Over the Fence

with Greg Brown

By GREG BROWN
greg@valcomnews.com

Back in December, I told you how the Curtis Park Village project will no longer have a park that was in the original plan. A pond will replace the park. Sacramento City Councilman Jay Schenirer had to be the bearer of bad news at the CPNA meeting.

At the recent Curtis Park Village meeting, developer Paul Petrovich and his trusty sidekick architect Phil Harvey recently presented the proposed changes to a packed house at the Sierra 2 Center. It was standing room only.

I should have brought popcorn and a Coke. It was quite a show.

The meeting was started with Schenirer telling everybody that the proposal has "a lot of pieces down the road." It will have to go before the Sacramento City Planning Commission and also the Sacramento City Council. In other words, it's not a done deal.

Schenirer was a great opening act. He assured residents that he would listen to their cares and concerns about the new proposal and that their input was valued. He said, "you will be heard by me and you will be heard by the developer. That's my commitment to you."

Then it was Paul Petrovich's turn. Paul asked, "Can you hear me without the microphone?" The crowd immediately all started to shout out, "No" and "Use the mic." That's when Paul said: "Our first controversy", creating some laughter. It broke the tension in the room.

And that's how it began. I was transfixed by the whole thing. Petrovich and the active community in Curtis Park have a history. There's no love lost. There's a lot of passion and drama with a dose of sarcasm.

Back in June of last year, Petrovich found out the detention requirements for the project had resulted in the existing neighborhood pushing 250,000 gallons of water into the site. He says that destroyed their ability to have the park as they presented it before. Drainage law states that if you have an existing condition, the new developer needs to deal with it.

He showed a visual of Leonardo da Vinci K-8 School's playground where they have a 4-acre detention basin. Petrovich called it, "Muddy, mucky, and really can't be used." So, Petrovich and Company decided against a detention basin.

The new plan is to build a year-round pond. There would also be green space surrounding the pond 100 feet wide and 340 feet long with benches and play structures. Instead of a detention basin like da Vinci has, a retention pond.

They are also required to have a certain amount of park space, and since the project doesn't have enough park space, they have to pay $1.9 million in Quimby fees, which are costs to a developer in lieu of park space. They hope to use those fees to improve the existing 17-acre-park in Curtis Park. Petrovich called it a "win win."

Photos by Greg Brown
Paul Petrovich presents his new proposal to Curtis Park residence at the Sierra 2 Center.

Then it was time for questions by the Curtis Park residents.

A couple of residents were concerned about the 20-foot deep pond not having a fence around it. He invited them to go to Natomas or McKinley Park. Then the resident said, "McKinley isn't 6 feet deep. Petrovich responded by stating, "What's the difference after 6 feet deep?"

Most of the concerns were about less green space for the Curtis Park Village project. Water is not park; it's not useable space. I can see why the residents would be concerned and not all that thrilled with the proposed change.

Some residents came up with other ideas to make the project more green.

Dan Pskowski mentioned that all detention basins are not muddy and mucky like the one at Leonardo da Vinci. He pointed out that Banfleth Park at 950 Shamus in South Sacramento has a detention basin with trees surrounding it. He said kids play soccer on it and there's supposedly no muddy mess.

Petrovich said, they'd look into it.

Another resident asked what other storm water solutions were explored?

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There are French drains and other Subterranean best management practices they could use in lieu of the retention basin.

Petrovich said "after all the engineering and working with the Department of Utilities, the pond was the optimum solution."

Another idea was for a couple of little pocket parks. Former Curtis Park President Rosanna Herber said her biggest concerns was Petrovich has added so many more homes and taken away so much green space.

She suggested to Petrovich that he "give us a couple small pocket parks in the development. Maybe even one little pocket park around the heritage tree that everybody has fought to save."

Herber ended by saying, "I just want everyone to know that the decision maker in this room is that man over there (pointing Jay Schenirer). I don't believe that Paul Petrovich is going to walk away from this project or build a huge amount of commercial space when with a little more compromise, this could turn out to be great." The crowd roared its approval.

Unique Valentine's gift: Singing Valentines

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

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

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

Last year, the Capitolaires sold 47 valentines. One quartet had 16 valentines to sing in one day, with 12 being the typical amount. While they generally stick to the greater Sacramento area, Samora said last year they accepted a request from a military officer serving in Afghanistan for a Singing Valentine for his sweetheart who was living in Yuba City. Also in the past, they delivered a Singing Valentine to a staff member in the Mayor's Office and also sang to nurses and donors at BloodSource.

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

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

The Capitolaires belong to the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce and are sponsored by Sacramento Metro Arts Commission as they have qualified to receive grants for the past several years. From events like the Singing Valentines and the Polar Express, they raise funds to help pay for teaching four-part harmony to high school boys at a camp in Pollock Pines each September. The boys memorize the words and the notes.

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

Masonic Lawn Cemetery grounds predated by earlier established cemetery

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
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Editor's Note: This is part eight in a series regarding Sacramento area cemeteries.

On the western end of the 7 ¾ -acre, rectangular-shaped Masonic Lawn Cemetery at 2700 Riverside Blvd. is an elevated area with some of the cemetery's oldest monuments.

That area, which is identified on a c. 1930s map of the cemetery as the "old section," has a history predating the establishment of the Masonic cemetery.

Historically, that "old section" was recognized as part of the Sunset Hill Cemetery, noted Don Mac Vicar, manager of Masonic Lawn Cemetery.

In speaking about the Sunset Hill Cemetery, Mac Vicar, who admitted that he was no expert on that cemetery's history, said, "I think it started out being a privately owned cemetery, and eventually (the Masons) made the big purchase of the land, all that was included and agreed that we would take care of the stuff that was already there. It's the only section (on the current cemetery grounds), supposedly, where stand-up monuments were allowed until more recent times. There is a lot of beautiful stonework back there."

Included in the 1880 book, "History of Sacramento County, California," is a brief reference to the Sunset Hill Cemetery that reads: "Sunset Hill Cemetery is located directly south of the city cemetery (which has the present day address of 1000 Broadway). The ground was purchased by (undertaker and former Sacramento County coroner) Joseph Anthony Conboie (1830-1918) in 1869, and has been laid out into lots for sale."

A more thorough description of the cemetery was presented in the Jan. 18, 1873 edition of *The Sacramento Union*.

The article mentions that the cemetery adjoined the city cemetery to the south, consisted of 15 acres and had its main entrance on the "Sutterville or Riverside road."

It was also noted in the 1873 article that interments in the cemetery commenced in September 1869 and had since reached 500 burials.

Among the people who were interred at Sunset Hill Cemetery was Joseph Smith Emery, who either jumped or fell to his death from the steamer Chrysopolis while en route to the capital city on a trip along the Sacramento River on Thursday night, Sept. 1, 1870.

Another man, F. Kessler, was buried in the Sunset Hill Cemetery on June 12, 1871. He was noted in *The Union* to have "died on the Central Pacific cars" two days earlier.

On Aug. 19, 1872, *The Union* reported that while Conboie, who was a native of Ireland, and an assistant

See Cemetery, page 7

Photo by Lance Armstrong
This 1874 monument is among the historic memorials from the old Sunset Hill Cemetery.

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Cemetery:

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were working at Sunset Hill Cemetery, a small haystack adjoining the place caught on fire, and that a considerable amount of effort was made to save the cemetery's fence from being destroyed. The cause of the fire was undiscovered at the time of the publishing of the announcement.

In November 1872, J.F. Clark, superintendent of the city cemetery, noted that of the 38 people who had died during the previous month, seven of them had been interred at Sunset Hill Cemetery.

Two disinterments occurred at the cemetery on Nov. 6, 1872, as arrangements had been made for the remains of two Chinese people to be sent to their native land for reinterment.

In the aforementioned article about the cemetery in the Jan. 18, 1873 edition of *The Union*, it was noted that Conboie had a contract with the Ning Ming Yang, Yong Wo, Gen Wo, See Yup, Sam Yup and Hop Wo companies to "inter the remains of those Chinese whose bodies might be brought here from the mountains and the interior for burial, prior to being shipped back to the Flowery Kingdom."

The 1873 article also provided details regarding the cemetery grounds, as follows: "The grounds are being handsomely laid out with drives and avenues, and ornamented with trees, shrubs and plants. A row of trees is to entirely surround the inclosure (sic). The drives are forty-two feet wide and the avenues four feet. The Chinese are buried in a part of the cemetery especially set apart for that purpose. The sizes of the lots vary from 10 by 5 feet to 20 feet square. Between the tier graves, the avenues, four feet wide, run only north and south. For the purpose of irrigating the flowers and shrubbery, two windmills are to be erected. A receiving vault will also be built. As the soil there is very superior, the trees, etc. must flourish finely, so that in the course of a few years, Sunset Hill Cemetery will be one of the most beautiful spots in the suburbs of Sacramento."

Photo by Lance Armstrong

A portion of the old Sunset Hill Cemetery is shown in this recent photograph.

A real estate transfer was announced in the March 13, 1875 edition of *The Union*, as follows: "J.A. Conboie to A.T. Nelson, in trust for the five Masonic Lodges of Sacramento – Twelve acres, more or less, known as Sunset Hill Cemetery: $5,000."

Another news brief regarding the cemetery was published in the April 6, 1875 edition of *The Union*. It was announced that "a communication was received from the Masonic Committee, proposing to sell and convey four acres of Sunset Hill Cemetery to the city for $2,000."

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Alice Birney students kick off fourth annual Knit-A-Thon

Alice Birney Waldorf Inspired K-8 School held its fourth annual Knit-A-Thon Cast Off Event on Jan. 25 with live music performances by teachers and students.

The Knit-A-Thon is a key Alice Birney fundraiser that directly supports the children's handwork program. All grade levels and family members can contribute squares that are turned into blankets for children through Project Linus.

"It's a great way for all of our students and families to help other children with the gift of a blanket of their own," says Principal Mechelle Horning. "Many recipients of project Linus blankets arrive with no personal possessions. A blanket provides much needed warmth and security."

Donations from the Knit-A-Thon go directly to the school's handwork budget. Handwork such as sewing, knitting and crocheting help children develop fine motor skills and recognize patterns, necessary for learning math.

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Vic's Café now open

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Vic's Cafe staff shown from the left on Monday, Feb. 10, Bart O'Kelly, Aaron Penrose and Marcelena Menard.

Good news travels fast in Land Park. An unadvertised soft opening of Vic's Café held Sunday, Feb. 2 was reportedly well-attended and since its official opening on Friday, Feb. 7 staff has seen a steady morning crowd with the most popular order being hot cocoa. The Feb. 2nd date was sentimental in that it was 67 years ago then that Vice's Ice Cream opened its doors to the Land Park neighborhood.

As was mentioned in a previous article in this publication, the 3100 block on Riverside Boulevard has a recent history of coffee shops that have come and gone, such as Central Valley Coffee and a small coffee bar inside Land Bark Pet Supplies that closed in 2010. To fill the void, Vic's Ice Cream owner Craig Rutledge opened Vic's Café next door to the parlor, where Temple Coffee and baked goods from Old Soul are served.

Customers rave about the new addition to the neighborhood and staff has enjoyed learning how to make quality espresso.

"You can't get this at Starbuck's" was a common statement made by customers and staff alike.

Janie Charamuga was enjoying a cup of loose leaf tea while studying for a nursing exam. "It's really good. You can't get that at Starbuck's. They don't have loose leaf."

Aaron Penrose, a long-time employee of Vic's Ice Cream demonstrated the use of the espresso machine, as he brewed 22 grams of coffee precisely for 28 seconds. Four staff members trained at Temple for three days straight.

While the café hired a few new people to help out, its arrival has allowed for current ice cream parlor staff to work more hours.

Marcelena Menard started working in the café Monday, but has been a long-time Vic's employee. The business is like a family to her as she has made many friends there over the years.

Saturday, Feb. 8 was Bart O'Kelly's first day working at the cafe. He used to own a "little kiosk in Roseville" but he enjoys the coffee much more at Vic's. "They're so picky here and I like that attention to detail."

There are a lot of little things Rutledge said previously they would like to try after they work out the kinks of operating a new business, namely offering affogato, a concoction of ice cream and espresso that takes the form of a scoop of vanilla gelato or ice cream topped with a shot of hot espresso.

Gary Smith, a loyal Vic's Ice Cream parlor customer, on Monday said he had already been to the café three times and will keep coming back for the lattes.

Hours are Monday through Thursday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., Friday and Saturday 6 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. Vic's is located at 3193 Riverside Blvd. Sacramento. For more information, call 475-1223.

Gary Smith enjoys a hot cup of coffee at Vic's Cafe on Monday, Feb. 10.

Customers enjoying each other's company at Vic's Cafe on Monday, Feb. 10.

Shown here is a white mocha from Vic's Cafe.

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Congratulations to Jonah Eldridge, CKM rugby star

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Jonah Eldridge, local rugby star.

Jonah Eldridge, a senior at C.K. McClatchy High School, is a nationally-ranked rugby star. Eldridge made the USA Sevens Rugby Tournament, the largest rugby competition in North America, and performed so well he was selected to captain the second side, shocking tournament organizers by taking third place in the Jan. 24-26 Las Vegas event. Jonah is certainly in the mix to move on to London if there are circumstances, like unforeseen injuries, that prevent one of the boys who played on the undefeated first side from going.

In a recent interview with the *Land Park News*, Eldridge described the competition "Sevens" referring to having only seven people on the team. "It's meant for smaller people, unlike the usual set up with 15 versus 15 on the field at a time. So it's a lot more running, benefiting the smaller, quicker people, me I guess."

Jonah plays the position of scrumhalf, which, in rugby, is the link between the forwards and the backs. They're similar to halfbacks in football. A difficult position to master, scrumhalves have to be able to pass with both hands, which Jonah likens to a "quarterback doing a 10-yard up and out play on passing it 10 times perfectly with his right hand and doing the exact same play, throwing it with his left hand."

Is the young man gifted as being ambidextrous? Well, it's hard to tell. "Past rugby I can't write with my left hand; I can't hold sticks with my left hand; I can't do anything with my left hand but I've been doing rugby for so long, it's like second nature at this point," he said.

Jonah has been playing since sixth grade when he turned 10 years old, which was a much frowned upon thing to do since most of the players were at least in the seventh grade. But he joined the Land Park Motley anyway. "I was a 10 year old playing against 14 year olds, so, that's how it all started." Then Jonah went to McClatchy where he "kept on playing, kept on playing. Then, if you play well, you get invited to All Star Teams and that's where you get sucked into the next level."

Asked if competition has been too easy for him, he said: "NorCal has the best in the nation, so the competition is great." And he said it's not just that but the sport itself is very much a team sport. "Not just one person can take over a game." As such, he explained how typically there are 15 players on the field, lending itself to a lot of action between multiple players. "It's not like basketball where the best player of the team can score 30 points, rugby is a team sport contributes their part."

So rugby being such a team oriented sport lent itself to the obvious question: How do officials choose who will be on the U.S. Rugby Team? That's a good question, said Jonah. "You have to be invited to the camp in Arizona and then they just pick people from there. If you have what they're looking for you're invited or if you fit their mold, then you get invited."

His grandmother Paula Ridgeway had a different explanation: "He's just the best, that's all there is." She went on to describe her admiration for the way he plays. She said, "He can control that ball. It's like a flip ball. Jonah throws it in a tight spiral."

Among the more memorable experiences Jonah has had playing rugby, was when he was in the eighth grade when the Land Park Motley had a great season, as he recalls making it to the finals. "The team worked on a sequence where one of the players kicked the ball deep into a corner and our big four tackled him out of bounds and we balled in and scored. That's what we worked on in practice. In the opening kick off, it happened. There was a feeling that went right so how much worse can the rest of the game be? We went out winning the game, so I went out in eighth grade as a NorCal champion, so that was fun. It was a good experience."

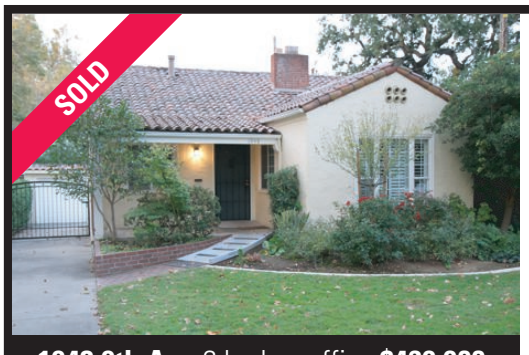
The fact that Jonah started playing in sixth grade didn't seem to matter too much as the coach and his teammates knew his age. "There wasn't a rule against it. If your parents signed a waiver, you could do it but it was frowned upon because I was only 60 pounds at the time, so the average seventh or eighth grader weighed maybe 120 (pounds). They were double my size," he said.

Photo courtesy

Photographed here is Jonah Eldridge from when he was in sixth grade.

No, he didn't double his weight in a year, in fact he has always been small, but just recently he has been able to slightly catch up. His second year, he was maybe 80 pounds tops and he came in as a freshman at 105 pounds. "I've never been on the big end; I've always been the little guy and not much has changed."

A senior at McClatchy, Jonah wants to continue playing in college, though he's undecided where. He's talking to colleges, seeing what his options are. As he said, "I am just feeling it out."



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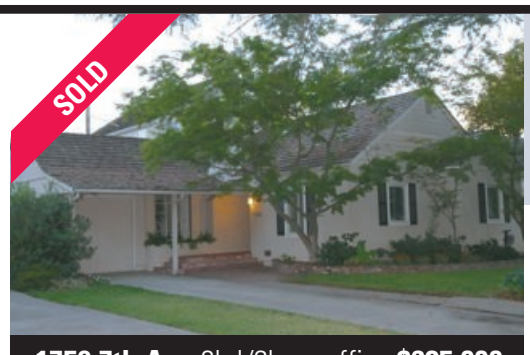

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It's a bouncing baby boy!

The Sacramento Zoo welcomed its first new resident of 2014, an infant Coquerel's Sifaka Lemur! The male, weighing 121 grams at birth, was discovered by keepers the morning of Sunday, Jan. 5. Mother, father and infant can be seen daily in their habitat across from the Conservation Carousel.

There are only nine Association of Zoos and Aquariums-accredited facilities in the U.S. that house fewer than 60 endangered Coquerel's Sifaka. To help preserve vanishing species, the Sacramento Zoo takes part in Species Survival Plans® initiated by the AZA, to cooperatively manage specific populations of typically threatened or endangered species in accredited institutions.

In other news, the Sacramento Zoo broke ground on the exhibit renovation for Small Wonders of Africa. With this new project underway it will become the home of African Straw-colored Fruit Bats, Banded Mongooses, Aardvarks, Wolf's Guenons, Red-billed Hornbills and Crested Guineafowl. Each of these species will help tell the story of East Africa, presenting the challenges of conserving wildlife in this unique corner of the world. The Sacramento Zoo has been an active participant in many East African conservation programs to educate the African people who share the landscape with African wildlife.

Also, there will be a poker tournament on Sunday, Feb. 23 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. So, put on your best poker face and hide your tells at the Zoo's first Texas Hold'em Showdown poker tournament. A $100 buy-in gets you a seat at the Old Sugar Mill in Clarksburg along with good grub, spirits, prizes and more! Proceeds benefit renovations in the Sacramento Zoo's Reptile House. Visit saczoo.org for more information.

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Fairytale Town Celebrates Dr. Seuss' Birthday

"You're off to great places! Today is your day! Your mountain is waiting, so...get on your way!" Celebrate Dr. Seuss' birthday at Fairytale Town on Sunday, Mar. 2, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., with a read-aloud of his beloved books and Seuss-themed hands-on activities.

"Green Eggs and Ham," "Fox in Sox," "Hop on Pop" and more of Dr. Seuss' celebrated books will be read-aloud from the Mother Goose Stage throughout the program. Featured readers include Sacramento's mayor pro tem Angelique Ashby; Sacramento city council member Kevin McCarty; the Sacramento River Cats' mascot, Dinger, and emcee, Mike on the Mic; Capital Public Radio's Donna Apidone; and the Sacramento Bee's publisher, Cheryl Dell, and community affairs director, Pam Dinsmore.

There will also be a variety of Seuss-inspired hands-on activities for children to create and take home as souvenirs. Activities include making "Cat in the Hat" hats, making "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish" handprint crafts, and planting "Thing 1" and "Thing 2" flowers. Runaway Stage Productions will perform excerpts from "Seussical, The Musical" in the Children's Theater at 11:15 and 11:45 AM.

Dr. Seuss' Birthday Celebration also marks the kick-off of United Way California Capital Region's STAR Readers Book Drive. The drive benefits the STAR Readers project that is working to increase graduation rates by improving early reading skills. Guests who bring a new or used children's book for donation to United Way's booth will receive a discount coupon to use on a future visit to Fairytale Town. For more information about the book drive, please visit www.yourlocalunitedway.org.

Dr. Seuss was born Theodor Seuss Geisel on March 2, 1904 in Springfield, Massachusetts. He is the author and illustrator of 44 books for children, including "The Cat in the Hat," "How the Grinch Stole Christmas" and "Oh, The Places You'll Go!" His birthday is also celebrated as Read Across America Day, organized by the National Education Association to promote reading.

Dr. Seuss' Birthday Celebration is free with paid park admission. Weekend admission is $5.50 for adults and children ages 2 and older and free for children ages 1 and under. Activities take place from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., and Fairytale Town is open from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., weather permitting. The celebration is sponsored in part by ScholarShare College Savings Plan and SAFE Credit Union.

For more information, visit www.fairytaletown.org or call (916) 808-7462.

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Sacramento Undy 5000 5K Run/Walk set for March 1

Grab the kids and grab the dog, but leave your pants at home. Run in your underwear while raising awareness of colon cancer. Instead of race day T-shirts, all registered participants receive a commemorative pair of Undy 5000 boxers. It is a family-friendly event open to all ages. There is also a one-mile fun run. A giant, walk-through inflatable colon will make its appearance at the event. This event is chip/tag-timed event. For more information, call: 202-628-0123, email undy5000@ccalliance.org, or visit www.undy5000.org

Each participant registered before race day will receive a specially designed pair of boxer shorts to enjoy or run in on event day. There will be an assortment of snacks available before and after the race. Plus award categories.

Schedule

7:30 a.m. - Race packet pick up & on-site registration
8:40 a.m. - Opening remarks
9 a.m. - 5K begins
9:10 a.m. - 1 mile fun run begins
10:05 a.m. - Survivor ceremony and awards

Photos by STEPHEN CROWLEY
Stephen@valcomnews.com

Runners came out in their underwear to race a 5K through Land Park on March 2, 2013. Sponsored by Dulcolax, the Undy 5000 was family-friendly event created by the Colon Cancer Alliance. It was unique because participants were encouraged to run in their boxers to bring attention to the area affected by colon cancer. The Alliance found that by getting people talking about this disease, they can save lives.

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Operation Christmas Child collected 19,000 boxes of gifts for suffering children worldwide

Dear Land Park News,

I'm writing to thank Sacramento residents for their generosity in helping thousands of suffering children worldwide this Christmas. Through their efforts, we were able to collect more than 19,000 shoeboxes—filled with toys, school supplies and hygiene items—for Operation Christmas Child, the world's largest Christmas project of its kind.

These simple gift-filled shoeboxes communicate to needy children that they are loved and not forgotten. For many children, the shoebox gift is the first gift they have ever received.

Since 1993, Operation Christmas Child has delivered more than 100 million gift-filled shoeboxes to needy children worldwide. In 2013, the project celebrated its 20th anniversary and collected over 9.8 million gift-filled shoeboxes.

Although drop-off locations in Sacramento are closed until November 2014, shoebox gifts can be packed any time. Gifts are received year-round at Samaritan's Purse (801 Bamboo Road, Boone, N.C., 28607) or using the project's online tool, where donors can virtually build a box. To get involved, visit samaritanspurse.org or call 714-432-7030.

Thanks again to everyone who participated in this project. A simple gift, packed with love, can communicate hope and transform the lives of children worldwide.

Sincerely,
Jennifer Trevithick
Santa Ana, West Coast Regional Director,
Operation Christmas Child

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Kari #21424436
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Gender: Female Hair: Short
Age: 4 years 1 month

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Bernie #18827731
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Gender: Male Hair: Short
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Breed: DSH/Mix Color: Brown/Black
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Age: 8 years 2 months

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

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Calendar

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

Ongoing

Land Park Pacific Little League collecting memorabilia as part of 60th anniversary

Land Park Pacific Little League (LPPLL), a youth baseball organization serving children in the Land Park, Curtis Park, Hollywood Park, South Land Park, Little Pocket, and neighboring areas, celebrates its 60th anniversary season in 2014. As part of the celebration, LPPLL is collecting photos and other memorabilia to display throughout the season. LPPLL's home fields are located at Dooley Fields, located behind Holy Spirit Parish School at the edge of William Land Park, and the baseball fields located in William Land Park. Originally, Dooley Fields were the home of Pacific Little League, created in 1959. Through the years, some of the area little leagues merged. In 1994, Dooley Fields also became the home fields Land Park Little League, which was established in 1954. In 2000, Curtis Park Little League also merged into the league. As part of the Opening Day Parade, scheduled for March 22 at 8:00 a.m., old photographs, jerseys and other memorabilia will be on display. Alumni from past years are invited to attend and share memories. Anyone willing to share or donate items should contact info@lppll.com. Additional information about the league is available at www.lppll.com

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AARP tax aide seeks volunteers for 2014

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

Mahogany Urban Poetry Series - Queen Sheba - poetry readings

Each Wednesday from 8-11 p.m. at Queen Sheba in Sacramento, local talent makes it way to the restaurant for weekly open-mic events. $3-$5. 1704 Broadway.

Registration Open for Nature Bowl Science and Conservation Competition

Registration is now open for the 29th annual Nature Bowl, an elementary school activity-based competition held in the spring. Coordinated by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) in partnership with local organizations and agencies, the Nature Bowl increases the science and conservation literacy of third through sixth grade students in the Sacramento Valley and Sierra foothills. The Nature Bowl is open to students from any school, group or organized youth club. Participants employ teamwork, creativity and critical thinking while participating in group learning activities centered on local and regional natural environments. The first round will be held at 10 locations from mid-March through early May. Teams will consist of three to seven students each and several teams will advance to the finals to be held at California State University, Sacramento on May 17, 2014.Teachers, youth group leaders or parents can coach a team. Coaches' workshops are scheduled from Jan. 14 to Feb 4 at locations throughout the area. Registration information can be found online at www.dfg.ca.gov/regions/2/naturebowl/. The semifinal at Nimbus Hatchery is scheduled April 3, 2014. To register, call (916) 358-2884. The semifinal at Effie Yeaw Nature Center is scheduled March 11, 2014. To register, call (916) 489-4918. A new semifinal is also being offered at Sutter's Landing Regional Park in Sacramento on May 1 or 2 (date to be determined). For more information, please call (916) 284-1627. For more information about the Nature Bowl, please call (916) 358-2353 or visit the CDFW website at www.dfg.ca.gov/regions/2/naturebowl/.

Brain Gymnasium

Exercise your mind and have some fun at this on-going Brain Gymnasium class! Inviting all seniors to Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Boulevard, 9:20 a.m. Thursdays. $6 per class. Call 441-1015 for more information.

Women with Good Spirits monthly meeting

Women With Good Spirits is a networking group that engages women in the Sacramento community with non-profit organizations that make contributions to our quality of life and care for our fellow residents. Each month, Women With Good Spirits invites a community non-profit to present on its mission work. The meeting is held at Revolution Wines on the second Tuesday of each month and starts at 6:30 p.m. The presenter will start their presentation promptly at 7:15 p.m. and will last 15-20 minutes with an open question and answer forum after. RSVP is appreciated as well as a $5+ donation per person that will go directly to the non-profit presenting that month. Revolution Wines is located at 2831 S St. Visit www.womenwithgoodspirits.com or find the group on Facebook.

Davis Art Center invites teen girls to write and publish

The Davis Art Center is offering a six-week creative writing class for girls ages 13-18 from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesdays starting February 11. The class will offer a positive, supportive space for girls who love reading and writing and are interested in discovering and developing their individual voices. Participants will use short stories by a diverse range of contemporary women writers as jumping off points for their own writing sessions. Each student will pick her best writing to include in a class-produced literary magazine. The class will be taught by Elise Winn Pollard, who earned her M.A. in creative writing from UC Davis. The fee is $95 for Art Center members and $105 for the general public. To enroll, stop by the Art Center at 1919 F. St., call (530) 756-4100 or register online at www.davisartcenter.org. Students must be registered at least two weeks before the first class session.

Gentle Qi Gong

Learn powerful relaxation techniques reduce stress, reduce physical pain and emotional suffering, lower blood pressure, increase immune response and improve balance. Inviting all seniors to Eskaton Monroe Lodge, 3225 Freeport Boulevard, 3 to 4 p.m., Wednesdays. $7 per class. Call 441-1015 for more information.

Attn. students: Submit now for water efficiency video contest

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

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California Youth Basketball League taking applications

CYBL is a non-profit year round league for ages 4 through 18 that prides itself on being well organized that aims to develop basketball skills, sportsmanship and self-esteem through coaches, gym official and organizers. Visit www.cybhoops.com or call 391-3900.

Kiwanis Club of East Sacramento-Midtown

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

The Sacramento Capitolaires meeting

A men's Barbershop Harmony group, meets every Tuesday night at 7 p.m. at Pilgrim Hall (Sierra Arden United Church of Christ), 890 Morse Ave., Sacramento. Info: www.capitolaires.org, call 888-0877-9806, or email info@capitolaires.org

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Artisan holds Food Drive

Artisan Salon is participating in the Spirit of Giving Food Drive. Over the last 17 years, the Spirit of Giving (SOG) drive has helped Sacramento Food Bank collect and distribute over 4.6 million pounds of canned and non-perishable food items for local families in need. Help support families in need by participating in this year's drive! Artisan Salon is located at 3198 Riverside Blvd.

Soroptimist International of Sacramento South meetings

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

Iceland is only just over 2 miles from Grant park and much of the ride will be via the American and Northern bike trails.

February

A Smart Start to Mutual Funds

Feb. 18: Learn fundamental information about mutual funds; 10 to 11 a.m. Free. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SSC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento, 916-393-9026.

Self-Acupressure (Reflexology)

Feb. 19: Learn the simple meridian points to help you stay healthy. 1:30-3 p.m., $15 or $20 at the door. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SSC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento, 393-9026.

Sacramento Community Concert Association performance

Feb. 22: Celebrating Black History Month, SCCA presents Tenor Darron Flagg & Soprano Candace Johnson and The UC Berkeley Gospel Chorus at 7:30 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian, 1300 N St. Singer-actor Darron Flagg is recognized as a standout professional bel-canto tenor, lauded for his heart-felt performances. A few of Mr. Flagg's engagements include the Lincoln Center, theaters in Eastern Europe, Walt Disney Hall, as well as the San Francisco and Sacramento Opera companies. Candace Johnson is a dynamic vocal artist who has experience in musical theater, television commercials, poplar songwriting, and piano performance. Among her many accomplishments, she held the title of Ms. Black Tennessee, and she was a finalist in the National Leontyne Price Competition. The UC Berkeley Gospel Chorus started in the 1970s as an informal student activity. Since 2007, director D. Mark Wilson has taken the Gospel Chorus in new directions, building a repertoire, which includes traditional and contemporary gospel music, spirituals, and classically influenced gospel anthems. Regular subscription: $90, Group discount (8 or more people): $75, Students subscription: $45, Single Ticket: $25. For more information, contact Sacramento Community Concert Association www.sccaconcerts.org; info@scc.aconcerts.org; 400-4634.

2014 Polar Plunge: Polar Plunge so a Special Olympics athlete can compete

Feb. 15: Swim at the Sacramento State Aquatic Center to benefit Special Olympic Northern California & Nevada! This is the first plunge in Sacramento. Know that while the water may be cold, you're Plunging so that 19,000 Special Olympics athletes in your community may compete. 1901 Hazel Avenue in Gold River! Every Plunger is required to raise a minimum of $125, which sponsors one Special Olympics athlete for a sports season. You will be fundraising to support Special Olympics Northern California & Nevada. Visit http://www.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1080725# for more information.

Sacramento International of Sacramento, Inc. annual crab fiesta

Feb. 15: All you can eat crab, silent auction, dessert bar auction, live auction; Saint Mary's Giovanni Hall, 58th and M streets. Doors open at 6 p.m., dinner at 7 p.m. Cost is $50 per ticket and funds are used for services to support vulnerable women and children. 2013-14 funds support Tubman House, a program of Waking the Village. The program provides 18 months transitional housing and other life skills training and support for local women and children. Call 709-6748, or visit the Crab Fiesta website at www.crabfiestasac.org to purchase tickets. Visit us at www.soroptimistsacramento.org .

Camellia Chapter, Embroiderers' Guild of America at their meeting

Feb. 18: Starting at 7 p.m., SMUD Building, 6201 S Street for a hands-on program on Assisi needlework. Guests welcome. Free. 223-2751.

Casa Garden 'Girls Just Want to Have Fun' lunch and Red Hat fashion show

Feb. 26: "Girls Just Want to Have Fun" lunch and Red Hat fashion show at 11:15 a.m. and 1:15 p.m. seatings at the Casa Garden Restaurant, 2760 Sutterville Road, Sacramento. Entree choices: Chicken Stuffed with Spinach and Smoked Gouda or Black

See more calendar, page 22

Roast Tuscany Salad with Grilled Chicken Breast, dessert, Chocolate Torte with Raspberry Coulis — $10 per person, includes tax and gratuity. Price varies, first served group reservations by one person, one check. Reservations a must — call (916) 452-3809. Proceeds benefit the Sacramento Children's Home.

Microbiology in Sickness and in Health

Feb. 27: Learn how to keep healthy from an infectious disease. 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., free; held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento. 393-9026.

Just Say No! – Senior Scams

Feb. 27: Learn the various types of senior scams in our community and how to prevent it, 1:30-3:30 p.m. Free. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento. 393-9026.

Music

Lunch and "Wine Social" at Casa Garden

March 4: There will be a lunch and "Wine Social" at Casa Garden with red and white wine sips offered by BellaGrace Vineyards of Sutter Creek paired with delicious Casa hors d'oeuvres at 11:30 a.m. (you seating with). Casa Garden Restaurant, 2760 Sacramento Road, Sacramento. Entree choices: Three Cheese Gordon Lasagna or Chicken Caesar Salad. dessert: Lime Mocha Torte – $20 per person, includes tax and gratuity. Reservations a must, space seating – call 916.452.2809. Proceeds benefit the Sacramento Children's Home.

How to Take Care of Your Body, Mind, and Spirit

March 4: 1-3 p.m., $35 or $17 at the door. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento, 393-9026.

Advance Health Care Directive

March 6: Also known as living will, personal directive, advance directive or advance directive, 6-7 p.m. Free. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento. 393-9026.

Focus on Fixed Income

March 10: Learn the basics of bonds, the advantages of laddering and how fixed income may be part of your investment strategy from 10 to 11 a.m. Free. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento.393-9026.

Pesticides and Integrated Pest Management

March 11: Learn how to identify and control pests and diseases with the least toxic and post-specific methods. 11 a.m. to noon. Free. Pre-registration required. Held at ACC SHC, 7375 Park City Dr, Sacramento. 393-9026.

St. Patrick's Luncheon at Casa Garden

March 11: St. Patrick's Luncheon with music by The Irish Eyes at 11:15 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. seatings at the Casa Garden Restaurant, 2760 Sacramento Road, Sacramento. Entree choices: Traditional corned beef served with steamed potatoes and parsley cream sauce or chicken Caesar salad, dessert: almond cake Frambroise – $22 per person, includes tax and gratuity. First come, first-served group reservations by one person, one check. Reservations a must — call (916) 452-3809. Proceeds benefit the Sacramento Children's Home.

Sacramento Community Concert Association performance

March 23: SCCA presents A Night At The Movies With Pipe Organist Dave Moreno at 7:30 p.m. at Westminster Presbyterian, 1300 M St. Complemented by emcee Marion Rombeil, organist entertainer Dave Moreno will thrill you as he accompanies popular silent films on Westminster's grand 3000 pipe organ. Don't miss this memorable event. Regular subscription $90, Group discount (8 or more people) $75, Students subscription $45, Single Ticket $20. For more information, contact Sacramento Community Concert Association www.sacramentoccaorg info@sacramentoccaorg 400-4414

Arts

'The Benefit Plant Sale' to be held at McKinley Park

April 5: Rob Hanson, personal grower and founder of The Benefit Plant Sale announces that The Valley Benefit Plant Sales benefiting the kids summer camp programs at Sacramento Children's Home, Sacramento Mountain Bike Patrol, Sacramento Wildlife Rescue and Rehabilitation Center and Sacramento Habitat Projects (http://www.sachabitatprojects.org/) will have a spring plant sale in the back parking area of the Sheppard Garden and Arts Center, 1100 McKinley Blvd. The sale will run from 10 a.m. to 4p.m. and will feature a wide range of perennials for the yard including many succulents and hard to find varieties in sizes ranging from starters to one gallon containers. Cash and checks will be accepted, but not credit cards. For more information, contact Rob Hanson at 617-7536.

McClatchy:

Continued from page 3

judge to be assigned to one of more than 25 work sites throughout the county.

De Necochea said they did a great job. "They cut out around the bases. They trimmed and weeded. They picked up trash and helped build a mound. We just filled out a form and got work done twice. The district could be requesting those guys. It's free. I asked them (the inmates): Do you like coming to schools? They said they felt like they were making a difference compared to just raking leaves at a park, which could be pretty tedious."

But are the team's Good Samaritan efforts to keep the fields clean taking away from contracted union jobs?

"It's always hard," Ross said. "We never want to discourage parents from volunteering at school sites. We also know we have less staff than we need. We have a system in the district where community members fill out 'special projects process' for the school site and district to participate in. Generally it's not about violating union contract, it's about protecting parents and students from harm," he said.

Prior to the massive budget cuts that have plagued the district for years now, the campus had a gardener Terry Stowers, who de Necochea said worked together with the team to keep the field looking its best. "It was great. They were out there with us, supervising us to make sure it's right."

While it may seem like de Necochea is at odds with the district, it's not the case at all. He wants to work with the district to brainstorm solutions on making the fields and the school, by extension, a more inviting place.

To that end, he's started to connect with alumni who might want to give back to their alma mater. He argues that the Booster program is not his preferred avenue. "We're putting band aids on a big project. We need to reach out to alumni and get Boosters for life," he said. De Necochea, who lives near the school, added: "I look at my neighborhood, parents have to have funds available."

Asked how the community can work with the district to create a better environment, Ross said in a variety of ways. "We want to make the right process. We want parents to find solutions. Hopefully in a few years, we will be back to the funding areas and help supplement what is going on at the schools. For the sports fields and at the school, it's critical we are all involved."

He said as a result of new funding from an accountability measure known as LCAP (Local Control and Accountability Plan), the community will have a larger voice in terms of how to spend and allocate resources. There will be a survey on the website www.scusd.edu for parents to document their priorities.

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Dollhouses made by Nancy Streukens are elaborate masterpieces she has inside of her Sacramento home

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

Inside of the living room of Sacramento resident Nancy Streukens' home are two elaborate dollhouses, well actually one is a house and the other, she calls a shopping mall.

"I made them myself, well my husband put the first one together. The second one I did all myself. My husband is a retired carpenter and my father is an architect."

Retired from 30 years of working for The Bank of America, Streukens spends many hours detailing the insides of these "homes."

"I call them simplistic. You see the Victorian ones now, but mine are more like a bookshelf dollhouse like the way they used to design them for little girls," she said.

Streukens has made a dollhouse for her two stepdaughters, one for her granddaughter, a bakery for her sister, but, the ones in her living room – they are all hers.

"A friend has asked: 'Do you let the neighborhood children play?' Well, I smiled and said 'no.' I always loved miniatures. My sister had an old-fashioned dollhouse with furniture. She let me play anytime I wanted but, in back of my head, it was hers."

Well when Streukens grew up, she knew what she wanted: A dollhouse of her own. "Even though it was expensive and impractical, I started collecting ever since," she said.

The attention to detail is so extraordinary and this reporter was fortunate enough to get a "home tour". Below describes each of the rooms of the dollhouse, which has been added to over the course of 40 years and has had been remodeled over time. What follows is just a sampling of the work she has done to the one house.

When viewing the home, you see it from the back of the 3-story house, as the front actually faces her wall.

The bottom floor includes a living room, den, dining room, kitchen and back porch. "I make some (interior) pieces, but I buy majority of pieces. I decorate. I don't make everything. I did build the front door myself. It was kind of strange. In the 70s, there weren't a lot of premade windows or doors. Now you can buy them. But when I did my first – that wasn't an option. It's eclectic 70s-80s style and some things look like antiques."

The den has a rug that a friend of hers made in exchange for a handmade dollhouse-size set of dishes. Also inside the den, sits an arm chair, a copy of the *Sacramento Bee* and the main wall is filled with little books that Streukens has made. "Some of them don't open. Some just have covers over them," she said.

A set of handmade dishes decorate the dining room. Each place setting has five to six pieces with tiny silverware she has bought.

Ten years ago, Streukens remodeled the kitchen. The room's first incarnation has cupboards made out of basswood. But, she said, "they looked kind of crude, so with the remodel, I was able to buy cupboards and islands and things. It made me refurbish the whole dollhouse."

As a result she bought standardized doors, rewired the house with little lamps, so if she flips the switch in the back of the dollhouse, the lights could come on.

"Outside" on the back porch, Streukens has a barbecue nicely placed and a porch swing she made. "That's about it," she said about the first floor.

The second story, meanwhile has a little girl's room, hallway, nursery, a bathroom, master bedroom and another porch.

The little girl's room has a handmade bed she made, a hand-crocheted rug her sister made and a closet she bought when she remodeled. Because Streukens wanted to put stairs in and liked the more realistic look, she had to build them herself.

In the nursery, she made the needlepoint rug and her sister knitted the afghan and hand crocheted a dime-size pig.

Inside the master bedroom is a bed and two dressers with pictures of her family, showing herself, her son and her mother. There are French doors that swing out to a second porch, which is decorated with a white table and surprisingly, the only doll in the house.

"I like dolls but I don't like doll house dolls. They make the scene look too static and I don't want to share my dollhouse. It's my house. It's true. There are dollhouse people that feel that way," she said.

Streukens decorates her own home similarly to the eclectic English cottage style dollhouse. "But I have a lot of leftover stuff of family members. I mix and match and make it all fit in," she said.

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