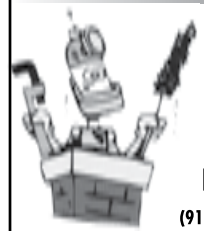
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A little slice of Italy and Czechoslovakia with a Yankee twist: La Trattoria Bohemia is gem of East Sacramento

By SUSAN LAIRD
Land Park News Writer
susan@valcomnews.com

Tucked into the side of J Street in midtown Sacramento is one of the little-known restaurant gems that make living in this region such a delight.

Featuring simple, authentic Italian and Czechoslovakian dishes, La Trattoria Bohemia has developed a loyal following. Despite the international flavor and flair, however, there is a timeless American tale here also.

"It's been a roller coaster ride, that's for sure," said Mark Lastuvka, who owns the restaurant with his wife, Romana. "I am originally from Prague; my wife is also from Czechoslovakia. When the Berlin Wall came down in '89, I went through that whole revolution thing. That was fun."

Fun? Lastuvka means it. "Imagine being a part of changing history," he said. "You're scared, but you want to do it. Those were great times."

This desire to make a better future is what fueled the passions of those who founded the United States, and all those who immigrated here. Lastuvka found himself caught up in the energy of the time.

"We had the revolution in '89. We married in '89. Then, in September of 1990, we came over here," he said. "We came to Sacramento because Romana's

father lived here after he escaped the communists years before. I came with no English and only \$10 in my pocket."

Lastuvka's father-in-law helped the couple out in the beginning.

"My father-in-law got me a bike, and I signed up at the Winterstein Adult School to learn English," he said. "While I was at the Winterstein School, I met some Italian kids. They worked at the Roma Pizzeria. They wanted to play soccer on Wednesday nights, so they asked if I wanted a job."

The dish-washing job grew to be an every night affair. Lastuvka learned how to make pizzas, as he continued to learn English. He pursued every opportunity to "make it" in this country.

"My degree is in building fine furniture," he said. "I worked on remodeling homes for 10 years, and I continued to work at Roma's. In the beginning I worked every day. My wife worked for Raley's and cleaned houses. She eventually became a flight attendant for Continental."

Lastuvka credits his mandatory military service in the Czechoslovakian army for developing his work ethic.

"At the time, I didn't want to do it," he said. "But you become independent. You learn to make your own decisions. I think (military service) should be mandatory for everyone."

Eventually, the Lastuvkas were able to save enough to take the next steps in the American dream. They purchased a home in Carmichael. The



Land Park News Photos/Tom Paniagua

Tucked into the side of J Street in East Sacramento is La Trattoria Bohemia, one of the little-known restaurant gems that make living in this region such a delight.

birth of their daughter, Nicola, also spurred changes in their lives.

"I was working my ass off," he said. "I decided to take a risk. I saw an empty pork store on J Street and decided to open a restaurant. We partnered with Maria Gurrera, the owner of Roma's Pizzeria. We had become friends when I was working at Roma's. That's why the food here is Czech food and Italian. We were eventually able to buy her out, but she helped us to get our start and we are good friends to this day."

The effort to build the restaurant was literally from the ground up.

"It's a good thing I had been doing remodels all those years," Lastuvka said. "I redid the plumbing, the electrical, everything needed replacement."

La Trattoria Bohemia opened in 2000. The little restaurant will celebrate 10 years on June 21.

The menu at La Trattoria is simple and delicious. Make that simply delicious. It offers over 50 items, plus an

See Trattoria, page 23

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Trattoria: 'We tell our friends that this place has the best pizza in Sacramento'

Continued from page 22

impressive selection of Italian pizzas.

Favorite Czech specialties include Bavarian Goulash, in which tender pork is stewed in sauerkraut to a thick broth. This is served with swirls of sour cream and Czech dumplings (\$17); and Schnitzel, where the customer's choice of fresh breaded chicken breasts or pork are served with European-style potato salad or roasted rosemary potatoes (\$17).

All pastas and breads are made from scratch at La Trattoria. With the same devotion he dedicated to fine furniture, Lastuvka crafts fine meals with particular attention to detail. His Spinach Ricotta Gnocchi is crafted by hand, and is served with fresh creamy gorgonzola sauce with prosciutto and mushrooms (\$16.50). Colorful red tomatoes garnish this beautiful entrée. Portions are filling and delicious.

A meal at La Trattoria cannot be considered complete without something from the dessert menu. Try a Gelati Celesti, which is an ice cream truffle (\$4.50), or an Artisan Trio Sorbetto, which is three scoops of delicious Italian sorbet (\$5). The Apple Strudel is a generously sized flaky pastry stuffed with a mixture of apples, raisins, walnuts, cinnamon – all sweetened with vanilla sugar (\$4.50). The Tiramisu is a dream. Layers of lady finger cookies are drenched in coffee and liquor, alternated with layers of mascarpone cream cheese (\$5).

There is a generous wine list and the beer list is known for its international selections.

In Italy, a trattoria is a family-run institution. Food and service are casual, warm and personal. Clients become regulars at trattorie because the staff learns their preferences. It's all about family.

"My mom walks here often," said Vivian Johnston, who grew up in East Sacramento and now lives in Bend, Ore. "I love to come here every time I come home. There is a warm atmosphere, the prices are reasonable and it's a good neighborhood place."

The draw of "la famiglia" brings regulars from through-

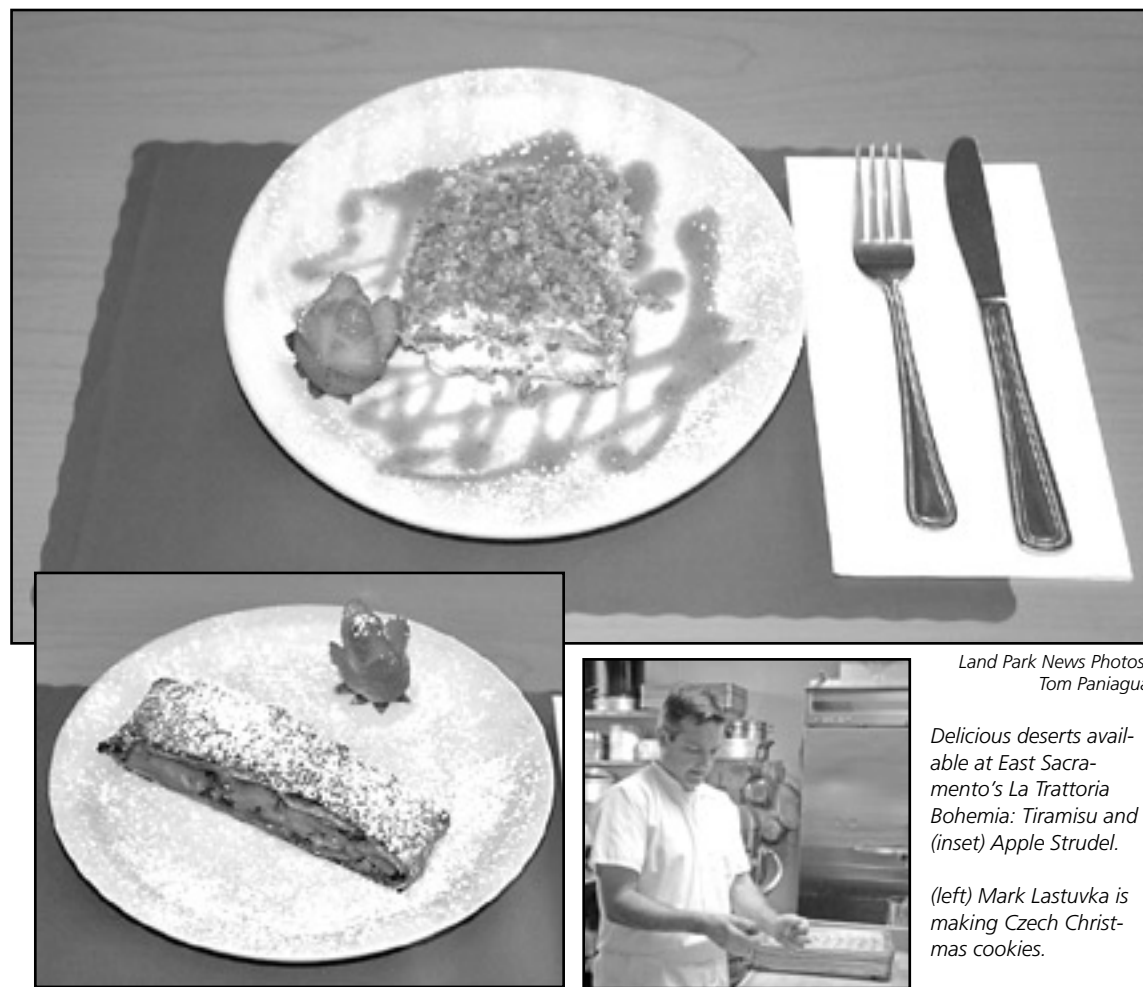
out the region. "My wife and I come here once a week, and have done so for the last two years," said John Lindgren, a former East Sacramento resident who now resides in the Pocket area. "We eat out about five times a week. We come to La Trattoria Bohemia because there's no turn over in staff, it's very consistent. We know everybody and they know us. The food is excellent."

In addition to the regular menu, the Lastuvkas offer weekly specials. Regulars often call ahead to learn of the specials, and to order an additional loaf of hand-crafted artisan bread to take home.

"I just make another for the oven," Lastuvka said.

Those who love traditional Czech cookies are known to place orders for these specialty items a year in advance, because it takes three weeks to craft these wonderful treats.

"Some people come only for the cookies," he said. "These are made only once a year. The dough takes a week to make, and the baking process takes days. Some will be filled with creams, others powdered with sugar. They all sell out."



Land Park News Photos/ Tom Paniagua

Delicious deserts available at East Sacramento's La Trattoria Bohemia: Tiramisu and (inset) Apple Strudel.

(left) Mark Lastuvka is making Czech Christmas cookies.

Lindgren enjoys introducing his "foodie friends" to this little restaurant. He raves about the excellence of the menu.

"We have certain favorites, but we tell our friends that this place has the best pizza in Sacramento," he said. "The


crust is phenomenal and the sauce is wonderful. Our foodie friends go crazy over some of the beers. It's a cozy place. You never have a bad experience here."

La Trattoria Bohemia is located at 3649 J Street in Sacramento. Hours are

Tuesday through Thursday and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. Closed Monday. For catering options and private party reservations, call (916) 455-7803. Also visit www.latrattoriaboheemia.com.



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From left: Wes, Ted, and Henry

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CALENDAR

GET IN THE CALENDAR

Is your club, group, church, school, or organization having an upcoming event? Let us know. Send information about your event—including date, time, location, a brief description, cost (if any), and contact information—to Calendar, c/o Valley Community Newspapers, 2709 Riverside Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95818, or e-mail ryanrose@valcomnews.com. Deadline is one week before publication. Priority is given to events that are in the community and/or of little or no cost. There is no guarantee that events submitted will appear in the calendar. To ensure placement within the newspaper, please call 429.9901 to place an advertisement.

DECEMBER

Travel to Spain

Ole, Espana! Come to a free informational evening about a fantastic Grand Tour of Spain in June of 2010. From the beaches of the Costa del Sol to the Moorish fortress of La Alhambra in Granada to the royal palace of Madrid we will explore the glories of Spain. Escorted by Spanish instructor Norma Petta. Go to ask_norma@spaineasy.com or call 916-457-1220. Two meetings: Dec. 16 at Oakmont High School in P33 at 6 p.m. and Dec. 17 at Border's on Fair Oaks Blvd at 6 p.m.

Christmas services

Faith Presbyterian Church at 625 Florin Road welcomes you to its Christmas Services: Dec. 6, 13, 20 and 27 – Sunday Services, held at 9 a.m. and 11 a.m. Dec. 2, 9 and 16 (Wednesday) Advent Dinner at 6 p.m., followed by worship at 6:45 p.m. Christmas Eve service at 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Winter Wonderland at Fairytale Town

Winter Wonderland 2009 is here! Fairytale Town has expanded their family-friendly holiday tradition to two consecutive weekends of after-hours music, magic and merchandise. A festive display of holiday lights and decorations throughout the park will welcome one and all ages to four enjoyable evenings of traditional songs, strolling, shopping and fun. Winter Wonderland at Fairytale Town will be held Saturdays and Sundays, December 5, 6, 12 & 13 from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m. (this is a special ticketed event and Fairytale Town will close early at 3PM on these dates to prepare). Admission to Winter Wonderland is only \$5 (Children 2 years of age and under will be admitted free). Fairytale Town Members receive 2 for 1 tickets for this event. For more information or to purchase tickets, please call 916-808-7462 or visit our website at www.fairytaletown.org.

Sacramento Opera Carolers

The Sacramento Opera Carolers will perform at Pavilions Shopping Center, 563 Pavilions Lane, Sacramento, CA 95825 on December 5, 12, and 19, 2009 from 1 to 3 p.m.; at The Fountains at Roseville, Roseville Parkway and Galleria Boulevard on December 20, 2009 from 3 to 5 p.m.; and the Town & Country Village, corner of Fulton and Marconi Avenues in Sacramento on December 6 and 13, 2009 from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. The Sacramento Opera Carolers are members of the Sacramento Opera Chorus.

DECEMBER 10

Carmichael's Holiday Tree Lighting

Experience Carmichael's Holiday Tree Lighting on Thursday, Dec. 10 at 6 p.m. in Carmichael Park, 5750 Grant Avenue. Holiday festivities include River City Concert Band, Santa Claus, Sac Metropolitan Fire District, Crafts for the Kids, Hot Cider and Cookies.

Computer club meeting

The Mission Oaks Computer Club will meet on Thursday, December 10, 2009 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbons Drive, Carmichael. The meeting topic will be "Computer Technology in Today's Automobiles." A problem-solving clinic, led by Adam Lacey of Applications, Etc, will follow the meeting. First-time visitors are welcome. For additional information call (916) 366-1687 or visit our Web site at www.missionoakscomputerclub.org.

California Citizens for Health Freedom, Sacramento Chapter

The California Citizens for Health Freedom, Sacramento Chapter will meet on December 10, 2009, at the SMUD Auditorium (the old SMUD Building) on 6201 S Street, Sacramento. A free lecture, "Bring Health and Happiness - Getting a New Start for 2010" presented by Chaplain Tom Kopko, M.A., B.A. Call 916-635-6724 for information.

DECEMBER 11

"Beginning a Business" seminar

Twin Rivers Adult School will offer a free seminar "Business Concepts for Entrepreneurs." Thinking about starting your own business? Need to jump start your existing business? Considering a virtual online business? This presentation will highlight business structures and operational planning, accounting with Quick Books, and promotional materials development. Join us on Friday, December 11, 2009 at 1:00 p.m., and again at 6:00 p.m. for this and other information as presented in our new Business Concepts course. SCORE counselors are scheduled to be on-site to answer questions regarding SBA loans and other related resources. This seminar will be held at Twin Rivers Adult School, 3220 Winona Way, North Highlands, CA 95660. For more information, call David at (916) 996-7554 or email bt4a@live.com.

DECEMBER 11-12

Galena Street East Holiday Tapestry

Galena Street East, a dynamic group of young performers specializing in music and dance, will perform their 37th Annual Holiday Tapestry production, "Wishes." Voted the "Best of Sacramento" in 2008, this lively, entertaining performing ensemble has captivated audiences for over 36 years with their diverse repertoire of music and dances that also includes traditional folk dances from many countries, including Hungary, Ireland, Korea, and the United States. This is a fabulous event for families as our young ambassadors, ages 5-19, dazzle audiences with their fabulous costumes, song, and dance. Shows are Friday, Dec. 11, at 7 p.m. and Saturday, Dec. 12, at 1 p.m. and 7 p.m. The performances are at Hiram Johnson High School Auditorium; 6879 14th Ave. Tickets are \$15/general admission; \$12/children, students, & seniors; \$10/groups of 10 or

more. For more information, call (916) 731-4090; www.galenastreeteast.org.

DECEMBER 12

Military Widows

The Society of Military Widows, Sacramento Chapter No. 5, will meet December 12, 2009, at the Lions Gate at McClellan Park at 11:15 a.m. for a Christmas luncheon and entertainment. Call 916-635-6724 for information.

Caleb Greenwood Flapjack 5K and Short Stack Kids Run

Caleb Greenwood School will host a Pancake Breakfast and 5K and Kids run on Saturday, December 12th from 8:00 a.m. until 11:00 a.m. Fun runs will begin at 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. Proceeds go to Caleb Greenwood school technology program. For more information, visit www.flapjack5k.com

Sacramento Preservation Roundtable

The Sacramento Preservation Roundtable will take place on Saturday, December 12, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at 1200 Front Street in Old Sacramento with a presentation by Regional Transit. For more information visit, www.sacoldcity.org.

Capitol Ballet Co.'s "Nutcracker"

Come and enjoy the wonder of Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" performed by Capitol Ballet Company with guest dancers from Stockton Ballet School. Attending this classical ballet has become a holiday tradition for audiences in Northern California's Central Valley. The Nutcracker performances are Saturday, December 12 at 2 p.m. at the Sheldon High School Performing Arts Center, 8333 Kingsbridge Drive, Sacramento and Saturday, December 19 at 2:00 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. at the San Joaquin Delta College Warren Atherton Auditorium, 5151 Pacific Avenue, Stockton, California. Tickets are \$18 for adults, \$12 for children, seniors, students and military with ID. Tickets may be purchased at www.capitolballet.com, or by calling Capitol Ballet Company (916) 484-1188.

ARRL honoring Sheriff John McGinnis

The American River Republican Women Federated are honored to welcome Sheriff John McGinness Sheriff to their luncheon on Dec. 12. John McGinness Sheriff has announced that he will not be seeking re-election in 2010. His service in Sacramento County will be missed by those who know him and appreciated his dedication to his position and community. Luncheon will be held at Lake Natoma Inn, 702 Gold Lake Drive, Folsom, CA 95630. Republican Women and men are welcome. Membership is open to all Republican Women and Men. Sign in at 11:30 A.M. Luncheon at 12 Noon. Cost is \$27.00. RSVP to 916-482-6069 by December 9, 2009.

DECEMBER 12-13

Fremont Presbyterian Church

Glorious Sounds of Christmas, a Christmas Concert is at Fremont Presbyterian Church, 5770 Carlson Dr. The free event begins at 7 p.m.

DECEMBER 13

Special concert in Carmichael

Bring the entire family to this holiday concert entitled "Symphonies and Sing-Along!" the second concert in our "Command Performance!" season, December 13, 3 p.m. at the La Sierra Community Center, 5325 Engle Rd. in Carmichael. The Sacramento Symphonic Winds is a 60-piece adult community band conducted by Dr. Les Lehr. Tickets: Child/

Student/ Senior (60+) free; others \$5, sold at the door. For more information, call (916) 489-2576 or visit www.sacwinds.org.

DECEMBER 15

Business and Career Expo

Sacramento's Business & Career Expo is on Tuesday, December 15th from NOON-4PM at the Sacramento Convention Center. At his FREE community event, attendees will learn about alternatives to traditional employment, including franchise & business opportunities. There will also be educational opportunities from a number of respected institutions. Franchise seminars @ 1:00, 2:00 & 3:00 include "How to find and finance a business that's right for you". Executives from three of the hottest Recession Resistant franchise companies coming to Northern California will be on hand to explain their business models and to answer questions. For more information about FranNet West, or about the EXPO, please contact Cari Lyn Vinci at 916.517.1612.

DECEMBER 16-17

Travel to Spain

Ole, Espana! Come to a free informational evening about a fantastic Grand Tour of Spain in June of 2010. From the beaches of the Costa del Sol to the Moorish fortress of La Alhambra in Granada to the royal palace of Madrid we will explore the glories of Spain. Escorted by Spanish instructor Norma Petta. Go to ask_norma@spaineasy.com or call 916-457-1220. Two meetings: Dec. 16 at Oakmont High School in P33 at 6 p.m. and Dec. 17 at Border's on Fair Oaks Blvd at 6 p.m.

DECEMBER 17

Latino Dance and Culture Group

Come dance to the beat of all types of Latin music! Featured DJ music and delicious Mexican food! Held at the Ethel Hart Community Center, 915 27th St., from 6:15-8:45 p.m. Suggested donation: \$3. For more information, call Barbara Alarcon 400-4514.

DECEMBER 18-20

Christmas celebration

Everyone is invited to enjoy St. Joseph Catholic Church's celebration of the birth of Jesus. This 45-minute non-denominational event is celebrated through the use of real animals and people in a "live nativity scene." Local bell ringers, musicians, and choirs add their talents to each performance. Dec. 18, 7 p.m.; Dec. 19, 7 p.m. and Dec. 20, 4:30 p.m. are the dates to mark on your calendars. St. Joseph's is located about 2 blocks north of the Freeport bridge on the west side of the river. The performances, lighted parking, and goodies after each performance are free. Merry Christmas. Although not required, non-perishable food items for the less fortunate in the area would be greatly appreciated.

DECEMBER 20

Christmas Concert

The Greek Orthodox Church of the Annunciation Choir invites you to our Christmas Concert Sunday, December 20, 2009, 7:00 p.m. at the Annunciation Church, Alhambra & F Street. A holiday reception will follow in the Hellenic Center.

DECEMBER 24

Christmas Eve service

You are invited to experience God's love and peace – Christmas Eve Service, 6:00 p.m.

Faith United Methodist Church, 3600 J Street, 452-7637

DECEMBER 27

River Park Blood Drive

The next River Park Blood Drive will take place on Sunday, December 27, 2009 from 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at 5458 Carlson Drive across from the school. Coffee Donuts and BBQ.

Computer Gardening Class

Class is 10:15 - 11:45 a.m. at 828 I St. Dig It! - A guide to gardening information on the Internet. Join us for this free class as we look at Web sites that provide information on plants, soils, climate and garden design. We will explore sources such as newsletters and weblogs, as well as information from plant and garden societies and educational and governmental sources. At the Central Library, 828 I Street. Free parking on Saturdays in the lots of Sacramento Public garages at Tenth & I streets and Tenth & L streets. To reserve a space, call 264-2920.

JANUARY 5

Alzheimer's Support group

Are you looking for someone to talk to – someone who understands what it is like to deal with Alzheimer's disease? Join an Alzheimer's Support group hosted by Carmichael Oaks Senior Living. Ongoing sessions provide families and caregivers guidance and training to assist them in caring for a person with the disease. Our program will offer tips, resources, and the ability to connect with fellow caregivers. The free event starts at 6 p.m. at Carmichael Oaks Senior Living, 8350 Fair Oaks Blvd. Information: Refreshments served. RSVP at 944-2323. For more information, visit www.carmichaeloaks.com.

JANUARY 9

Free Electronic-waste Collection Fundraiser

Proceeds to benefit Kit Carson Middle School's 8th Grade G.A.T.E. Class. Students are planning a 4 day-three-night trip to Washington, D.C. Drop off on: Saturday, January 9, 2010, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Kit Carson Middle School parking lot, 5301 N St. You won't even need to get out of your car, we will unload for you! We will accept: monitors, televisions, desktop and notebook PCs, VCRs, stereo equipment, speakers, keyboards, mice, PDAs, digital cameras, zip drives, telephones, cell phones, printers, copiers, laser and multifunction scanners and fax machines. We cannot accept: Household appliances (i.e. refrigerators, washers/dryers, etc), furniture, hazardous household waste, including fluorescent light bulbs, paint, pesticides, used oil, cleaning supplies, tires, etc. If you need something picked up, or have additional questions, please contact Shawn D'Alesandro at 658-2701 ext. 12#.

Senior Ball

Hart Senior Center cordially invites people 50 and older to attend our semi-formal Senior Ball on Saturday, January 9 at 2 p.m. This event is sponsored by the U.C. Davis Health System with all proceeds benefitting the Ethel Hart Senior Center. Please join us for 3 hours of catered appetizers and desserts, 50's and 60's music, free Senior Ball portrait, ballroom dancing and much, much more. Tickets are limited. No door sales of tickets. No refunds. Tickets cost \$5. Event at Ethel Hart Senior Center, 915 27th St. Call 808-5462 for more information.

See more Calendar, page 26

Calendar

Continued from page 24

JANUARY 12

Gray Panthers meeting

The Funeral Consumers Alliance of Northern California will conduct the Tuesday, January 12, meeting of the Gray Panthers of Sacramento. The Funeral Consumers Alliance is a nonprofit organization whose objective is to protect a consumer's right to choose a meaningful, dignified, affordable funeral. The meeting will be held at 1 PM at the Hart Senior Center, 915 - 27th Street, Sacramento, between I and J Streets. Further information can be obtained by calling 916-921-5008.

JANUARY 14


Computer club meeting

The Mission Oaks Computer Club will meet on Thursday, January 14, 2010 from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the Mission Oaks Community Center, 4701 Gibbons Drive, Carmichael. The meeting topic will be "Digital Photography." A problem-solving clinic, led by Adam Lacey of Applications, Etc, will follow the meeting. First-time visitors are welcome. For additional information call (916) 366-1687 or visit our website at www.missionoakscomputerclub.org.

JANUARY 22

Annual hot crab feed

Annual HOT Crab Feed & Auction Benefiting Courtyard School. Featuring the Captain Bob's famous HOT CRAB! Delivered live to the event, prepared onsite and served HOT to your table. All you can eat HOT crab, pasta, bread and salad! No to go bags, please. Tickets are \$50 per person; limited seating at 300. \$450 if you order a table of 10. The event will benefit Courtyard School and will feature raffle items, live and silent auction as well as a dessert auction. The evening starts at 6pm with a social/cocktail hour followed by dinner at 7:30 p.m. Located at the Dante Club, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd. Tickets can be purchased at the school: 205 24th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816. For more information contact the school at 916-442-5395.



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Land Park students get a magical preview of 'The Nutcracker'

By SUSAN LAIRD
Land Park News Writer
susan@valcomnews.com

Students at Hollywood Park and at Crocker Riverside elementary schools got an advanced peek at the "theatrical magic" of "The Nutcracker" when Ron Cunningham, artistic director of Sacramento Ballet, visited the schools on Nov. 30.

The hour-long presentation to second and third graders is something Cunningham, a Land Park resident, has been doing for the past 20 years. In addition to discovering some theatrical magic, the kids add some large, new words to their vocabularies and learn a little history.

"What's a choreographer?" Cunningham asked the second graders at Hollywood Park. A few hands went up, but no one guessed correctly.

"A choreographer is someone who makes up the dances," he explained. "In a ballet, the dancers don't just improvise on the stage. Someone has to teach them all the steps in the dance."

"The Nutcracker" was composed in Russia by Pyotr Illych Tchaikovsky some 150 years ago, Cunningham told the students.

"What was going on in Sacramento 150 years ago?" he asked the third graders at Crocker Riverside.

"The Gold Rush!" said one student.

"That is correct," Cunningham said. "Sacramento was a brand new, rough and tumble town back then. The people here were very poor, pioneering people for the most part. But Russia was a very elegant, sophisticated place at that time. People had beautiful homes, nice things to eat and beautiful clothes. That's where the story of 'The Nutcracker' takes place."

In addition to producing and creating the choreography for "The Nutcracker," Cunningham also plays a

key character in the ballet: Dr. Drosselmeyer.

"I have to play a really old character," he explained to the students. "I wear an eye patch and a tall top hat. I have to create a special 'face' and a special walk."

Giggles erupted from students as Cunningham "transformed" into Dr. Drosselmeyer before their eyes. The kids learned that a lot of work goes into each role in the production, whether one is a performer onstage, a choreographer, or a technical person working the lighting and special effects. Students were impressed.

"I liked how the choreographer in 'The Nutcracker' is also an actor," commented Natalie Leclerc, age 8. "He just doesn't sit around telling people what to do."

Cunningham went on to show students a few of the magic tricks that his character performs in the ballet, and how some of the special effects in the ballet are accomplished.

"Most magic tricks are actually very simple," he told the kids. "Remember, when you are doing a trick on stage, you need to divert the eye."

Students learned how Dr. Drosselmeyer is able to conjure up flowers from a cane, pull a giant candy cane from his top hat...and how he transforms a wooden nutcracker into a flesh-and-blood dancer. It was exciting and engaging for the students.

"I liked the magic stuff," said Collin Macias, age 7.

"I liked the part when he made his magic cane into flowers," said Rebecca De La Cruz, age 7. "It was a surprise because no one saw when he took the top off of his cane."

"My favorite part was when he pulled the big candy cane out of his hat," said Javarri McDaniel-Wily, age 8.

"I liked how he showed us his magic, because I watch plays and I've always wanted to know how they do that," said Maddie Haggard, age 9. "It will be a fun ballet."



Land Park News Photo/Ryan Rose
Students at Crocker Riverside Elementary Schools got an advanced peek at the "theatrical magic" of "The Nutcracker" when Land Park resident Ron Cunningham, artistic director of Sacramento Ballet, visited the schools on Nov. 30.

Students got to see the actual masks that are used for the central character and the Mouse King in the ballet. They learned how the actors see through the masks (not very well), and how hard it can be to keep one's mask in place while dancing.

"I really liked the cool costumes," said Carson Kaye, age 8. "I liked how the colors blended in (so the audience can't see where the actors look out)."

Cunningham explained the technical side of some of the special effects in "The Nutcracker," including the math calculations that are necessary to make a hot air balloon "fly" across the stage with two actors on board.

"It's exciting and cool to see," said Cesar Garcia, age 8. "He showed us the props and stuff that goes on behind the scenes."

"I didn't know how the balloon flew or how the magic box (containing the wooden nutcracker) worked before," said John Laugenour, age 8. "It's amazing how that works. I think everyone should see 'The Nutcracker.'"

The elaborate sets for "The Nutcracker" were designed in France and made in Russia. One special canvas that weighs hundreds of pounds involves a Christmas tree that Cunningham's char-

acter enchants. There is another special canvas that plays a key part in "weather effects" on stage.

"I liked how he showed us how the Christmas tree grew," said Lucie Scantlebury, age 9. "Everyone should come to see how much work goes into this."

"I liked how he showed us how they make it 'snow' on the stage," said Melissa Ng, age 7.

The students who attended Cunningham's presentation at both schools will be attending an upcoming performance of "The Nutcracker." There is tremendous excitement.

"They are so excited," said Suzanne Womack, who teaches second grade at Hollywood Park Elementary School. "We've been earning money so they can all go to see 'The Nutcracker.'"

"Each year the third grades attend the Nutcracker matinee performance, and Mr. Cunningham's presentation at our school prior to the trip truly enhances the experience for the children," said Sharon Sommer, who teaches third grade at Crocker Riverside. "We really consider it part of the field trip. He explains what happens behind the scenes so they have a special appreciation for what they are going to see. They get to see the special effects and learn how the scenery and props work, so that when we finally go to the ballet, the children are looking for those things and are completely engaged throughout the performance."

Cunningham's production of "The Nutcracker" is one of Sacramento's most cherished holiday traditions. Over 200 costumed characters enthrall the audience to the majestic Tchaikovsky score played superbly by the Sacramento Philharmonic Orchestra. Magnificent dancing, sumptuous scenery, and spectacular choreography combine in festive celebration. The production includes nearly 500 children, from Teeny Tiny Mice to swirling Candy Canes, making it the largest cast of children in any "Nutcracker" in the world.

Whether it is sharing the magic of "The Nutcracker" with elementary school students, or teaching youngsters the steps in the actual ballet, this annual production is something Cunningham looks forward to every year. To him, it's all about the kids and the magic they bring to the stage.

"One of my great pleasures of the season is working with the beautiful children that make our 'Nutcracker' alive," he said. "Alive with energy and joy."

The Sacramento Ballet's 22nd season of Ron Cunningham's "The Nutcracker" opens on Dec. 11 and runs through Dec. 23 at the Sacramento Community Center Theater. For tickets, visit the box office or www.tickets.com or call (916) 808-5181.

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The delicious ride up to El Dorado County's Apple Hill

By **BENN HODAPP**
 Land Park News Writer
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I recently took my yearly pilgrimage to Placerville to see what was going on at Apple Hill. Much to my delight, not a whole lot had changed since 2008. That is part of its charm, really. It's a place to see and to be appreciated for what it is rather than what it isn't.

But first: breakfast.



Land Park News Photo/Benn Hodapp

The Buttercup Pantry – a nice little restaurant packed with delicious delights.

Buttercup Pantry
 222 Main St., Placerville
 (530) 621-1320

As is tradition, a pit stop was in order to indulge in a meal that I had nearly forgotten. The Buttercup Pantry was the destination. It is a nice little restaurant packed with all manner of things from the 1930s. (Actually, I don't know if it's from the 1930s, but that's what it looks like to a child of the 1980s.)

My usual hasty bowl of Corn Flakes was not on the menu this day. No, no. This was a chance to reconnect with an old friend called French toast. And it was good. I don't know what they did to the bread to make it crispy like that, but it is probably best that I remain in the dark lest I demand it daily.

Stopping off at the Buttercup Pantry has become tradition and the food is excellent, but it serves a second purpose just as important: filling me up so I don't eat every apple creation under the sun when I reach Apple Hill.



Land Park News Photo/Benn Hodapp

Pony rides and fresh air – an experience with nature within driving distance.



Land Park News Photo/Benn Hodapp

Delicious and decadent: The many varieties of apples available at Apple Hill.

High Hill Ranch
 2901 High Hill Rd., Placerville
 (530) 644-1973

Stop number one was High Hill Ranch. The parking lot, though just seconds from the freeway, is a reminder of how awesome nature can be. Parking your car in a pine forest is not something you get to do a lot in the concrete expanse of every day life. Looking up, it was hard to tell if I was in Placerville or the woods of Oregon.

I took the familiar walk towards the display tents that housed handmade art for sale from vendors from all over the area. Woodcrafts, paintings and a vast array of little knick-knacks encased the area. I certainly would have taken pictures of some of the more bizarre pieces were it not for the many "No Photography" signs posted around the tents.

Afterwards, I walked past the fishing pond, complete with the two biggest white ducks I had ever seen. They could be mistaken for those paddleboats for two at first glance. I avoided the enormous pie shop (for obvious reasons) and made my way past the pony rides towards the dreaded candy shop. I submit that it was not my fault that I was drawn into its midst. It pretty much taunts you with its small-town appeal and promises of unimaginable sweetness.

I made it out alive. The only thing I bought was a little container of chocolate-covered gummy bears. (I know, I know. But when one sees something so ruthlessly absurd, curiosity overwhelms the senses). And if you're wondering, yes, they tasted about as odd as you'd expect. I'm just happy I resisted the urge to buy a caramel apple dipped in Oreo cookie pieces. I was this close to committing grand theft pastry.

Boa Vista Orchards
 2952 Carson Rd., Placerville
 (530) 622-5522

As you might expect, Apple Hill is mostly about apples. For miles around there are apple orchards, most of which have signs pointing you towards where you can purchase their produce. I stopped off at Boa Vista Orchards and counted 14 different kinds of apples. I thought there were roughly three in existence.

There was simply too much interesting stuff at that marketplace and they finally got me. I got some apple-raspberry cider, a caramel apple (sans Oreo crumbs), peanut brittle and some of those totally unnecessary but ultimately intriguing flavored honey straws. That may sound like a lot of things that are terrible for me, but if and when you go, you too will understand the power of the apple.

Before heading home, I rode through a long, winding stretch of road perfectly set between forests on either side. It was the kind of road that seems utterly impossible based on what we see as "city folk." I even passed the picnic area where I was viciously attacked by a flock of stupid geese as a child. I suppose "viciously attacked" is a bit strong, but I distinctly remember them pecking at me to share my chips. Horrible animals.

Destination and journey

There are no seven-foot-tall mascots, thrilling rollercoaster or depressingly long lines, but you could do a lot worse than a day at Apple Hill. Take the kids and enjoy the scenery. Eat the apples, of course. Just watch out for the blood-thirsty geese.



Windermere

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