

## 'Celebration of Hope' at Faith Presbyterian Church

See page 4

Kings minority owner on team history

See page 21

COMMUNITY CALENDAR, PAGES 24-25 • KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR, PAGE 27 • FACES AND PLACES, PAGE 16

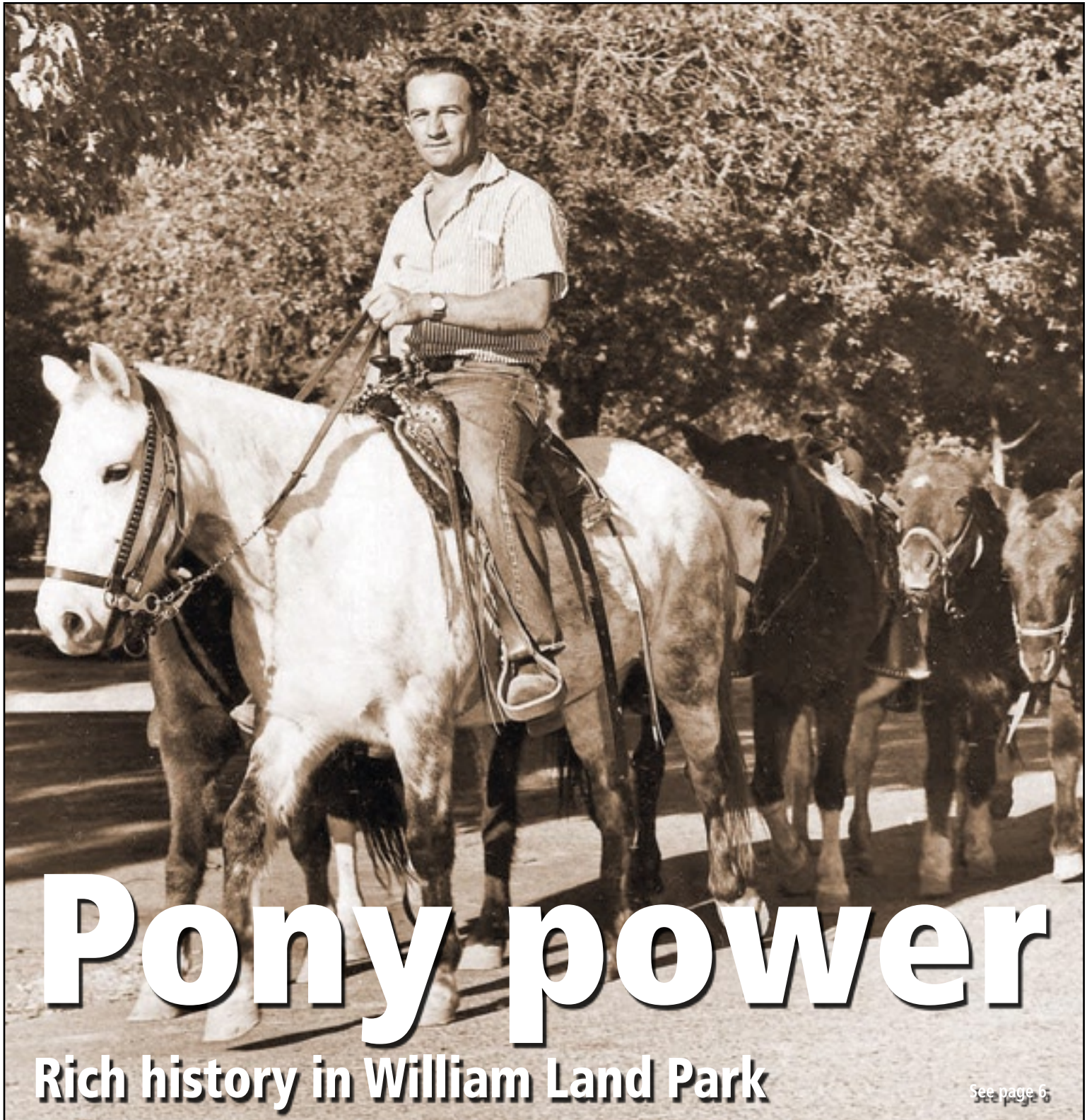
### Inside This Edition



65th annual Japanese Food & Cultural Bazaar  
See page 10



Rare birth at Sac Zoo  
See page 16



# Pony power

## Rich history in William Land Park

See page 6



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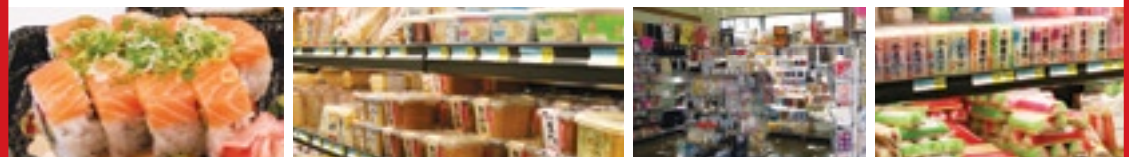


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Photo courtesy, Barbara Tracy

INFORMATION BOOTHS in the narthex of Faith Presbyterian shared information about the difficult living conditions in Ethiopia with members of the local congregation.

## Celebration of hope at Faith Presbyterian

Special to Land Park News

With drums and the voices of Ethiopian children raised in song, members of the congregation at Faith Presbyterian celebrated the first anniversary of a joint commitment and partnership with the people of Abaya, Ethiopia on Sunday, July 31.

“Hope Sunday” was a celebration of a year of accomplishments, and a hopeful look ahead to the future.

In the past year, Faith Presbyterian members individually sponsored 90 Abaya children through World Vision. (Members of the church sponsor

See Faith, page 5

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By Richard Allieri

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Photo courtesy, Barbara Tracy

CHILDREN from Faith Presbyterian Church emptied bottles of water into a tub in front of the altar at Faith Presbyterian. The water symbolized the new life fresh water provides.



Photo courtesy, Barbara Tracy

THE ETHIOPIAN CHILDREN'S CHOIR of the Ethiopian Church in Sacramento opened the worship service for "Hope Sunday" at Faith Presbyterian Church on July 31. The Ethiopian Church uses the hall at Faith Prebyterian for its services each Sunday.

## Faith: Local group to travel to Ethiopia to listen, learn

Continued from page 4

over 300 children throughout the world, also). The church also completed the installation of a latrine and access to fresh water, a \$20,000 commitment.

Future plans include raising funds to build a school in Abaya. The school will give hope to 400 children who cannot attend school right now because the existing school is too small. The goal is to raise \$100,000 and \$20,000 has already been raised.

Faith Presbyterian will send a pastor and five members of the congregation to Abaya to

live among the people for a period of time. The purpose is to listen, learn and determine needs. This will be a follow-up visit to the one conducted a year ago, when the partnership began.

The congregation hopes to sponsor more children in Ethiopia through World Vision. Efforts to educate members of the church about the difficult situations facing children and the impoverished in Africa are ongoing.

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# Popular pony rides at William Land Park have rich history

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

Long before the days of Fairytale Town in William Land Park, local children, as well as children visiting from outside the city, had plenty of places to attract their attention at the park. And one of the things that many of these children looked forward to was taking rides on the ponies that were maintained by Sacramento native Eddie Fernandes.

Although the pony rides, which are located near the entrance of Funderland (formerly Kiddie Land) at the corner of 16th and 17th avenues in the park, are no longer managed by the Fernandes family, the rides continue to be operated today.

## The Fernandes era

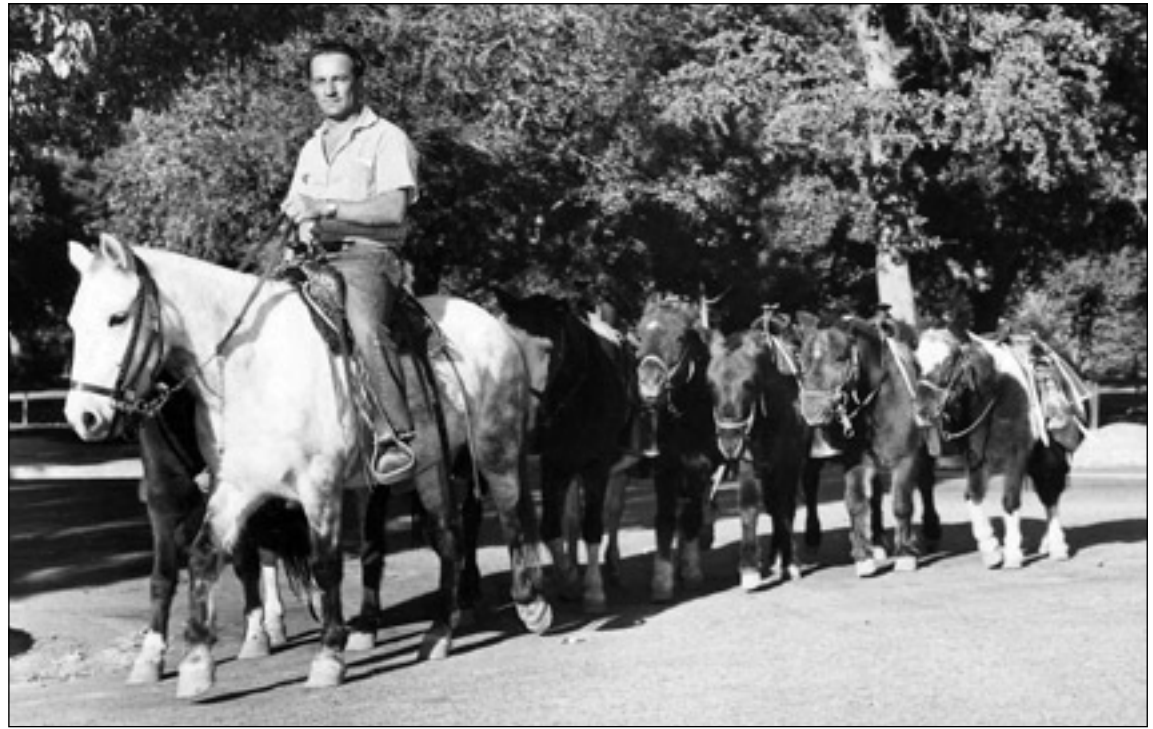
Assisting in the efforts to tell the story of Eddie Fer-

nandes, former pony ride workers, Eddie's daughter, Donna (Fernandes) Nieto, Eddie's son, Larry Fernandes, and Dave Rake-la, recently shared their memories about the concessions.

Because her father owned the pony rides, Donna said that she grew up with the notoriety of being the daughter of the "pony ride man."

"When I was growing up, my friends and other people, when they found out that my father owned the ponies at William Land Park, it was, 'Oh, wow, you're dad owns the ponies at William Land Park. You get free rides?' Well, of course I got free rides. It always blew me away that they thought my dad would charge me for a pony ride."

Larry added that during his childhood, a



EDDIE FERNANDES leads a line of ponies to William Land Park.

Photo courtesy, the Fernandes family

unique aspect about telling people about what his father did for a living was having them re-

spond by saying, "Oh, I know him."

The pony rides, which follow a scenic trail in the shade of many large trees, were under the direction of the Fernandes family for 32 years, beginning in 1948, when Eddie took over the reins of the business.

Donna said that she believes that the man who was in charge of the rides prior to this time had established the business only a few years earlier.

Although Larry remembers meeting the former owner of the business, he unfortunately could not remember the man's name.

In order to purchase the ponies and take over the pony ride business, Eddie, who had previously been an apprentice mechanic for the E.A. Boyd Co., a Chrysler and Plymouth distributor at 1125 Alhambra Blvd., borrowed money from his mother, Claudina Fernandes, a Portuguese immigrant, and his brother, A.J. Fernandes, who was employed as a county weights and measures worker.

During the earlier years of the business, the horses were boarded outside the park and would be walked to the park each day in single-file lines down such streets as Riverside Boulevard, South Land Park Drive and Rio Lane.

In about the mid-1960s, the city had a barn built for the ponies in the park about a quarter-mile from the site of the pony rides.

Larry, who worked for his father from 1955 to 1963, described his duties at the pony rides.

"I started out in the back picking up the (pony) mess," Larry said. "Then I made sure that the ponies kept going around the circle and didn't decide to stray and try to eat grass or take off for a run. And I made sure the kids didn't kick the ponies (while they were riding them). We didn't allow that, because then they would run."

Many of the workers helped the children on and off the ponies, which during this era had such names as Pee Wee, Blondie, Flash and Silver.

The workers also fastened and unfastened a safety belt around each child.

Regarding the belts, Donna said, "That was their trade off for liability at that time."

Dave chuckled as he explained a very vivid memory about working at the pony rides.

"My brother (Bob, who later became a commercial artist in Sacramento) worked there," Dave

See Ponies, page 7

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LAND PARK PONY RIDES owner Lynn Hagemann stands next to her small mule, Ladybug.



Photo courtesy, the Fernandes family

PONIES AWAIT their next riders at William Land Park in this 1960s photograph.

## Ponies: Generations of Sacramento children have enjoyed the ponies in the park

Continued from page 6

said. "He was up front and he got me the job working in the back. That was a very humbling job, because I can remember the girls who came to ride the ponies were about my age and here I am at the back sweeping urine around and picking up the golden nuggets. So, that was kind of embarrassing for me."

Donna said that her father was very passionate about his work and was endeared by many people, including his young workers.

"My dad really was a mentor to a lot of teenage boys," Donna said. "They all loved him for some reason or another. He had a dynamic personality. But when he meant business, he meant business. Even though he was only 5-foot, 1-inch-tall, they listened to him and they minded him. And those boys, after they stopped working for my dad, they would always come over to our house and visit. And when my dad passed away, they were all there. It was a huge funeral. There was something about my dad that just attracted people. He just had this personality that was kind of like when you walked in a room, the light went on."

Eddie died of a heart attack at the age of 48 on

July 4, 1969, while on the job doing something he truly loved – working with the ponies and the public.

For the following decade, Eddie's widow, Evelyn, a native of Tennessee, operated the pony rides.

### The Hagemann era

Since the end of the Fernandes family's era with the pony rides, besides a few years when the pony ride concessions were owned by a woman, named Norma, who introduced entirely different ponies to the park, Sheridan (Placer County) resident Lynn Hagemann has been in charge of the rides' operations.

Hagemann was born in Canada, but has lived in California since she was one year-old. She has 15 ponies, a small mule and two average-size horses available for riding. The current horses have such names as Blackie, Candy, Rocky, Carmel, Hot Shot, Cody, Bubba, Wrangler and Ladybug.

One of the original ponies that worked during Hagemann's time as the business's owner is Buster, who is 31 years old and is living his retirement years in Sheridan.

Hagemann said that Buster is quite a celebrity when

it comes to the park's pony rides.

"I swear at least half of Sacramento has ridden Buster, the little pony," Hagemann said.

Hagemann, who had previous experience assisting with pony rides when she was 14 years old in Fremont and later at the Nut Tree in Vacaville, added that in being an outdoor person and an animal lover, she has enjoyed her time operating this historic business at the park.

### A memorable place

Like many adults throughout the region, Roseville native Margie (Trevizo) McNeil said that she has fond memories of riding ponies at William Land Park during her childhood.

"I rode these horses (at the park) when I was three years old and I'm 57," McNeil said. "I used to come here with my family from Roseville. It was always a tradition for us to come here and ride the horses."

The pony rides are open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. daily, except on Mondays.

For additional information regarding the pony rides at William Land Park, call (916) 645-1161.

*"I rode these horses (at the park) when I was three years old and I'm 57."*  
**-Margie McNeil**

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# Stone walls should not a prison make – a tale of two care facilities

By EARL ROGERS  
Land Park News writer  
earl@valcomnews.com

Should the old and infirm be hidden behind a concrete wall? Need the very young be shielded from the very old by that same wall?

A residential care facility for the elderly in the Greenhaven area addresses these concerns.

During construction, the architect and the city building department wanted a concrete wall to separate a residential care facility from the playground of an adjoining preschool.

John Cimino, owner of the former, argued for a wrought iron fence. He made his point.

"I fought for the fence. I wanted the openness for my elderly residents," Cimino said. He has since backed up his concept with a landscaped patio featuring tables, chairs, and umbrellas alongside the wrought iron fence. Instead of being walled off, the elderly residents now have an open view of children at play.

"Just yesterday the residents had lunch out there, and the kids were

saying 'hi' and waving to them. It lifts their spirits," he added. "It changes the whole demeanor of the elderly when they see the children and hear them playing."

Within the past year, Cimino and his business partner, Rangi Paula Giner, have opened the doors to The Meadows at Country Place, A Care Center for the Elderly. According to Cimino, The Meadows fills a niche in the market for the care of elderly people who do not need continuous medical attention.

"There are basically two kinds of licenses in California," he said. "Skilled Nursing, licensed by the Department of Health, and Residential Care for the Elderly licensed by the Department of Social Services. There is no special license for assisted living," he added. "Assisted living is an industry phrase."

Assisted living can be covered by a license for Residential Care for the Elderly, along with other services. The Meadows offers



Land Park News photo, Earl Rogers  
CHILDREN PLAY IN THEIR PLAYGROUND that is adjacent to The Meadows at Country Place, A Care Center for the Elderly. The wrought-iron fence allows the very young and the very old to safely interact with one another.

See Meadows, page 9

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# Meadows: The young and the young at heart will be able to interact

Continued from page 8

non-medical custodial care for people with physical disabilities, dementia, and Alzheimer's. The 17-room building includes a lounge area, a commercial kitchen, a homelike atmosphere and a patio area on two sides of the building.

"Our license gives us flexibility," Cimino said. "Our building has to be a safe place. We need to protect the elderly person's privacy."

If residents become combative or belligerent they can be referred to other residential care homes that specialize in helping more difficult individuals.

"We are a locked facility," Cimino said, referring to the fact that some patients with dementia may have a tendency to wander away.

"I think we shield the kids too much in certain things," he reflected. "I don't know how that is beneficial. Some people don't feel comfortable around wheel chairs and elderly people."

As a part of his concept to break down the barriers between the very young and the very old, Cimino put a locked gate in the wrought iron fence. He hopes to work with administrator and the teachers at the preschool, so at some time in the future they may allow groups of children to come through the gate for a field trip around the patio or have a little parade on Halloween or Thanksgiving or Christmas.

"With kids and the elderly, it's not a clear cut

easy thing," he said. "Some parents are very touchy having their kids around people in wheel chairs. We have to watch out for the safety of the kids."

He admits there are regulations that have to be met when dealing with children, so he is moving slowly on this issue.

He sees other advantages to the locked gate. The preschool is part of a larger campus housing the buildings and worship center of Greenhaven Lutheran Church. He would like to escort some of his residents through the gate on Sundays to attend worship services in the church sanctuary.

But is this a just one sided concept? Is it only beneficial to the elderly? Do preschoolers between two-and-five years of age get anything out of waving at the old folks standing at the fence or sitting in their wheel chairs in the patio? John Cimino believes this concept can benefit both groups.

"Within the industry, there has been collaboration where they have had day care centers as part of an assisted living facility," he said. "It is very difficult to put the two together."

Here it was easier because the preschool was there and functioning when the elderly care facility was being designed.

The people who run the Angels Nest Child Development Center are not opposed to having their playground and the care facility on opposite sides

of an open fence. Eva Lack, a long time member of the governing board believes that contact with the elderly is extremely important for children.

For over twenty years, Eva ran the 4th R Program at Crocker Elementary School, a before and after school program for school-age children.

"Contact with the elderly is very beneficial to kids," she said, remembering the years when she belonged to the Greenhaven Mothers' Club, taking their children to visit the elderly in convalescent hospitals. Now, her daughter is doing the same with her own children.

Children have always been taught to be wary of strangers outside the wall. They need guidance when meeting and greeting strangers through the fence. But given their innocent nature, the children can usually find something to like in the elderly, something to brighten their day.

The kids all know Bob, a resident of the care facility. Bob sometimes stands at the fence and sings to them. How cool is that.



Land Park News photo, Earl Rogers  
CO-OWNERS OF THE MEADOWS, John Cimino and Rangji Paula Giner.

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Valley Community Newspapers file photos

OVER SIX DECADES STRONG, the annual Japanese Food & Cultural Bazaar offers something for everyone: great food, entertainment, cultural and educational opportunities, and some wonderful shopping. The bazaar is this weekend, Aug. 13-14.

## 65th annual Japanese Food & Cultural Bazaar is this weekend

By SALLY KING  
Land Park News writer  
sally@valcomnews.com

Want to try the best teriyaki chicken in northern California? To experience an entire culture without travelling thousands of miles? To check out local history?

Then look no further than the 65th annual Japanese Food & Cultural Bazaar this weekend.

The two-day event will be held at the Sacramento Buddhist Church at 2401 Riverside Blvd. in Sacramento from noon to 9 p.m. on Aug. 13 and

14. There will be free parking and shuttles from the W and 7th streets parking lot.

According to the church, the bazaar began as a way for the Japanese to rebuild their community following their forced evacuation from the West Coast during World War II.

Reverend Bob Oshita said he has a theory on why this event has continued to grow from a small food bazaar to what it is today, with an estimated attendance of 40,000 to 50,000 people.

"In the late 1950s, our physical community was moved to

renovate the downtown area, which scattered people," Oshita said. "Every year, that community seems to come back to life through the bazaar."

Oshita said that people who no longer live in the south Sacramento area come to revisit friends. He said it is a chance for them to reconnect with something from their childhood.

"This is the second largest temple in the country," Oshita said. It was founded in 1899.

The temple was located at 1221 Third Street and one year later, due to growth, moved to

410 O Street. It remained here until 1958, when it was relocated because of the city's redevelopment project and moved to Riverside Boulevard.

Oshita said the bazaar provides cultural exhibits, flower arranging, calligraphy, Taiko Drums, craft booths, children's games, lots of food and much more.

"We have the best teriyaki chicken in all of northern California," Oshita said. "This event always takes on a life of its own and I just let it happen."

Oshita said it takes 500 to 600 hundred people to run the bazaar and all of them are volunteers. He said the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Dharma Women's Auxiliary and others volunteer their time, making sure it is a success.

"My favorite part of the bazaar is the Taiko Drums, Garrett Kurahara, student staff member, said.

Oshita said his favorite part of the bazaar is the food and meeting with people. Oshita said this year they purchased 10,000 chicken halves. The organizers said they will clean one and half tons of rice, 400 pounds of shrimp, 1,500 pounds of beef and 500 pounds of noodles for hot and cold dishes.

Proceeds from the event will support the Sacramento Buddhist Church and its affiliated organizations such as youth sports programs, adult and senior groups, and many others.

To see a schedule of events, visit: [www.buddhistchurch.com/events/Bazaar.htm](http://www.buddhistchurch.com/events/Bazaar.htm)

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Rare birth at zoo

# Abyssinian ground hornbill hatched

Special to Land Park News

Last week, the Sacramento Zoo was pleased to announce a rarity in the zoo world – an Abyssinian ground hornbill chick was successfully hatched.

Currently, there are only four other pairs of this hornbill species successfully breeding at zoos in the United States, and no other captive hatches have been reported in the last year.

Two eggs, laid by the zoo's only pair of Abyssinian ground hornbills, were discovered in early May. Based on the mating pair's history of not yet successfully raising any chicks, staff de-

ecided to incubate and care for the chicks using protocols developed by the San Diego Zoo. Both chicks hatched but sadly one did not survive.

The chick, hatched on June 15 and weighing 72 grams, is being raised by staff off-exhibit and now weighs 3,930 grams.

"Every first at the zoo provides a new and exciting learning experience," said Harrison Edell, general curator. "We do everything that we can, but it is still not an exact science. With each success we are able to share knowledge with other institutions and fur-



Photo courtesy, Sacramento Zoo

See Chick, page 17 THIS RARE Abyssinian ground hornbill chick was hatched on June 15. Here, it is just three days old.

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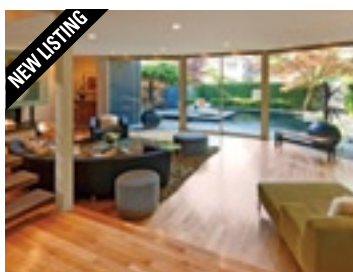
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# Chick: Rare bird is being raised using San Diego Zoo wildlife protocols

Continued from page 16

ther our conservation efforts."

The Zoo supports the Mabula Ground Hornbill Research and Conservation Project in South Africa. In addition to conducting research on genetics and behavior of Ground hornbills, this important project has launched awareness campaigns to educate the public on the dangers to hornbills such as unintentional poisoning, secondary trapping and snaring. Part of the project also includes hand-rearing some second-hatched hornbill chicks for release back into the wild or to join the captive

breeding program. This is done because ground hornbills usually only raise one chick at a time. If two chicks are hatched, one must be removed from the nest to improve its chance of survival.

Like all 54 different hornbill species, the Abyssinian ground hornbill wild population is vulnerable. Ground hornbills from Sub-Saharan Africa are the largest of the hornbills. They have a bony horn on top of their bill called a casque, which makes their calls louder and easier to hear over great distances. Abyssinian ground hornbills

fly only when disturbed or when crossing areas of dense brush, preferring to walk or run from danger. The greatest threats to the hornbill are human-related and include habitat loss and illegal hunting.

To receive the most current information about the new hornbill, see pictures of it off-exhibit and learn when it will be out for the public to see, visit [www.sacramento-zoo.blogspot.com](http://www.sacramento-zoo.blogspot.com).



Photo courtesy, Sacramento Zoo  
LOOKING GOOD at 47 days, this rare Abyssinian ground hornbill chick is being raised at the Sacramento Zoo using wildlife protocols developed by the San Diego Zoo.

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Not your 'typical' swim team

# The Stingrays Synchronized Swim Team is more than meets the eye

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

Of the many summertime activities for youths in Sacramento, swim team is one of the ones you hear about the most. But the Fulton-

El Camino Stingrays swim team has a counterpart that no other recreational team in Sacramento has – a synchronized swim team.

With 42 girls from ages five- to 18-years old, the Stingrays synchronized swim team (synchro for short) is

one of five synchro teams in the Valley Foothill Competitive Aquatic League along with ones from Auburn, Davis, Rancho Cordova and Citrus Heights.

While the synchro enrollment is but a fraction of "traditional" swim teams, the

Stingrays have found ways to keep the young ladies coming back year after year.

"We get most of our kids from word of mouth or they saw our ad in the summer brochure," said Stingrays Head Coach Laura Faulkinbury.

Along with that, many of the current Stingrays have siblings who were on the team before them, including Faulkinbury herself. Laura swam with the Stingrays from 1993 to 2005 from ages six to 18. She was never on any other swim team and she learned how to swim as a Stingray.

"My first year I was terrible," she recalls. "I was scared of the water."

Suffice to say that she didn't stay scared for long. Faulkinbury, now 25, swims for the Masters team with the Sacramento Synchronized Swim Team, a member of USA

Swimming. Her coaching career started as a student coach with the Stingrays in 2004.

The Stingrays, who practice at Cottage Pool at 3097 Cottage Way in Sacramento, is a recreational team built on learning and having fun, but competition is an important part of the team as well.

"It's definitely a mix," said Faulkinbury. "We try to keep in mind that it's recreational, but at the same time it is a competitive league."

The term "synchronized swimming" probably brings visions of many swimmers doing a vast array of simultaneous and visually outstanding maneuvers. And while that is part of the sport, there are also solo events called "figures" as well as duo and trio per-

See Synchro, page 19

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THREE EVENTS are currently recognized internationally in synchronized swimming: solo, duet and team (eight swimmers). The competitive rules and manner of judging are similar to such sports as figure skating and gymnastics.



THE STINGRAYS HAVE FUN at their events, while still keeping their competitive edge.



Photos courtesy, Jim Faulkinbury

## Synchro: Much like gymnastics, there are both individual and team goals

Continued from page 18

formances. Much like gymnastics, there are both individual and team goals.

Lisa Crayne, 18, is a student coach for the Stingrays who just finished her last year of eligibility as a swimmer for the team as well as her senior year at Victory Christian High School.

"I tried (synchro) when I was nine and didn't like it," Crayne said. "But I tried again at 15 and loved it."

While the goal is to make the moves look perfect and smooth, Crayne is quick to point out that synchro is anything but easy.

"It's such a difficult sport," she said. "People don't realize how hard it is to make it look effortless."

One of the things she loves about her job is imparting her knowledge to the younger girls on the team.

"I love seeing the girls improve and learn new things," she said.

Shelby Carney, 19, is an assistant coach for the Stingrays. She is in her third year as a coach and swam with the team for 12 years beginning when she was seven. She shares Crayne's love of watching the little ones learn.

"I like seeing kids light up when they understand what they're doing," Carney said. "I love that instant spark they get. It warms your heart."

Carney, whose career plan is to become a teacher, found her passion for teaching as a coach for the past three years.

"I learned my love of teaching as a coach here," she said. "I felt like I was supposed to be doing what I was doing. My parents told me when I was younger that I was a role model for younger kids. The (swimmers) cling to me. I love to nurture."

She credits her time with the Stingrays for picking her major of liberal studies with a minor in special education at Sac State.

Carney isn't just a great coach, she was a dynamic figures swimmer as a Stingray and competes with Faulkinbury on the Masters team. Also like Faulkinbury, Carney had an older sister who swam for the Stingrays.

The Stingrays finished their season on July 17 with the league championship. The season runs from May to July with two weeks of pre-season training before the first meet. The season consists of four duel meets where every team faces each other once, followed by a season-ending championship meet where all five teams compete together. Those interested in becoming a member of the Stingrays can visit the team website at [www.fecstingrays.org](http://www.fecstingrays.org) for more information.

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SUMMER FUN need not be expensive. Check out Sacramento's wonderful city pools for opportunities to beat the heat on a budget and have fun in the sun at the same time.

## With great weather comes great fun: **Splash into summer at your local pool**

By **ROB FONG**  
Sacramento City Council Member,  
District 4

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City pools are also available to rent for private parties. It is a great way to celebrate a memorable moment or special occasion. For more information, call (916) 808-2306.

If you are looking for a way to not only cool off from the heat but have some fun while you're at it, come visit one of our open Sacramento City swimming pools this summer.

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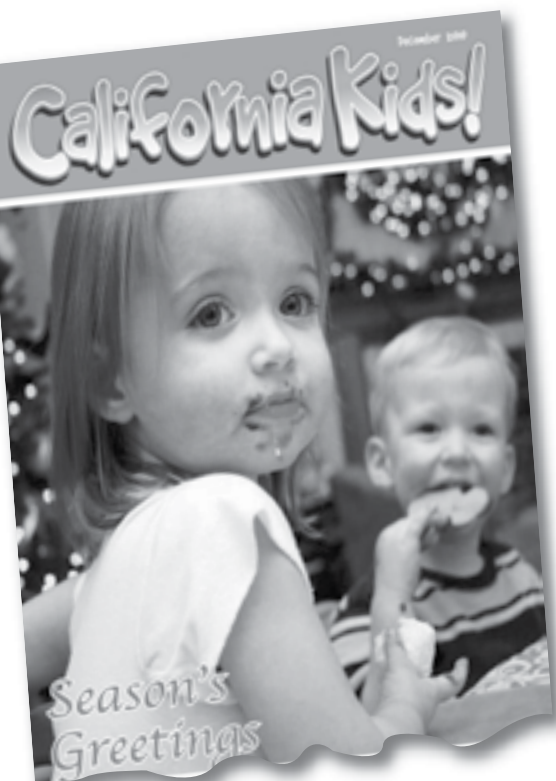
There are a variety of swimming programs designed to fit any age group and ability level. Costs and deadlines to register vary. For details, download the online 2011 Summer Aquatics Program Directory by visiting <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/parksandrecreation/recreation/aquatics>.

### Pools open

Pools that are open this summer include: Clunie Pool, Doyle Pool, Glenn Hall Pool, Johnson Pool, McClatchy Park Pool, Natomas High School Pool, Pannell Meadowview, Recreation Pool and George Sim Pool.

Please note that the following pools will be closed this summer: Cabrillo, Mangan, Oki, Southside and Tahoe.

If you have questions, contact my office. My mailing address is: City Hall, 915 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814. Phone is (916) 808-7004. Email is [rkfong@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:rkfong@cityofsacramento.org).



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# Joe Benvenuti shares his memories as a Sacramento Kings owner

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

*Editor's Note: This is the second article in a two-part series regarding Sacramento Kings owners who reside within the coverage area of Valley Community Newspapers.*

It has been more than 60 years since Arden area resident Joe Benvenuti moved to Sacramento. And one of his most notable accomplishments as a local resident was playing a major role in the relocation of the National Basketball Association's Kansas City Kings to California's capital city.

Joe, 90, who has been an owner of the Kings since 1983, when the team was still located in Kansas City, sat down with *Valley Community Newspapers* last week to discuss his life and connection with Sacramento's only major league sports team.

After spending the first nine years of his life living in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, Joe, who was one of the five children of Angelo and Mary Benvenuti, moved with his family to New Jersey.

It was during his time in New Jersey that Joe became a fan of the classic New York Yankees teams of the 1930s and 1940s.

And like many Yankees fans during this time, Joe Benvenuti was a big fan of the Yankees great, Joe DiMaggio.

Joe Benvenuti said that he enjoyed his formative years and was raised well by his parents.

"I had a very good upbringing," Joe said. "My father was a missionary and besides that he pastored about four churches in his lifetime. We were all Christians."

At the age of 29, Joe moved to Sacramento, where he encountered a building project that led to his longtime career in real estate development.

After learning various details about the building project, which featured \$6,700, two-bedroom, one-bathroom houses near his first Sacramento home, Joe was inspired to emulate what he had seen.

"Right away, I bought the five acres at the corner of El Camino and Morse (avenues)," Joe said. "I put a 68-

unit apartment right on the corner and around the back, I built these homes. And that's what got me going. I started building homes. I built a lot of homes."

Another one of Joe's early housing developments occurred after he purchased 10 acres on Edison Avenue and Kerria and Tamalpais ways.

"I built 45 homes there and they went like that," Joe recalled.

Joe eventually purchased seven lots on Railroad Avenue for 25 cents per foot and placed warehouses on the lots.

"I started (with warehouses) there and I never stopped," Joe said. "I never went back to homes. I built a lot of warehouses. I own I don't know how many down in Natomas."

Although Joe abandoned his formal education after the eighth grade, he said that it was his personal motivation and risk-taking that allowed him to succeed in life.

"It depends on yourself," Joe said. "I was always very aggressive. I took chances all the time. You know, 'nothing ventured, nothing gained,' and that's what I believed in. And that's what I did. I've got a lot of warehouses. I've built some apartment houses, I built a couple of small shopping centers. I still have (a shopping center near the corner of Douglas and Sunrise) in Roseville. And I saw that Sunrise stopped right there, and I extended (the street) all the way to what is now the auto mart. I still own the buildings on Arden Way, where the paint shop is, just west of Fulton (Avenue)."

Joe's drive in life led him to be in a financial position that allowed him to assist in the project to help make it possible for the old Kansas City Kings to become the Sacramento Kings.

Recalling the moment that he was asked to become involved in the local efforts to acquire an NBA team, Joe said that he was approached by Sacramento business owner and a future Kings owner Gregg Lukenbill in the early 1980s.

"Gregg Lukenbill – I'd read about him, (how he) and his father were building homes, but I'd never met (Gregg)," Joe said. "He called (local real estate developer) Buzz Oates, he called everybody, all the contractors.

He wanted to get some team over here. Sacramento had nothing; no baseball, no football, no basketball."

Joe said Lukenbill also approached him and convinced him to become involved in the efforts to bring an NBA team to Sacramento.

In 1983, Joe and Gregg traveled to Kansas City to negotiate a deal to purchase the Kings.

In recalling this historic event, Joe said, "(Gregg) and I got on a (Kansas City-bound) plane one day and we spent three days there with lawyers and bought (the Kings). Paid \$10.5 million for them. I paid it. Gregg had no money; he just had a lot of guts. And that's how we got the Kings."

Two years later, the Kings were relocated to Sacramento, as they played their first regular season game in a temporary arena just east of Power Balance Pavilion on Oct. 25, 1985.

During a discussion regarding the temporary arena, Joe said, "That small (arena) sticks in my mind, because that's where it all began. And all these big players came from L.A. and Washington and New York to play. (Games at the arena) were always exciting. There were only 10,000 seats, but (the arena) was always jam-packed. And people were selling their tickets for more money, because you couldn't get any more than 10,000 (tickets)."

The second arena – today's Power Balance Pavilion – was opened for the 1988-89 season and until earlier this year was known as Arco Arena, which



Land Park News photo, Lance Armstrong  
SACRAMENTO KINGS minority owner Joe Benvenuti holds a framed Kings 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary (1985-2010) art piece, which includes a small portion of Arco Arena's basketball floor.

was also the name that was given to the temporary arena.

Of the original owners of the Kings – Joe, Bob Cook, Gregg, Gregg's father, Frank Lukenbill, Steve Cippa and Frank McCormack – only Joe and Cook (who was featured in the first part of this series, which was published in July) remain in the ownership of the Kings.

Joe, who believes – despite the league's current lockout – that NBA teams will play a

full 2011-12 season, because team owners would not want to lose money from a cancelled season, said that he is looking forward to following Kings games by this coming fall.

And in reviewing the Kings' quarter century in Sacramento, Joe said that the team has brought him much joy in his life.

"Win or lose, I'm glad to have them," Joe said. "After all, I bought them. We had a lot of good times and we still do."

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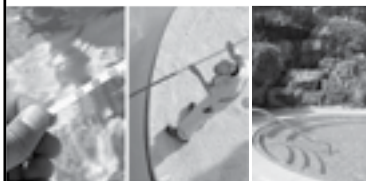
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# CALENDAR

For more Calendar entries visit  
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Send your event announcement for consideration to: susan@valcomnews.com at least two weeks prior to publication.

## REUNIONS

**C.K. McClatchy High School 1971**  
Sept. 17: C.K. McClatchy High School, Sacramento, Class of 1971, is holding their 40th high school reunion at the Frasinetti Winery. Contact McClatchy71@gmail.com or Cyndy Wright at (916) 704-4952, or Steve Chan at (916) 421-7777.

## ONGOING

**'Annie Get Your Gun'**  
Through Aug. 14: There's no business like show business, especially in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show. Music by Irving Ber-

lin. Call for times, prices. Music Circus. (916) 557-1999 www.SacramentoMusicCircus.com

## Defending the Caveman'

Through Sept. 11: Broadway's smash comedy about the sexes, written by Rob Becker. Call for times, prices. The Cosmopolitan Cabaret, 10th and K streets., Sac. (916) 557-1999 www.CosmopolitanCabaret.com

## Landscapes from the Age of Impressionism

Through Sept. 18: This exhibition of approximately 40 paintings includes many of the finest examples of mid-19th through early 20th-century French and American landscapes from the collection of the Brooklyn Museum. These works form a broad survey

of landscape painting as practiced by leading French artists such as Gustave Courbet and Claude Monet, as well as their most significant American followers, including Childe Hassam and John Singer Sargent. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org

## Transcending Vision: American Impressionism, 1870-1940

Through Sept. 25: "Transcending Vision" traces the development of Impressionism in the United States and the growth of a truly American style of painting. The exhibition includes works by more than 75 prominent American artists including George Bellows, George Inness, Childe Hassam, Ernest Lawson, Lilla Cabot Perry and Julian Alden Weir. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org

## Gardens and Grandeur: Porcelains and Paintings by Franz A. Bischoff

Through Oct. 23: After beginning his career as a china painter in Bavaria, Franz A. Bischoff immigrated to the United States in 1885 to become one of the foremost porcelain painters of his day. He won numerous awards and earned the title "King of the Rose Painters." "Gardens and Grandeur" features approximately 40 examples of Bischoff's work, including porcelains, still lifes, and landscapes. Crocker Art Museum, 216 O St., Sac. (916) 808-7000, www.crockerartmuseum.org

## AUGUST

### Bilingual Toastmasters

Aug. 11, 18, 25: Una oportunidad unica para mejorar sus habilidades bilingues y superar el temor de hablar delante de gente con nuestro club Los Oradores Toastmasters. Improve your language skills and lose fear of speaking in front of people in Spanish and English with Los Oradores. Every Thursday/Cada Jueves 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm Sutter Cancer Center 2800 L Street, Sac. Teri Bullington (916) 723-6232 teri.bullington@gmail.com, www.sacramentotoastmasters.com

### Capitol Mall Farmer's Market

Aug. 11, 18, 25: Capitol Mall Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, May-Sept. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. 6th St. & Capitol Mall, Sac. www.california-grown.com

### East End State Capitol Park

**Farmer's Market**  
Aug. 11, 18, 25: East End State Capitol Park Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, June-Sept. 10 a.m.-1:30 p.m. 15th & L streets, Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Florin Sears Store Farmer's Market

Aug. 11, 18, 25: Florin Sears Store Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, year round. 8 a.m.-noon. Florin Rd. & 65th St., Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Food Addicts Anonymous

Aug. 11, 18, 25: 12-Step group for those who struggle with obesity, food obsession or eating disorders. Meets Thursdays. 9 a.m. St. Andrews United Methodist Church, 6201 Spruce Ave., Sac. (800) 600-6028.

### Living Positive with Chronic

**Disease group**  
Aug. 11, 18, 25: Meet-up group for people living with chronic disease who honor how important a positive mindset is. If you want to complain - this isn't the group for you. The group will discuss and support: best practices for managing your condition, communication strategies, ways to laugh, have fun, engage with life and more. Free. Meets Thursdays. 5:30 p.m. - 7 p.m. Starbucks, 1401 Alhambra Blvd., Sac. Danae Horn (503) 319-4247

### Rotary Club of Pocket/Greenhaven

Aug. 11, 18, 25: Hear guest speakers address local, regional and international topics. Visitors welcome. 7:30 a.m., every Thurs. Aviators Restaurant, 6151 Freeport Blvd., Sac. Kelly Byam (916) 684-6854.

### Sacramento Downtown Plaza

**Farmer's Market**  
Aug. 11, 18, 25: Sacramento Downtown Plaza Farmer's Market. Every Thursday, May-Sept. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 4th & K streets, Sac. www.california-grown.com

### Sutterville Heights Optimist Club

Aug. 11, 18, 25: Come enjoy community speakers and community projects for youth. 12 noon., every Thurs. Aviators Restaurant, 6151 Freeport Blvd., Sac. Cliff (916) 427-2698 or Mary-Jo at (916) 691-3059

### Volkssport walking

Aug. 11: Come join the Sacramento Walking Sticks Volkssport Club! Monthly meetings held every second Thursday at 7 p.m. SMUD Headquarters Bldg., Conference Center, 6201 S St., Sac. Those who wish to walk before the meeting, meet at Starbucks, 1420 65th St., Sac. At 5 p.m. to walk a 3-mile walk to CSUS campus & back. Barbara Nuss (916) 283-4650 or (916) 691-7618 or nussb@surewest.net. Also www.SacramentoWalkingSticks.org

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The YoloArts Musical Tour is funded in part by the California Arts Council and Dept. of Justice, state agencies, and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

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**Saint Rose of Lima Park Farmer's Market**  
 Aug. 12, 19, 26: St. Rose of Lima Park Farmer's Market. Every Friday, June–Sept. 10 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. 7th & K streets, Sac. www.MarketLocations.com

**Kiwanis Club of East Sacramento–Midtown**

Aug. 12, 19, 26: Come listen to an interesting guest speaker weekly; community service, serving the children of the world. Visitors welcome, first breakfast "on us." 7 a.m. – 8 a.m. Fridays. 2875 50th St., UC Davis Med. Ctr., Sac. (916) 761-2124 www.east-sacmidtownkiwanis.com

**Rotary Club of Point West**

Aug. 12, 19, 26: Hear guest speakers address local, regional and international topics. Visitors welcome. 7 a.m., every Fri. DoubleTree Hotel, 2001 Point West Way., Sac. www.pointwestrotary.com

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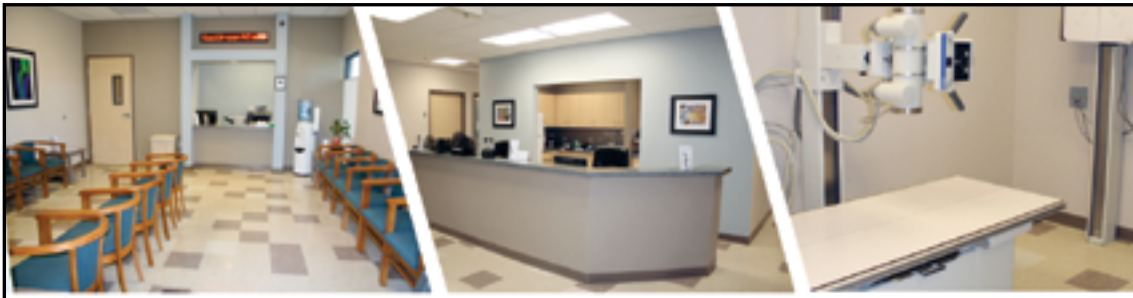
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Special to Land Park News

On Sept. 9, Christian Brothers High School will be transformed into a festival of food, fun, beer, wine and live music.

Now in its 24th year, the Wine, Beer & Food Extravaganza is a well-established Sacramento tradition that draws crowds of over 1,600 to the campus for open tastings from vintners and craft breweries – along with ample foods and desserts by area restaurants and caterers.

Setting this event apart is its festive, casual atmosphere and live bands in two venues – a beer garden and wine tasting area. New this year, guests can also enjoy a cigar along with bourbon and port tastings in the Cigar Lounge.

Not only will guests sample great food and beverages, they will sample great music too. The evening starts out with the jazz sounds of the New Originals Trio. In the Wine

and Restaurant Area, the Dane Drewis Band will get the party started. And once everyone is warmed up, Mustache Harbor will perform "Yacht Rock Explosion" music in the Beer Garden that will rock this late summer evening with "sweet sounds as smooth as the summer sea."

The Wine, Beer & Food Extravaganza will be held Friday, Sept. 9 from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. at Christian Brothers High

School, located at 4315 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Sacramento. Event shuttles will be available from East Sacramento, Downtown and Midtown locations. For ticket information, visit [www.cbhswinetasting.com](http://www.cbhswinetasting.com).

All proceeds benefit tuition assistance at CBHS, so celebrate the last days of summer with an evening of wine, food and fun and help support this most worthy cause – and let the good times flow.

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Know your neighbor

# Artist Jose Di Gregorio involved at Verge Center for the Arts

By SALLY KING  
Land Park News writer  
sally@valcomnews.com

The artwork of Sacramento resident Jose Di Gregorio was displayed at the annual Jumble Sale preview for the Verge Center for the Arts on Aug. 4. This local artist is dedicated to promoting the arts in the Sacramento community.

Di Gregorio said his first foray into art was photography. He said he remembers being in his early twenties and living in Santa Cruz when he started taking photographs.

"I wanted to encapsulate what I was seeing with what was so aesthetically beautiful and sublime," Di Gregorio said. "It's the sublime that continues to reflect in my work today."

Di Gregorio was born in Puerto Rico. Soon after, his family moved back to his father's homeland of Argentina. When Di Gregorio was four-years old, the family moved to Woodland because his father had a close friend there. His parents, who were not well educated, felt their children would receive a better education in the United States.

Di Gregorio said he moved to Puerto Rico in 2000, to live with his godfather, who had a mountain estate, and to be the groundskeeper. He said his purpose was to meet his mother's side of the family.

Seven months later, Di Gregorio was accepted to the Herron School of Art and Design in Indianapolis.

"I shifted from photography to painting," Di Gregorio said. "I was influenced by plein aire artists."

In 2004, Di Gregorio received a full scholarship to attend the Pont-Aven School of Contemporary Art in France. This was his first experience being in Europe. He said this changed his art style altogether.

"I went from a deeply figurative technical style of work to non-representational abstract work," Di Gregorio said. "I made lots of drip paintings and gave them to people passing by on the streets."

Di Gregorio said he studied under abstract painter Robert Reed. Di Gregorio said he realized over time he did not like

holding a paintbrush. He said he is more comfortable as a tactile artist. He said he prefers drawing more than painting.

Di Gregorio said he believes art is innate in every society; some societies are just more cognizant of it. He said he sees everyone as an artist in his or her own way.

Di Gregorio finished his undergraduate studies in 2006 and moved to East Sacramento with his wife, Megan and two daughters. He said he loves East Sacramento because his neighbors have such an eclectic range of careers and they appreciate him as an artist.

Di Gregorio said he loves working at Verge.

"Verge won first place for the Arts Innovation Grant from Sacramento Metropolitan Arts Commission," Di Gregorio said. "Our plan is to have art classrooms, an installation studio, art studios, a print making lab, an art gallery and a retail area where art can be purchased by the public. This is unprecedented in Sacramento."

Di Gregorio said the hope is for Verge to open by next spring. Di Gregorio said Liv Mo, executive director for Verge, asked him to work on this project.

"Jose is a fantastic addition to Verge," Mo said. "He understands the big picture of what we are trying to do and he has experience working at other art centers."

Di Gregorio said he sees Verge being a place where artists can network with other artists and be an inspiration to all. The art center is located at 625 S St. in Sacramento.

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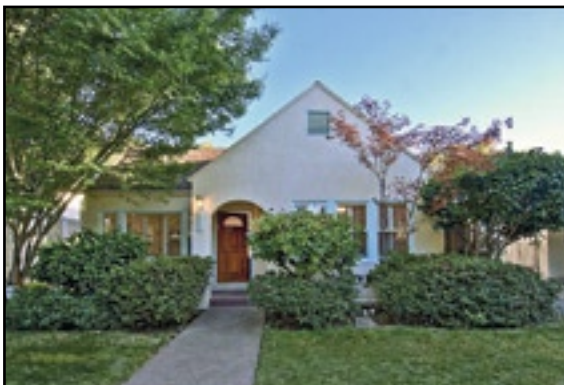


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Behind an unassuming exterior lies a wonderful home described by the owner as "The House of Glass and Steel". An entire wall of glass overlooks a peaceful courtyard framed by towering bamboo, with stained concrete patio and a tranquil pond. See: [www.3717jeffreyave.epropertiesites.com](http://www.3717jeffreyave.epropertiesites.com) \$125,000

**CHRIS BRIGGS 834-6483**



### WASHINGTON SQUARE

Better than new 3 year old 2 bedroom 2½ bath condo is centrally located to all downtown has to offer ... restaurants, galleries, parks, light rail and shopping! Energy efficient with cherry cabinets. <http://41317thst7.canbyours.com> \$315,000

**NANCY WEGGE 600-5458**

**LISA MARTIS 612-7548**



### LITTLE POCKET GEM

Well-maintained 4BR. Spacious original kit has portable D/W & gas stove. Lg LR has blt-in bookshelves. Newer CH&A, dual-pane windows, recessed lighting, refinished floors. See: [www.1071casiladaway.epropertiesites.com/](http://www.1071casiladaway.epropertiesites.com/) \$329,000

**CHARLENE SINGLEY 806-8072**

**JENNIFER MERICA 397-1605**



### QUAINT CURTIS PARK

Here is a Curtis Park charmer that is move-in ready. 2 bedrooms, 1½ baths, pretty hardwood floors, granite countertops, formal dining room and breakfast nook; inside laundry. Easy care yard and great patio. Walk to Taylor's Easy living in a great neighborhood! See: [www.2114marshallway.epropertiesites.com](http://www.2114marshallway.epropertiesites.com) \$269,000

**JAMIE RICH 612-4000**

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