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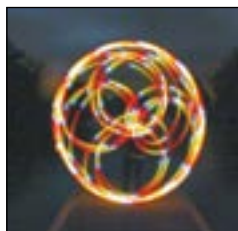
★ 4th of July Parade ★

See page 4



- The Pocket Watch3
- Faces and Places.....5
- Lance Armstrong feature.....6
- Matías Bombal's Hollywood14
- Calendar 20

Artistic flow at the river's edge
■ See page 11



Entertaining Elks Lodge passersby with dance
■ See page 22

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The Pocket Watch

Back off, Thomas Wolfe



By JEFF DOMINGUEZ
jeff@valcomnews.com

It should come as no surprise that, as of yet, I haven't been able to find a viable way to make a living exclusively as a writer. So, for the better part of the last 20 years of my life, I've been a licensed Realtor, and I've represented clients in the sale and/or purchase of homes in the Sacramento area, an avocation which has its frustrations, yes, but which can also be sufficiently fun and exciting.

Sometimes, I think those of us who have owned homes for several years often forget what an incredible feeling it is when you become a homeowner for the first time. It makes you feel like you've carved out your own place in the world, a refuge with all of your possessions, where you decide how the furniture is going to be arranged and what color the walls are going to be. There's really no other feeling like it in the spectrum of human emotion. There's nothing that provides as much relief and comfort as coming home.

It's widely understood that the real estate market, like the national economy, is cyclical. Values go up, and they come back down. Interest rates go up, and they come back down. I've seen two or three of these full cycles in my time as a Realtor. I remember how I told myself if I lived through the first cycle, next time, when the economy got rough and prices took that invariably precipitous dip, I was going to buy five houses!

What I failed to factor into my planning was that, because my own income relies directly on the real estate market, when business is bad, and prices take a tumble, I don't have the extra money to buy any houses. In fact, not only could I not afford any additional homes, I

start sweating out making the payments on my own note.

This last recession was as bad as I've ever seen it. In fact, I believe that it was, statistically, every bit as bad as the Great Depression of the 1930s. This time, it wasn't just the folks who are directly dependent on the real estate market, usually the first industry to bear the brunt of the initial wave of an economic crisis. Seemingly every industry across the board was affected by this crisis, and it wasn't just a "squeeze" that was felt. It was a rear-naked choke that tapped out a lot of families.

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See Pocket Watch, page 19

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4th of July past and present in the Pocket

To thank the community for its general support over the many years of the 4th of July Pocket Parade, the Pocket News is going back in time with this collage, dated "some-time in the late 90s," according to one of the head organizers, Linda Pohl, the cheerleader here at Valley Community Newspapers' headquarters. So, have fun and see if you can find your former self in the pictures here. From time to time, we will be organizing collages, so if you see us yelling, "Pocket News!" don't be shy! In fact, the next issue of the paper will showcase between 50 and 100 photos of folks sitting on the sidelines, watching the parade as well as photos of the floats, judges, runners at the Matsuyama Fun Run and folks at the business fair.



Faces and Places Sacramento Youth Band at Parkside Community Church

Photos by MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

The Sacramento Youth Band played patriotic favorites to a relaxed crowd of family and friends on Tuesday evening out on the lawn in front of Parkside Community Church, 5700 S. Land Park Dr. Event goers were treated to hotdogs and buffet-style sides, prepared by many dedicated parents. The band will show a strong presence at the Pocket 4th of July Parade.



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Sacramento Musical Dinner Theatre to make debut July 11-12

By LANCE ARMSTRONG
Lance@valcomnews.com

Note: This is part three of a three part series about 1970 John F. Kennedy High School graduate Steve Masone and his involvement with theatrical productions.

This month marks a very special time for Steve Masone, the 1970 John F. Kennedy High School graduate who was featured in the last two editions of this publication.

His dream of once again establishing a musical dinner theater in the capital city is about to become a reality.

For Masone, who was involved in opening a now defunct musical dinner theater at the old Sheraton Inn at 2600 Auburn Blvd. in the 1970s, he will experience a touch of déjà vu on July 11-12, when the



Photo by Lance Armstrong
Steve Masone's dream of once again establishing a musical dinner theater in Sacramento will become a reality with the July 11-12 opening of "Starry Evening" at the Red Lion Hotel.

Sacramento Musical Dinner Theatre opens in the grand ballroom of the Red Lion Inn at 500 Leisure Lane with a production of "Starry Evening."

In speaking about the establishment of his new company, Masone said, "I just formed the Sacramento Musical Dinner Theatre, producing the Phoenix Players from Eugene, Ore., who are working with me right now. I am bringing them down. They are going to become Sacramento's newest (theatrical attraction). This is another first. I remember a lot of theater companies leaving

Sacramento, but I don't remember any coming here. They're known as a very talented (troupe). They're internationally acclaimed. Last year, they went to the Czech Republic and Ireland and London. They've been together for many years, of course with players in and out."

Masone fondly recalled his discovery of the Phoenix Players, and his involvement in arranging for this musical theater group to perform in Sacramento.

"I discovered (the Phoenix Players) only about a year ago," Masone said. "I found them already doing The

Red Cane Theatre (in Eugene), but they weren't really doing the dinner part of the theater like they would like to do and that's where we are going to merge and bring them down here. They would have to bring (the dinners) in (at The Red Cane Theatre). They didn't have their own restaurant. They didn't serve drinks or anything like that.

"I started talking with them and working with them. Now they're contracted with me to come down here (to Sacramento), and start the business

See Masone, page 7

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Masone:

Continued from page 6

with me down here, and (to go on) tour down here and (have) their director – who is very talented and gifted, because she writes her own dialogues and her own shows and musicals – down here, and get them to help me audition and start another dinner theater down here. When I brought them down here, it turns out they feel they've ceilinged out in Eugene and they want to get to the next level and so they're quitting their jobs and they're coming down here to try to be a new resident company."

Masone, who was also involved in the operation of a dinner theater in Santa Barbara, has certainly been very active in his work to establish a new musical dinner theater for Sacramento, and he describes his new company as launching something very special to fill a theatrical void in the capital city.

"It's amazing," Masone said. "There are 30 (musical) dinner theaters in the L.A. area. There are none in Sacramento and there are none in the Bay Area that are year-round musical dinner theaters. Now, when I say musical dinner theaters, what I mean (is) doing

Broadway shows and doing musicals with dance and dialogue and an actual musical play. There are people claiming that they're dinner theaters, because they're doing the murder mystery, but that's a murder mystery show. That's not really dinner theater, if we're going to go by definition."

After being asked to share more details regarding the upcoming show and future shows of his company, Masone said, "The first production is called 'Starry Evening,' and it's classic of Hollywood floor show song, romance and comedy. It's all about Hollywood actors and actresses doing the shows and everything. It's just a great musical. I can't tell you any of the names right now of the songs we're going to do, because we're still getting the rights to them. You can't advertise until you (acquire) the rights.

"We were going to do 'Grease,' but 'Grease' was too expensive. So, we're not going to do 'Grease' yet. We may do 'Grease' (later). We're going to do all the big ones. We're thinking we're going to probably be looking at a lot of the Broadway shows. But those are expensive to do. Some shows are like \$7,000 they want upfront for royalties

and everything. But once we build the audience and we know we're going to be able to pencil it all out, those are the kind of shows we'll do."

In further praising the Phoenix Players, who he described as a "triple threat" due to their ability to sing, dance and act, Masone added, "This will be the only company in Sacramento – dinner theater or normal theater – that's going to be able to mount seven or eight musicals a season. It's really hard, but these guys can do musicals back to back. They'll be juggling three shows at a time, and that's just what they do. They do this full time. They're not part time. They don't go to their eight-hour day (non-theatrical jobs). These kids do this full time and that's what I fell in love with when I saw how dedicated they are to musical theater. It's a lost art. I'm not talking about (all) Broadway shows' musical theater. Some can be a musical and be on Broadway, but it doesn't really represent musical theater. Musical theater would be the type of shows like 'Kiss Me, Kate' (and) 'Damn Yankees.' Some of the newer ones still fit the bill. And of course, I'd love to do 'Fiddler on the Roof.'"

Masone emphasized the fact that all of his company's productions that are appropriate for any age.

"All of our shows that Sacramento Musical Dinner Theatre is doing are all G rated," Masone said. "There are some shows that we just won't do, because there is no need to do them. We're doing the classics. We're doing true musical theater. And there are young people in the troupe who are just great at it."

Although the grand ballroom of the Red Lion Hotel is not a permanent location for Sacramento Musical Dinner Theatre productions, Masone does not count out that possibility.

"We're barnstorming for the summer," said Masone, whose artistic goals also include becoming involved in choreography and reestablishing his former blues band. "We're going to be playing the Red Lion here July 11 and 12 for our opening nights here. That's a Friday and Saturday night. We'll add a Saturday matinee and a Sunday matinee, if the demand is there. And then the following (week-end), the 18th and 19th (of July), we're going to go over to an outside amphitheater (at the Red Lion Hotel) through August (2). I've

been negotiating an Old Sacramento location (The Coconut Grove at 106 J St.) of which we're going to be doing Wednesday nights, and every Saturday and Sunday down there for the rest of the summer. And then I'm still looking for other venues right now to keep up barnstorming and working until we find a permanent (location). It might be here (at the Red Lion Hotel). The Red Lion has expressed interest, if we come to terms and everything. This would be my (preferred location), because of the grand ballroom. It's got a beautiful stage. It's a great room, and that's been my dream is to come back and do it in that room."

For additional information about the upcoming production of "Starry Evening" at the Red Lion Hotel, call (209) 418-7853 or (541) 287-1497, or write to stevemasone@gmail.com.

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Notes From The Eagles Nest

Three new Eagle Scouts honored at Troop 259 Eagle Court of Honor

By BILL KIRK

On Sunday, May 18, 2014, three new Troop 259 Eagle Scouts, Billy T. Hernandez, Robert Shirley and Joseph Krieg, were honored at an Eagle Court of Honor ceremony at Elks Lodge #6 on Riverside Boulevard. They were joined by family, friends and fellow Scouts of Troop 259 in Greenhaven to celebrate the achievement of Boy Scouting's highest rank—the rank of Eagle Scout.

The Master of Ceremonies at the event was Scoutmaster Ike Krieg, assisted by Senior Patrol Leader Damian Thompson. Elks Chaplain De Anna Marwin delivered the Invocation and Benediction with welcoming remarks by Past Elks Exalted Ruler Darrell Lawrence. The ceremony was officially opened by Dr. Eddie Braddock on behalf of the northern California Golden Empire Council in the Boy Scouts of America.

Scoutmaster Krieg noted in his opening remarks that the Eagle Court of Honor ceremony carries on "a 100-year tradition that has helped to shape the character of millions of young

men in this country and around the world through the tradition of Scouting." To earn his Eagle, every Scout must achieve five intermediate ranks: Tenderfoot, Second Class, First Class, Star and Life, earn at least 21 Merit Badges (12 of them mandatory) and live by the Scout Oath and Law. In addition, an Eagle Scout Candidate must complete an Eagle Scout Service Project. Its purpose is to give the Scout an opportunity to learn and demonstrate project management and leadership while making a contribution to the community.

Like the Eagles who preceded them, Hernandez, Shirley and Krieg each identified a need, overcame challenges and completed a beneficial project that clearly left its mark. Shirley's project provided a much needed facelift to 25 band instrument storage lockers installed 25 years ago at Sam Brannan Middle School. Hernandez organized a community book drive, collecting, cataloguing and distributing over 1,000 books to children of all ages at the Sacramento Children's Home. And Krieg worked with the preservation director at the histor-

ic Pioneer Cemetery in Slough House to preserve existing gravestones and to construct and place two 300-pound concrete meditation benches onsite and add native landscaping.

As the Troop's three newest Eagle Scouts, these young men join rare company in their Troop and nationally. According to the Boy Scouts of America website, out of more than one million registered Boy Scouts and Venture Scouts nationally in 2013, the number of Scouts earning the Eagle Scout rank was 56,841 or about 5.6 percent of all registered Scouts. The average age of Scouts earning the Eagle Scout rank in 2013 was 17 years of age.

Since Troop 259 was originally chartered on August 25, 1966, there have been a total of 168 Eagle Scouts in the Troop. An important component of the Eagle Court of Honor proceedings is the Eagle Challenge, which was issued during this ceremony by 2012, Eagle Scout Dylan Kirk. Kirk called on the new Eagles to live with honor, loyalty, courage and good cheer, noting "the final responsibility

Eagle Scouts, page 9

Eagle Scouts:

Continued from page 8

of the Eagle Scout is service," for which an Eagle Scout should always be prepared to put forth his best.

The highlight of the Court of Honor was the presentation of special resolutions from the City Council and from the County Board of Supervisors to each Eagle Scout. The presentations were made by Sacramento District Seven Councilmember Darrell Fong and by Mamie Yee, Chief of Staff to Supervisor Jimmie Yee. "The resolutions acknowledge the outstanding accomplishments of these young men during their many years in the Scouting program," said Yee. For his part, Councilmember Fong recalled the responsibility to serve from the Eagle Challenge, noting that service to others is a key building block that makes our communities strong.

In their personal remarks, each new Eagle Scout spoke of how Scouting had affected the direction of their lives, providing a valuable underpinning for what lies ahead for each of them. Hernandez recounted his plans to further extend his book distribution project to as many other children as he can possibly reach. Shirley credited his outdoor experiences and leadership opportunities with stimulating his personal



Photo courtesy

The Troop 259 Eagle Scout Court of Honor ceremony was held at the Elks Lodge No. 6 last month. Shown here are three Eagle Scouts, from left to right: Billy T. Hernandez, Joseph Krieg and Robert Shirley.

growth. Lastly, Krieg noted the many backpacking and camping adventures and the National Scout Jamboree in 2010 as having left lasting impressions on him.

Looking to the future, with many years in Scouting still ahead of him, Hernandez plans to remain active in Troop 259 and is looking into Venture Scouting to continue the adventure. Having earned his Eagle Scout Rank while still 13, he is the Troop's youngest Eagle. As for Shirley and Krieg, both have now aged out of Scouting. However, they will remain registered with the Troop as Unit College Scouter Reserve to connected with the Troop. They are also both considering several college options in the fall and are currently awaiting those all important acceptance letters.

Congratulations to each of these fine young men for their exceptional Scouting achievement on the Trail to Eagle. It's a great day for Scouting!

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Congratulations to Jibril Kyser, JFK High School Student of the Year

Shown here is John F. Kennedy High School Student of the Year, Jibril Kyser, the day after graduation being awarded at the State Capitol by Comcast with a scholarship and a Youth Leadership Award. Jibril has a rich history of community service and academic achievements. He started a chess club, called Black Knights with fundraising and contests. For his senior project he organized and produced the first Sacramento City School District Chess Play Off. Jibril also represented JFK as the State winner of Poetry Out Loud. He was an award winner of the Optimist Club's Student of the Month in May. He represented JFK as a Boys State Elected Member and held office in the program also represented JFK with the Black Caucus at Sacramento State University through the African American Youth Leadership Program. He was

a dedicated soccer player for JFK and was voted the student with the most spirit, leading student government as vice president. Jibril received a full academic scholarship at Howard University in Washington D.C. and was headed that way when his acceptance to U.C. Berkeley arrived, where he will be attending next year. Jibril has received scholarships from CAL Alumni. Jibril delivered an amazing graduation speech to his class of 2014, titled, "Dare to be Different. Dare to be Beautiful." Jibril was asked to return to his elementary school, John Cabrillo, and give that speech to the sixth graders. He had to decline because of his Comcast Award Ceremony. However, Genevieve Didion K-8 invited Jibril to present the speech to their eighth graders, and Jibril was able to make that event and deliver a speech that inspired all.



Artistic flow at the river's edge

By MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

On a warm and Delta breezy evening, psychedelic colors illuminated the Sacramento River with their warmth and coolness, spinning out of control from the careful hands of two friends – Ryan and Nate.

Finding comfort in nature, they practice swinging these tethered weights, also known as poi, until the flow of the rhythmic patterns solidify into Celtic-shaped knots.

"It kind of just flows. You make a big circle, then a small circle, and a small circle, small circle, big circle. It's like a pattern. So if you go at the right pace, it never really stops at any point. It's Zen-like and a little bit mindless," Ryan said.

Mindless, perhaps, but their minds are transfixed. The hardest part, Ryan said, is just letting go and allowing the tear-drop shaped, silicone vessels expose the programmable LED lights that changed from solid pinks and blues to rainbow and strobe.

While speaking about his progression into the art form known as flow, Ryan said: "I felt the more I let go and just let it happen, it feels more natural and it flows. I guess that's why they call it flow because it flows out of you versus trying to manipulate it yourself."

On another evening, Ryan was there spinning poi as his best friend hula hooped to the sound of waves crashing from the speed boats cruising up and down river.

With effortless control, the hula hoop traveled up and down her body, dancing around her arms, neck, chest and waist, as time seemed to stand still, and as the music of the night, reverberated through portable speakers connected an iPod.

Always interested in fire dancing, Ryan said he found poi through some sleuthing around on the internet. "I saw fire dancers doing it and I thought, 'wow, that's really cool. But how do you get to that point? You can't just practice with fire.' So I found a tutorial online that taught me how to make sock poi."

Starting with old knee-high socks, Ryan filled them with rice to make a ball and twirled them around for about a week and a half, but that's all it took. "I was just hooked; I couldn't put it down. I thought this is something I could get into, so I just started to do some research." About five or six months ago, Ryan found the website, www.flowtoys.com, where he said he bought his poi. "I had them for a good month and I was on the fence about it, but then I just fell in love with it, and I really haven't stopped since."



Photos courtesy

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Vibrational Raindrop Techniques: Wednesday, July 2nd at 2:00 PM
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California Heritage Art: Wednesday, July 9th at 2:00 PM
Local historian Mark Davidson will share the 'back stories' of Sacramento's past. Those things not often discussed in history books. These vivid and entertaining stories about key individuals in local history come to life via Mark's extensive knowledge accumulated through many hours of research. Don't miss this chance to learn about those who contributed to Sacramento's success!

Mind & Body: Connection & Reflection of Your Personal Journey: Wednesday, 16th at 2:00 PM
The saying "everything changes with time" could not be more true when we talk about our fitness and health goals, and daily routine. Join Colleen Sullivan for an interactive and engaging discussion about how our activities have shifted over time. Learn how movement and physical activity can keep you sharp and focused. Travel through time and share stories and personal reflections of where you were then and where you are now on your personal fitness and health journey. Learn creative tips to maintain your current fitness level and fun, easy things you can incorporate into your daily routine. Colleen has been instrumental in developing and facilitating customized leadership trainings for many organizations across the country. She has a Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction and is affiliated with the Jorgenson Learning Center.

Green Acres Nursery: Garden Talk: Wednesday, July 23rd at 2:00 PM
Greg Gatton, District Manager, will introduce us to Green Acres Nursery and the event planned for the year. As a guest on the "Farmer Fred" show on KFBK ra-dio he has spoken on everything from drought to vegetable gardens. Greg has a degree in Environmental Horticulture and is a Certified California Nurseryman. This is a great time to get all of your gardening questions answered!

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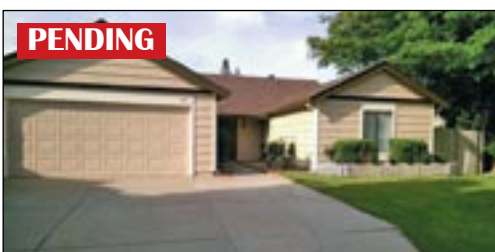


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Matias Bombal's Hollywood

Transformers 4: Age of Extinction

The MPAA has rated this PG13

Paramount Pictures brings us yet another Transformer movie. This fourth in the series has the additional title, "Age of Extinction." Michael Bay is the driving force behind this 3-D epic summer blockbuster, which is playing in IMAX Theatres. It is an overwhelming experience that clocks in at a long 2 hours and 45 min without an intermission.

Mark Wahlberg plays Cade Yeager, a junkman who repairs things in order to provide for his teenage daughter, played by Nicola Peltz, who you may have seen on television's "Bates Motel." As Cade tries to fix a recently acquired big rig, he discovers it is a "wounded" Transformer. The first 45 minutes are very good, but then, when his Transformer comes to life, it turns into a CGI (computer-generated imagery) smorgasbord of rapid movement and dizzy action for the film's last two hours. Explo-

sions by the second and mass destruction are the orders of the day.

It also features Kelsey Grammer and Stanley Tucci, who has fun with his role in a good performance and the movie showcases the voices of John Goodman and Ken Watanabe as two of the Transformers. I found the 3-D effect a headache inducing problem for such a long viewing time with no rest or intermission. The movie is overly loud and ridiculous with some noticeable continuity errors. *Transformers 4: The Age of Extinction* is aptly named; you may become extinct during the long running time.

"Earth To Echo"

The MPAA has rated this PG

Relativity Media offers a story of wonder for children of all ages and perhaps the E.T. of



"This is Hollywood" Illustrated by Underwood Typewriter

See Bombal, page 15

Bombal:

Continued from page 14

this generation of the smart phone, "Earth to Echo". A bizarre series of smart phone transmissions are seen by a trio of boys in one neighborhood who have determined that they have a map leading them to adventure.

They cycle out to an area of the Nevada desert at night, and encounter a tiny projectile imbedded in the ground, which starts to beep. They try to figure out just what's in it, and presto! It's a cute little armored alien. The boys side with trying to assist the alien in the projectile and encounter all sorts of challenges from agents trying to track the little guy down to destroying him.

The photography is all from the perspective of the kids themselves though the medium of their electronic devices— the way most kids

relate to each other in this modern age.

We see this story through Skype-like calls, small strap on cameras, glasses with cameras in them and more. Many of the shots are from the low angle of a kid's perspective, or are from the handlebars on their BMX bikes. Anticipate the image on the screen to suddenly turn sideways when their bikes are set on the ground, or shaky quick movements in tandem with the rapid fire quick exchanges that are the way kids really talk.

The choice of the director, Dave Green, to have almost the entire story told through the eyes of the kids' electronic devices is at first a neat idea, but becomes tiresome very quickly, and ultimately is distracting.

It's like a kinder, gentler kid's version of "The Blair Witch Project" with a cute alien instead of horror. The young actors are Reese

Hartwig, Astro (He goes by just that one name.) and the fellow destined to become the next "tween" heartthrob, Teo Halm.

This is a delightful movie for everyone, in spite of the less than traditional cinematic photography.

Until next time, this is your pal, Matias Bombal, bidding you a fond farewell.

For more in-depth, complete reviews of these same movies and many more in theatres now, with scenes shown from the movie reviewed, you may see and hear "Matias Bombal's Hollywood" at: www.mabhollywood.com. Find us on Facebook or follow us on Twitter: @MABHollywood

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Ray Allinger.

Photo 1979 Nugget yearbook

Long-time metal shop teacher leaves legacy

By MONICA STARK
 editor@valcomnews.com

Sad news hit the neighborhood on May 7 with the passing of long-time metal shop teacher, Ray Allinger, who many described as a good-natured, happy individual who enjoyed his retirement with a zest of life and adventure.

Preceded in death by his first wife Mary and his brother Doug, Ray is survived by his wife Bonnie, son Chris (Patti), daughter Carla (Jason), brother Grant, grandsons Joshua, Lauren, Nathaniel, Luke, Nicholas, Alexander and Matthew.

Richard, as his family called him, was born in Berkeley on May 20, 1931, and spent a great deal of time when he was young with his beloved cousins, hunting in the fields and mountains and fishing in the creeks of Butte County. He fondly remembered going to the 1939 World's Fair on Treasure Island. While he was only 8 years old, he was allowed to go unsupervised with friends, just as young as he was with only 50 cents in his pockets, 10 cents for the train to get there and back and

40 cents to spend on food or whatever he wanted.

He proudly earned his Eagle Scout Award in 1947 with six other friends in Troop 24. Ray graduated from Berkeley High School in 1950 and Chico State University in 1957. With the generous help of friends and his brother Doug, Ray built an adobe brick house with a red tile roof on 10 acres in Wilton in 1967 and lived there until his death.

One June 1, hundreds of former students, friends and family gathered at Ray's adobe home for his celebration of life service.

Ray's wife, Bonnie, spoke with Valley Community Newspapers about the ceremony and about her and her late-husband's many years together.

"It was a gratifying (turnout at the ceremony)," Bonnie said. "(Ray) had a huge diversity of interests we were involved in. He was a very, very wonderful, giving person in that he was always willing to help people," she said.

Sadly, Bonnie explained that while over the last eight to 10 years, Ray

Legacy:

Continued from page 16

suffered from many different health issues, involving various kinds of operations, he continued to persevere with a hopeful attitude. "We had many, many years of happy times. We were together for 28 years. It was a nice, wonderful relationship. As he started going downhill, we had to alter our lives, but he still remained happy and he did a good job with that. In the latter years, he was in quite a bit of pain. We have to look at the fact he's gone but that he's not in any more pain. He was very positive in his approach of getting over stuff and trying to get back to a normal life where he could still work in his shop and do his iron work and participate in his social activities he enjoyed. He was a happy person."

Recalling how they met, Bonnie explained it all happened in "1986 or 1987" during an educational trip to visit a vocational school in Arizona.

"Three of us went down there from the Sacramento area. I had seen him in other vocational department affairs. He and the other industrial education teacher were both really nice guys. We had a lot of fun. We learned a lot. We discovered we enjoyed similar interests. That was the beginning. But, we all came back to our regular jobs and came back to work. We didn't get married until 1992. We just meshed beautifully. We enjoyed each other. He had a lot of diverse interests. I enjoyed them. He enjoyed mine. He was a friendly person. He enjoyed people. He loved kids. He was good at relating with students," Bonnie said.

During his teaching career, Ray taught at Stanford Jr. High School, part time at Sacramento City College and metal shop at C.K. McClatchy High School until his retirement. Ray was an active member of the Wilton community. He and Mary took square dancing lessons at the Alta Mesa Community Center and he thoroughly enjoyed being the auctioneer at the annual Box Social dinner. He was also very active in the Wilton 4-H Club. Ray took great pleasure in being Master of Ceremonies and planning and participating in evening entertainment at the annual Alta Mesa Fair. Many Wilton kids will remember sitting on the floor in his house stamping, carving, stitching and dyeing their various leather projects in the leather craft class he taught in 4-H. Ray also made a hand-engraved wood sign for each child that showed an animal at the County Fair. Each sign had the children's name on top and their show animals' names below, attached with two chains, to be hung outside the pen or stall. In addition to 4-H, Ray was a valued member of the Western Festival Committee and an active member of the Elk Grove Optimists. Ray loved the Alta Mesa Gun Club. He helped organize and also participated in the shoots, and he held the positions of treasurer and president over his many years of involvement. Ray and Bonnie also enjoyed jazz and assisted for many years for the setup of the jazz festival in Old Sacramento.

Ray loved to fish. Family vacations often revolved around locations with a lake or creek that he could put a line in. These included places like Butte Meadows where his Aunt Grace had a cabin, Weed to visit Father Mellow and Jackson Meadows with Wilton friends.

Several years after his first wife Mary passed away, Ray met Bonnie and began a second, happy chapter in his life. They enjoyed being a part of a dinner group and traveling to their their

travel trailer (and later their motor home) and overseas. He also loved the fishing trips he took to Alaska and Mexico. After retirement, Ray continued to work with ornamental iron, creating beautiful railings and gates for the custom brick homes his brother Doug built as well as for the homes of many neighbors and friends. In later years, his iron work drifted to creating bells from oxygen tanks, each one with a unique hanging attachment. He sold some of the bells and also enjoyed donating one each year for the Optimist crab feed.

In the late 1970s, Ray's close cousin Fred introduced him to diving for abalone in Fort Bragg and he was hooked. This was the beginning of many cherished family trips to the coast. Ray loved diving, spearing fish and just sitting around camp visiting, and the evening sing-alongs where he would play his banjo. Throughout the years, additional family and friends would come along and soon become part of the annual group.

Retired McClatchy teacher and counselor Jim Coombs said Ray was one of his favorite teachers to work with. "We had lots of laughs together. He was truly one of the best educators I met in my 38 years as a teacher/counselor, definitely in my top 10. He was so good with the kids and made a major impact on many hundreds of lives. I never saw him give up on a kid, no matter how big an asshole the kid was. Today our schools miss the likes of Ray and Chuck Warner (print shop teacher) who gave those non-academic kids a chance to succeed."

Jim shared two quick stories that came to mind in regard to Ray.

As the Vietnamese immigrants became more integrated into school life, Jim would call them in and ask them if they would like an American first name to go by, which would end up on their transcripts.

Jim did this for many kids and it became a joke around the lunchroom. But one day, Ray sends this poor kid who is not Jim's counselee in with a sealed note. The incident is still clear as crystal in Jim's memory. "The kid stands there while I read (the note). In huge letters Ray has written his name: FU KING YU. In quotes, he says, 'NEEDS A NAME CHANGE.' I asked the boy about doing this and his response was 'FU KING YU is bad name.' So in less than one minute, FU KING YU became KENNY YU and life was much better for him thanks to Ray. From then on, I was Kenny's counselor whenever he had a problem even though I wasn't his counselor."

The other story had to do with Ceila "BOOM BOOM" Boomhower, who was Ray's sixth period teacher's assistant. "BOOM BOOM was pretty accurate in describing her and all of the boys loved having Ceila in sixth period as she never wore a bra, and, boy were they big," recalled Coombs.

"(Ceila's) fifth period teacher was an old biddy who still lived in the 1930s and every day she would send Ceila out of fifth period with a note that said, 'Needs a bra.' She wanted Ceila suspended for violating the dress code. After this had happened about five times, Ceila and I made a deal that would get me fired today. Ceila brought in a bra and put it in a drawer in the back of the guidance clinic. After 4th period she would pop in and put on her bra. After fifth period, she would pop back in again and take it off for Ray and the sixth period class. Ray and I had many laughs over Ceila and the bra story."



Photo courtesy

Bonnie and Ray Allinger.

Joking aside, Ray clearly made a difference in many students' lives.

Starting high school averaging C and D grades, one of Ray's former students, Kerry McColloch, said things turned around because of his metal shop teacher. "(Ray) was the dad I never had. That's saying it mildly," Kerry said. "He set me on a path that straightened me out. Ray had a knack and ability to get through hard-headed, dumb kids our age when we thought we knew everything. He put the fear of God in you. He had a way to teach you without you knowing it."

While Kerry excelled in metal shop and continued his studies in college, he followed his then-new-found dream of opening a RV trailer repair and storage business (McColloch's Rv Repair & Storage, 2420 Harvard St.) and hasn't looked back. That motivation and courage to start the business on his own volition, Kerry said, was inspired by Ray. "It's a good feeling to have. I put my two kids through college. And this all goes back to Ray. Three years ago, I told him all of this and it made him cry."

Bob Sertich, a college-bound 1967 McClatchy graduate, said Ray was his class's sponsor. "I was a class officer and Ray would always encourage us to do stuff we didn't think we could do. I remember him saying, 'Bob, you can do this.' He was really positive and encouraging. I had lost my dad a few years before I started at McClatchy. There were male teachers and the principal who took care of me. There weren't that many people who didn't have a father. It's not like today with divorces. (Ray) was one of the males who filled the void."

As Jim Coombs stated: "Even as his health began to fail in recent years, Ray kept an optimistic attitude and stayed as active as his health would allow. Ray will be remembered for his positive outgoing personality, his willingness to help a friend, soup parties, tool loan cards, horseshoes, his beautiful iron work and his love of playing the banjo and ukulele. In addition to his family, Ray leaves behind many dear friends from Wilton, people he met during his teaching years and from traveling and the industrial education guys he befriended."

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Pocket Watch:

Continued from page 3

filled with people who, because of the plunge in the economy, had their hours at work reduced dramatically, and many who lost their jobs altogether. Such a grave reduction in income meant that heads of households everywhere were compelled to make difficult choices each month. Forget new cars or boats or trips. It was more likely a matter of, food or mortgage? Utilities or mortgage? Soon, many folks found themselves behind on their mortgage payments and making that difficult call to their lender's customer service department.

The lucky ones were those who were somehow able to convince whichever bank was holding their mortgage to modify the terms of their loan. In general, this meant either a reduction in their interest rates (an 8 percent loan became a 4 percent loan) or an exten-

sion in their terms (a 30-year loan became a 40-year loan). My albeit unscientific analysis of modifications was that the banks were only granting modifications to borrowers who weren't really in terribly bad shape. The more dire cases were soon compelled to leave their homes, via either short sale or, unfortunately, foreclosure.

For the millions of displaced families across the country, gone was that aforementioned elation that came with the purchase of their home, and, in its place, for many, came a sense of shame at having to admit that they were unable to live up to their end of the terms of their loans, a sense of humiliation at having to pack up their children and remove them from the only home they'd ever known, a sense of failure at their shot at what has widely become known as the American Dream, home ownership.

Three and four years removed from the loss of their homes, these neighbors

are now being allowed back into the market, as some lenders have relaxed their qualifying standards to include those who were party to a foreclosure as little as two years ago. In the interim, these former homeowners have watched their own homes be sold for a price that translated into payments that they could have easily afforded. And they've seen prices and, amazingly, interest rates, dip to unprecedented lows at the same time.

Usually, when we see low interest rates, we have high values. And when prices fall significantly, banks are generally charging high interest rates. To see both low rates and low prices, together, is almost a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. That opportunity passed overhead at exactly the same time that the people in America most in need of such a break were powerless to take advantage. Imagine how difficult it would be to see homes selling for prices that would be less than your monthly rent while

being unable to capitalize. This was the plight of many of our friends and neighbors.

But now it's time for them to get back under a roof of their own, and I take enormous satisfaction at my role in facilitating that redemption. The only challenge now is the waning inventory in the market. For a variety of reasons, we just don't have the volume or the selection that we've recently seen. Home buying, now, requires diligence and persistence. The right property is the needle in the haystack.

And that's maybe as it should be. Sure, it makes my job much more challenging, but the payoff is sweeter than it has ever been, given the circumstances under which we're working. You CAN go home again, friends. Welcome.

The Pocket Watch appears in every issue of the Pocket News. Jeff Dominguez can be reached at jeff.dominguez@yahoo.com.

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El Milagro Ballet Folklorico performed at Elks parking lot

Next stop, the state fair

Photos and story by MONICA STARK
editor@valcomnews.com

As the heat on Saturday warmed the valley, dancers from the local troupe, El Milagro Ballet Folklorico, kept cool washing cars at the Elks Lodge, No. 6 parking lot. In an effort to raise funds for new costumes, the dancers took to the hose and soapy wash buckets and scrubbed away. Four of the girls took a break from washing cars to entertain customers with a bit of dancing.

Meaning "miracle," the "Milagro" part of the troupe's name stems from the fact that the group's founders Hilda Ramirez and her sister, Lupe, didn't think the group was going to survive for very long. But as Hilda said in an interview with the Pocket News, "we started going to different churches and dancing at different events and people just started calling. It's amazing."

Hilda and Lupe each have three sons who, three years ago, were the first members of the dance troupe. "Then we got the girls from the church and that's how we started out. And people would just come. They

See Ballet Folklorico, page 23



Ballet Folklorico:

Continued from page 22

would want to join, but for many of them, it was too expensive."

Just the cost of getting started is about \$250, about \$100 of which goes toward the cost of shoes – the rest pays for the material to make the costumes, which Hilda and her sister do by hand.

"My mom sewed our dresses as well. So I would just watch her. One day I was just messing with the machine and I just started sewing and I made a skirt out of nothing, out of scratch. The more you do the more you learn," she said.

Saturday's fundraiser was the first in two years, the first being a successful tamale sale. The third will be a performance on Aug. 9 at the Meadowview Pannell Community Center from 3 to 7 p.m.

Asked what her favorite thing about dancing is, Alejandra Perez, 13, chuckled and said, "I don't

know. There's a lot of things. The fact we get free entrance to the fair – that's awesome. I just enjoy dancing. I like it. It's one of my hobbies." Her favorite dance? "Santa Rita. It's really fast, but you don't get tired. You actually just enjoy it," Alejandra said.

Gearing up for performances at the state fair, El Milagro will perform dances, including (but not limited to): "The Danza de los Viejitos" (dance of the old men), a traditional dance in Michoacán where the dancers wear masks of elderly people; and Pajarito, a dance in which girls dress flutter across the stage as little birds.

Isaac Ramirez, 14, said he enjoys performing in front of crowds "because you get encouraged to do more stuff. I would like to be a better dancer. I do a little bit of hip hop. I am excited about the fair." Told that he may, in fact, share a stage with famous celebrities, depending on if the group gets to perform on the "Golden Stage," Isaac said: "That's pretty cool."



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