

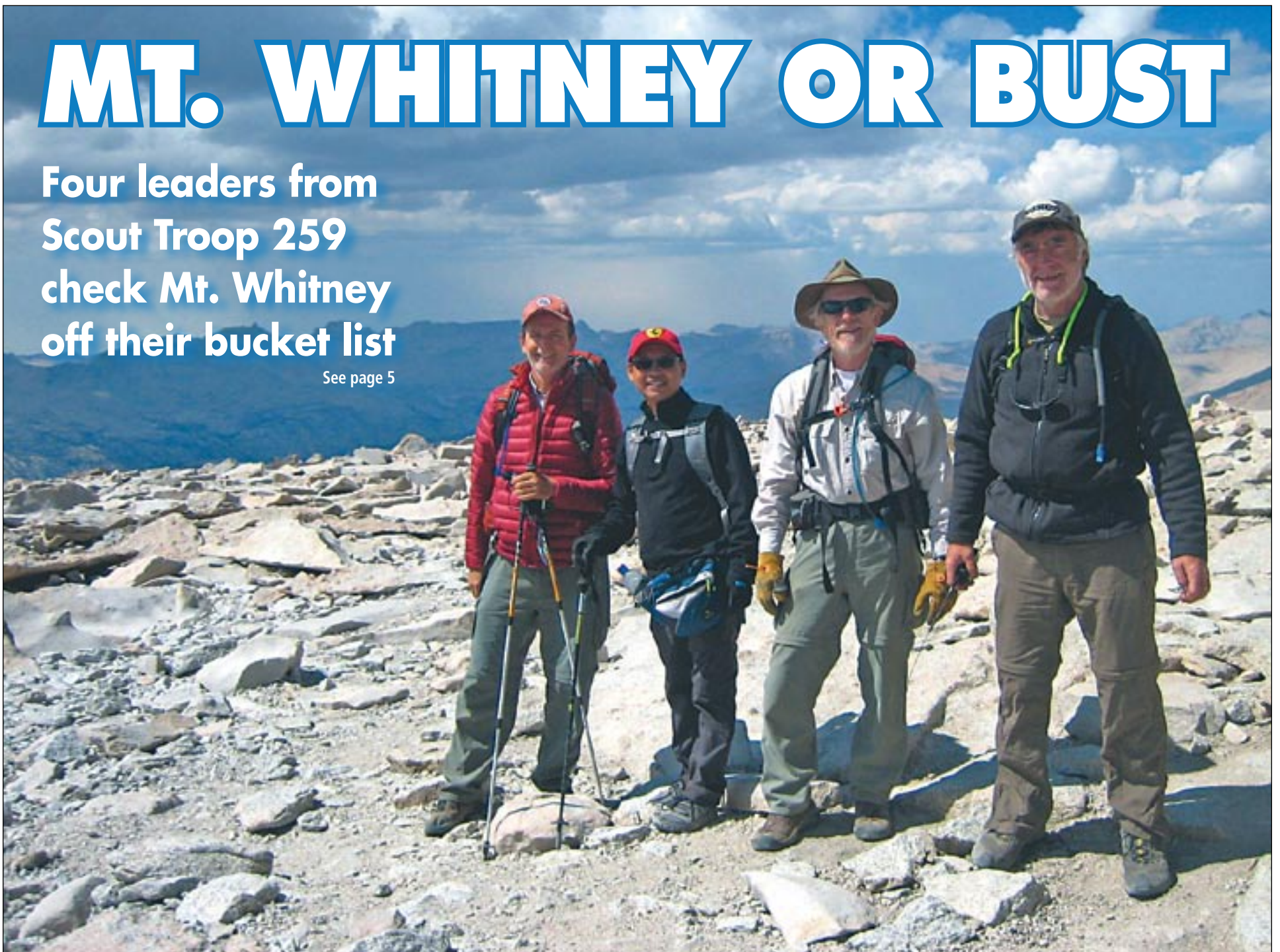
# POCKET NEWS

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## MT. WHITNEY OR BUST

Four leaders from Scout Troop 259 check Mt. Whitney off their bucket list

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Sacramento River levee access concerns  
■ See page 3



Alice Birney created a candlelit path of wonder for an enchanted evening  
■ See photos page 9

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## FROM YOUR COUNCILMEMBER

By RICK JENNINGS



On Thursday, Oct. 22, I hosted a town hall meeting for our Pocket/Greenhaven community to discuss access issues on the developed and yet to be developed portions of the Sacramento River Parkway. I was joined by a panel of experts to help educate our community regarding public versus private property access. I am thankful to our panelists and residents that came out to the Kennedy High School Theater for this important community discussion.

Helping me to provide accurate information were three members of the City's Parks and Recreation Department: Interim Director Pamela Sloan along with Gary Hyden and Mary DeBeauvieres. They were able to address questions about the Parkway Plan and how the bike trail is operated. Captain Dave Peletta from the Sacramento Police Department helped in the discussion on safety and security.

Sheryl Patterson from the Sacramento City Attorney's office focused on legal questions regarding private and public access. Finally, Chairman of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board of the State of California, Bill Edgar, was able to address issues related to what the State will and will not permit on the levee as well as what the State's easements allow.

Our evening was structured to have members of the audience submit questions for one or more of the panelist to answer. We tried to address everyone's questions during the two-hour meeting, but unfortunately we were not able to get to some before the meeting ended. I committed to the audience that all questions would be answered and that everyone would have the opportunity to access them. If you go to my City of Sacramento web page at [www.cityofsacramento.org/Mayor-Council/Districts/District7](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Mayor-Council/Districts/District7) you will find all of the questions posed and their answers.

In the beginning of the meeting it was important to me to make sure that there was a clear understanding of my position relative to the completion of the Parkway. I have been, and continue to be, a supporter of opening up the Parkway along the levees throughout District 7.

I am completely behind connecting the Parkway Trail from Garcia Bend Park to Zacharias Park. This would allow connection throughout all of Pocket/Greenhaven including a connection to the trails along our canals and greenspace. I truly believe in the Parkway Plan that originated in 1975, and I am committed to seeing it happen.

Of equal importance is an understanding of what we need to do to accomplish this goal. We need to purchase the necessary recreational easements to allow the city to develop the trail.

Unfortunately, as the Greenhaven community began to develop, the city did not acquire the recreational easements necessary to develop the full trail. Currently, there are segments of the trail that are in private ownership that do not have a public recreation easement (a map with the details on what is public and what has easements is located on my web page). Those parcels still in private ownership are just that, privately owned. We, as a community, need to respect their private property rights while the city works toward either public ownership or recreational easements.

While we, as a community work toward completion of the Sacramento River Parkway trail, we must keep in mind what it means to be neighborly:

- We must respect our community and our neighbors.
- We must work together to achieve common goals that improve our quality of life.
- We must respect and accept differences in opinion, not as a personal attack, but as an understanding of different perspectives.

*Throughout our collective journey to complete the Parkway Trail, we must remember that we all live, work, and play in a very special community— District 7.*

## Sacramento River levee access concerns

By LEIGH STEPHENS

*"The levee is not any homeowner's backyard. When the State acquired easements many years ago to improve the levees, the homeowners' predecessors surrendered their right to control what they do with the levees. From 10 feet off the landside levee toe to the river's edge, a homeowner can do almost nothing with the levee unless the state permits it. A homeowner can't plant a bush without an encroachment permit. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers provides guidance on appropriate vegetation and how it's maintained."*

**-Jim Houpt, Friends of the Sacramento River Parkway**

Homeowners from the Pocket and Greenhaven neighborhoods along with state, local, and city representatives met Thursday, October 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. at Kennedy High School Auditorium to clarify Sacramen-

to River levee use. Approximately 150 people attended the meeting.

City Councilman Rick Jennings, II, of District 7, called and moderated the meeting. District 7 represents the Pocket and Greenhaven neighborhoods in South Sacramento.

The Pocket Community Plan Area boundary "encompasses 7.9 square miles or 5,056 acres entirely within Sacramento City Limits. The community is bounded on the north by 35th Avenue and the Sacramento River on the south and west by the Sacramento River, and on the east by Freeport Boulevard."

This meeting was not the first one on the heated topic of levee use. Homeowners for many years have been up-in-arms about levee fences, about confusing signage along the levee, and about people walking the levees day and night. They

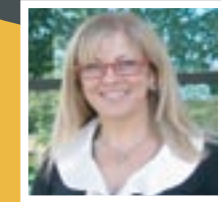
See Levee, page 4

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Sign-in table for Levee Program, October 22.

Photo by Leigh Stephens

## Levee:

Continued from page 3

complain about levee walkers, bikers, and transients leaving trash along the levees and in areas that homeowners claim belong to them.

The city River Parkway Plan envisions the Sacramento River Parkway similar to the American River one. It would have paved walks for bikers and walkers all the way starting within city limits including South Natomas down to south of the Freepoint reservoir to the Freepoint Bridge. The Parkway would be 17 miles long and cover 820 acres.

Several confrontations have occurred along the levees. Some homeowners have illegally constructed their own fences and put up signs that declare "Private Property: No Trespassing." Police are continually responding to crime and nuisance complaints from homeowners. One homeowner

who confronted someone on the levee was pushed down the embankment.

Jennings appealed to the homeowners not to confront those who they think are trespassing. He said with the world as it is today, you never know who you might encounter and what they might do. He also said the safety and maintenance of the levees must be our collective priority and responsibility. The public has the absolute right to access the levees.

Since 1975, the City has worked toward completing the River Parkway. Jennings says that the Sacramento River Parkway Master Plan (1975) includes 13 public access policies and two apply to the levee access discussion: *Policy 5 states public access is limited to daylight hours and the hours shall be posted at all access points. Policy 8 states that access points and associated improvements shall be de-*

*signed to minimize impact on adjacent land use.*

To move forward in the undeveloped part of the parkway trail, the California Valley Flood Protection Board will need to revoke the permits for the cross-levee fences, and the city will need to buy the remaining easements.

In 2012, CVFPB representative Alison Tang wrote, "The Central Valley Flood Protection Board would have required levee encroachment permits and none were ever issued."

Now that the staff is aware of these unpermitted encroachments in our easement, we will initiate enforcement action against landowners that allowed construction of unpermitted fences."

To develop the remaining portion of the Parkway Trail requires the City to purchase easements from 71 property owners along the river in the Pocket/Greenhaven area. One homeowner has already sold an easement while another is in escrow with the City.

The \$50,000 - \$80,000 cost for each easement to the City is determined by a property appraiser. The total purchase cost for homeowner easements is estimated between \$4 & 5 million dollars. Unfortunately, the Pocket/Greenhaven and the Little Pocket community (District 4) developers did not obtain easements as a condition of development.

One homeowner echoing a number of sentiments at the meeting shouted, "I don't want

# Mt. Whitney or bust!

## Four leaders from Scout Troop 259 check Mt. Whitney off their bucket lists

By BILL KIRK

Some ideas become reality, springing forth like so many dandelion tufts, exploding with the least provocation in a breeze. Others form slowly through wondering and contemplation which nudge an idea from concept through reality check to full-on execution. A recent Mt. Whitney experience on Sept. 11 for four Troop 259 Boy Scout leaders was clearly the product of the latter process. In part it was an escape. But it was also a bit of a shake down to determine the feasibility of Mt. Whitney as a Scouting High Adventure trek for our Scouts.

Our planning was nothing if not long, slow and deliberate, yet with a certain edge of urgency that comes from aging—I mean maturing—with the passage of time. Like the Cubs, we wanted to get past "There's always next year" to "Done!" So, we listened on the edge of our chairs to all the superlatives from other hikers—Amazing! Awesome! Unbelievable vistas! Unforgettable! We also acknowledged their cautions—to watch the weather, carry plenty of water and train at elevation (including conditioning hikes at or above 10,000 feet).

During the February 1 through April 15 Mt. Whitney permit lottery, we failed to be selected for an overnight permit which would allow us to hike to a mid-point, camp overnight and then summit the next day. Our only hope was to present ourselves before the "drawer of daily lots" (e.g., the Park Ranger) at the Lone Pine Ranger Station in hopes of getting a good draw for any available "No Show" permits. May through August are heavy use months. So, we opted to wait until September when the number of hikers (and over-nighters) would drop off.

The summer drew on, after family vacations, Scout summer camp and before the press of school prep took over. In late July and early August, our personal and family sched-

ules seemed to open up a bit. Would this be the year after all? Soon two training hikes fell into place. The first was a virtual walk in the park on August 22, up Donner Peak (8,019 feet) and nearby Mt. Judah (8,243 feet). The second on September 3 was an arduous hike/crawl up Pyramid Peak (9,984 feet), which was more challenging in terms of the number of hours on our feet, the higher elevation and the rock scramble to the top (and back down). I vaguely remember hearing someone utter, "What were we thinking?" Oh, wait. That was me.

After those conditional successes, all that was left was to pick a date for the six-hour drive south to Lone Pine—without a firm target date, we knew Whitney wouldn't happen this year or ever. A three-to-four day group itinerary quickly took shape. At the same time, each of us began our individual preparations to reduce our pack weight, making sure to account for all gear contingencies. Each of us has our rituals and when you are down to the final week

before departure, things start to get serious as the objective actually feels within reach.

The day before departure, a last minute flurry of e-mails, texts and phone calls confirmed the meet up place and time. We left Sacramento at 4:30 a.m. on Thursday morning, Sept. 10. The six-hour drive took us along highway 50 to the highway 89 turn toward Markleyville, then Highway 88 to U.S. Highway 395 south paralleling the Sierras. At 10:45 a.m., we pulled into the Eastern Sierra InterAgency Visitor Center, 15 minutes before lot-to-time.

A small crowd had materialized inside, casually milling around the gift shop and Visitor Center (e.g., Lone Pine Ranger Station). Everyone killed time by studying the photo displays, maps and a large 3-D raised model of the high Sierras. All were hoping for a lucky number. The Ranger called one representative from each group forward. Nine numbers initially went into the bucket from which seven group leaders would randomly draw a number.



At the Mt. Whitney Trailhead, shown from the left: Ike Krieg, Dennis Kazee, Rob Fong and Bill Kirk.

Rob Fong from our group pulled lot number FOUR. When all lots were drawn, each group was called forward sequentially to claim its permits. Unbelievably, numbers ONE

and TWO were not drawn! That meant number FOUR gave us an excellent shot at a permit! Yes, I know. You are

See Mt. Whitney, page 14

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**The Crossword** by Margie E. Burke

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16							17					
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54	55	56				57	58	59	60			
61						62			63			
64						65						
66						67			68			

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**ACROSS**

1 Masseur's workplace, maybe  
4 "Had enough?"  
8 Gelatin dish  
13 Quilt pattern  
15 Portuguese currency  
16 Causing worry  
17 Flower part  
18 Blue shade  
19 Caribbean, e.g.  
20 "Wheel of Fortune" category  
21 Amount of hair  
23 Children's verse  
25 Tongue-lashing  
28 Fluster  
32 One at a time  
36 Cold and wet  
37 Ritzy  
38 Piglike  
41 "My dear man"  
42 Guard  
44 Arctic  
47 Some like it hot  
48 Dusk to dawn  
50 Subject of many horror films  
54 Thin layer  
57 "Is that \_\_\_?"  
60 Like some losers  
61 Canine's coat  
62 Period of greatest success  
64 Rock layers  
65 Fair  
66 Nonsensical  
67 Escape, in a way

**DOWN**

1 Bias  
2 Kind of cap  
3 Mojave plant  
4 Leg, in old slang  
5 Nile wader  
6 Kudzu, for one  
7 Fencing words  
8 Bronchial disorder  
9 Chicken  
10 Fast feline  
11 Bad day for Caesar  
12 Christmas decoration  
14 Fine stemware  
15 Make out  
22 Beget  
24 Elf, to Santa  
26 "You \_\_\_?"  
27 Hook up  
29 Big bore  
30 Track assignment  
31 It has a big mouth  
32 C-worthy  
33 "Beowulf," e.g.  
34 Squeaky clean  
35 Garment part  
39 Go through  
40 Keyboard instrument  
43 Bacterial infection  
45 Sloth, e.g.  
46 What a leadfoot may do  
49 Big bash  
51 Tearful  
52 Court call  
53 Destitute  
54 Amount to make do with  
55 Part of ABM  
56 Clayey soil  
58 Like some wolves  
59 Brain area  
63 Quick drink

See Solution, page 17

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**Easements:**  
Continued from page 4

to live here anymore. Why don't you buy the whole property?"

Jennings says that different sources will be asked to contribute funds for easement purchase. For example, the California Lands Commission has funds to help purchase more access easement, but the property owner must be willing to sell.

Four panel members at the October 22nd meeting answered questions about public versus private rights along the levees with an effort to untangle the previous confusion and misinformation among property owners and those who use the Sacramento River Parkway.

Panelist Bill Edgar, President of the Central Valley Flood Protection Board said the Board is responsible for regulating encroachments that may affect the federal flood control system built by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and is maintained by local agencies.

At the meeting Edgar was a clear voice about levee access. He emphasized two issues of CVFPB responsibility: 1) Public security by protecting levees from devastating flooding, and 2) Continued issuance of permit easements along the river. The Board is responsible for other project permits for such as bridges, fish release sites, access ramps, and coffer dams.

A minimum of 10-foot clearance between private property owners and the toe of the levee is required. Obstructions such as homeownner planted trees, mowed lawns, stairs leading up the levees, bar-b-que areas with picnic tables are illegal. Some boat docks have legal easements and some do not. Edgar drew a laugh from the audience by saying that although not in this area, one homeowner had dug a hole in a levee and built himself a wine cellar.

Another panel member, Sacramento Police Captain Dave Peletta, discussed the security and protection of the public. Peletta is Captain of the South Command and said, "These levee issues have been on-going for more than 25 years, and our concern is public safety and protection." Police have been caught between property owner rights and the public access to levees near private property.

Peletta says that there are only nine officers who patrol

the South Command and priority is always the emergency 911 call which he says police respond to within three minutes. Police response works on the level of concern about an incident. He says police track every complaint about trespassing on private property as well as those calls about loiterers and transients on the levee, but emergencies have to take priority. There is no 24-hour patrol of the levees.

He says, "We won't tolerate transients setting up camp on the levees."

Panelist Deputy City Attorney Sheryl Patterson answered legal questions from the audience. She said to visualize the levee areas think of them as cake layers.

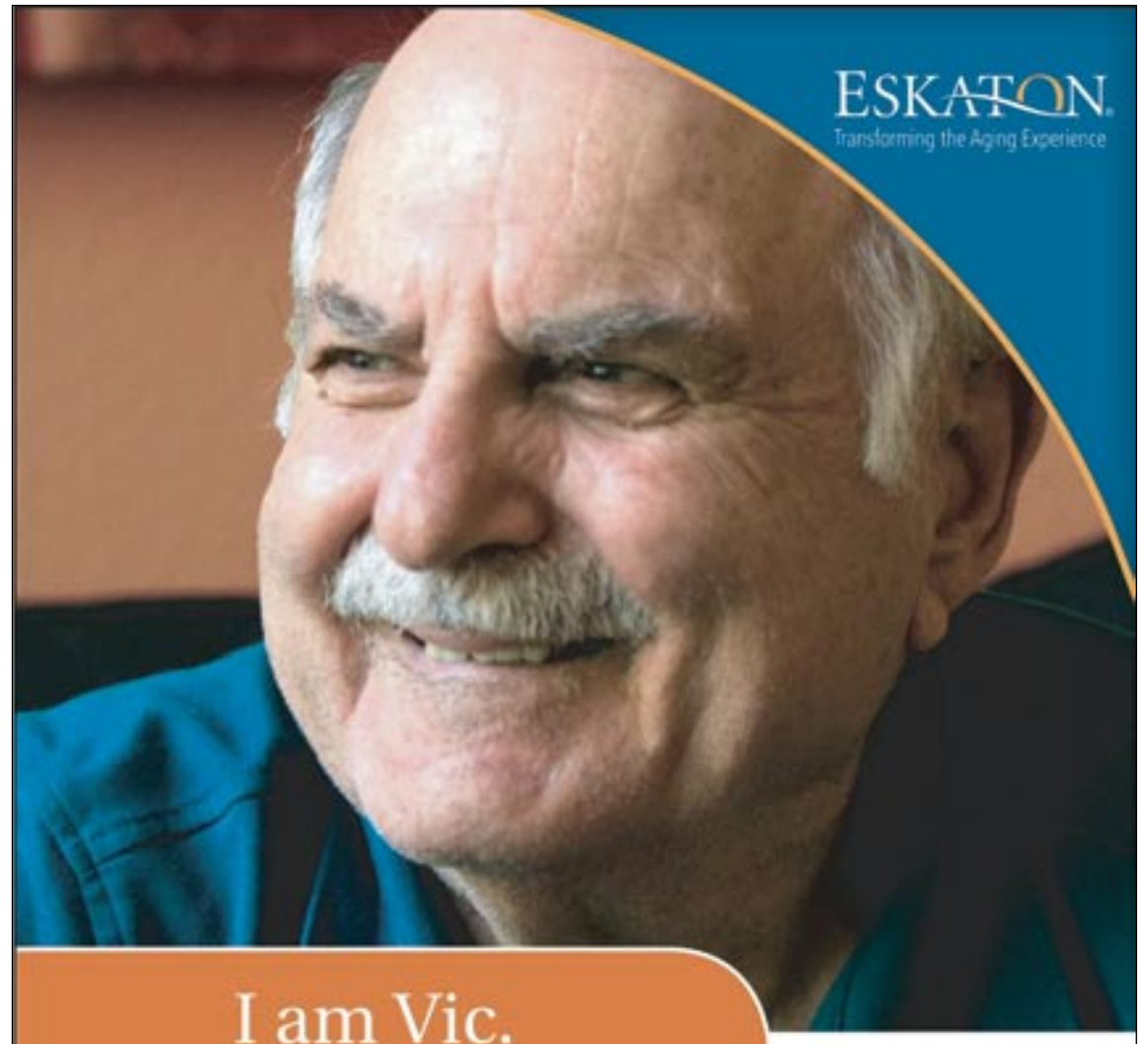
The CVFPB prescribed 10 feet minimum space from the property owners' property to the toe of the levee, the land side of the levee, the crown of the levee, and the water side of the levee make up these layers. Someone in the audience asked about eminent domain, but Patterson and Jennings said they were not ready to talk about that issue.

The fourth panelist Principal Planner Mary de Beauviers of the City Parks & Recreation Planning & Development discussed park services. She said they do not have personnel to patrol the levees at night. Her department is responsible for land acquisition and real estate transactions, parks and trails along the rivers.

It may be some years before levee issues are settled. Although public agency responsibilities may seem contradictory and overlapping, the law will ultimately prevail. Meanwhile residents will have to be patient and civil to their neighbors.

Councilman Jennings says, "This extension of the Parkway Trail is a good beginning, but I will continue to work toward the completion of the Sacramento River Parkway Trail throughout our community. In order to do this, we will need the cooperation of the CVFPB in regard to cross levees fences and continued funding for the purchase of the recreational access easements."

Public Policy Advisor Casanya Ursery of Jennings' office says questions and answers from the meeting will be posted on the Councilman's website (rjennings@cityofsacramento.org) in the coming weeks.



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Faces and Places:  
**Alice Birney Waldorf School  
Candlelit Path of Wonder**

Photos by STEPHEN CROWLEY  
stephen@valcomnews.com

Alice Birney Waldorf School celebrated an evening of wonder on Friday, Oct. 30 with a candlelit path and magical stories and skits. There was also delicious food, Waldorf-inspired art, a petting zoo and a pumpkin patch.

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There will be three different dates and venues to choose from: Friday, December 4, 7:30 pm at the First Baptist Church of Fair Oaks; Saturday, December 5, 7:30 pm at the Faith Presbyterian Church in South Sacramento; and Sunday, December 6, 4:00 pm at St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Citrus Heights. As you can



see, you don't have to drive downtown or pay for expensive parking to experience one of these fine performances. And parking is always free!

The River City Chorale, 60 voices strong, has been providing a very eclectic selection music to Sacramento for 38 years, featuring classical, jazz, Broadway, folk, etc. The Chorale performs three times a year; in addition to the Christmas concert, there is the ever-popular winter

Cabaret and the Spring concert in May. Richard Morrissey has been the Musical Director of the River City Chorale for a number of years and brings a wealth of teaching and performing experience to the group.

Visit [www.RiverCityChorale.org](http://www.RiverCityChorale.org) or call 916-331-5810 to order tickets. Season ticket holders receive a 20% discount on what is already a very affordable rate -- 3 concerts for only \$44!



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# Intel PC Pal and JFK come together in a great partnership

By EMILY CHU and SAMANTHA TAKEMORI  
JFK students

On Wednesday, Oct. 21, the students of John F. Kennedy High School met up with some people who work at Intel for a mentoring program called PC Pal thanks to the arrangement of Bethany Carter, the office manager and secretary to the principal. In April of this year, students from JFK's Chinese program visited the Intel software company in Folsom and were introduced to the PC Pal program.

May Tam, a junior at John F. Kennedy, stated that, "The experience was eye-opening. It was exciting to learn about what it's like to work in the industry. I look forward to being a part of the PC Pal program." Intel's PC Pal program allows students to communicate with Intel employees through email. They give advice to students about academics and life lessons.

While visiting John F. Kennedy High School, the Intel employees met up with the students and enjoyed a nice lunch consisting of

sushi and pizza, while getting to know more about them. The Intel mentors also talked about Intel and what it takes to work there, along with their life story. Many students really enjoy this program, and look forward to becoming more involved with the program. Elliot Tom, who is also a junior at John F. Kennedy, said, "I learned a lot, and I thought it was really fun."

Later this year, John F. Kennedy High School is planning on having Jerry Lu, the PC Pal coordina-

tor, visit the school again and give a short presentation to students who are interested in the program. Hopefully in upcoming years the Intel PC Pal program will spread to other JFK programs such as engineering and auto shop. This program will encourage students to strive for both academic and moral success. It will also allow students to start thinking about the career path they would like to pursue and get a head start on life-long goals.

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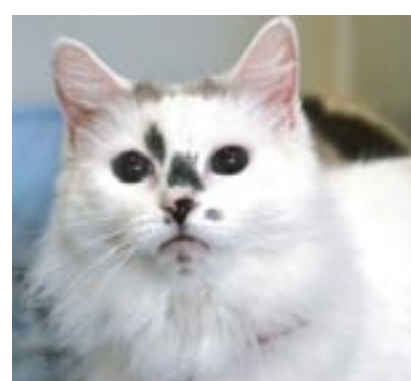
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# Mt. Whitney:

Continued from page 5

probably beginning to wonder about our mental capacity. After all, how could anyone be so excited by the prospect of hiking to the 14,508 foot summit?

Well, it's all about the luck of the draw. During our planning, we expected our best hope to be one overnight with "Next Day" entry onto the Whitney Trail. That meant we would have to find a "no permit required" place to sleep the first night, such as the Horse-shoe Meadows private campground or even roughing it in the Whitney Portal parking area. The next day, we would push as far as we could up the trail to an overnight trailside camp. The third day we would hike the rest of the way to the summit and all the way back down to Whitney Portal for our trip home. At least that was our plan.

So, with our best hopes in mind and a pretty good number, when our turn came to

request our permits, we asked for one overnight each if possible out of the "No Show" pool. But as luck would have it, there had been 22 overnight "No Shows". Because we were second in line, the Ranger offered us TWO nights on the trail! We could barely subdue our excitement as we accepted the unexpected gift of fate. The only condition was a "Same Day" entry, meaning we were burning daylight in the Ranger Station. We had to begin our hike up that same day rather than starting early the next morning. "OK. We'll take it!"

As final checklist items, the Ranger gave us our WAG bags (with instructions on how to "deposit" and carry out all solid waste), reminding us to attach our permits to our packs. Then we were off, driving the 13 miles from Lone Pine to the Whitney Portal parking lot. After tweaking our pack weight down a few more pounds (given the excellent weather forecast), we hit the Trail at 1:45

p.m. and were above the tree line at 10,000 feet by 5:30 p.m. Our optimism about reaching Trail Camp before dark dimmed as we trudged on. The sun was already dipping below the surrounding ridges and peaks. An hour later we passed by Outpost Camp at 10,800 feet, 3.8 miles from Whitney Portal. When we finally reached Trail Camp 2.2 miles later at 12,000 feet elevation, there were only a few dim lights and quiet voices among the scattered tents as the last of the overnight hikers drifted into camp.

It had been a hard 3,700 feet ascent to that level from the Whitney Portal Trail Head at 8,300 feet. After quickly setting up camp in the dark, we did little more than get a quick bite of dinner and collapse in our tents. Due to the elevation change basically from sea level in Sacramento to 12,000 feet, sleep was fitful. There was a lot of breath catching going on all night in the thin air. We knew the next day we had another 2,500 feet

of elevation gain. But somehow that didn't sound too bad. We were glad to finally get our packs off and find a flat place to pitch our tents.

After a restless night, we were up at 5:30 a.m. to eat breakfast, filter water at a nearby tairn (small mountain lake) and load up our day packs with 3 to 4 liters of water, rain gear (precautionary) and trail snacks. Based on the Ranger's advice, we left our tents open to any critters (marmots and chipmunks), knowing they would likely chew their way in otherwise. We stored the rest of our food and "smellables" in bear canisters placed 50 feet from our tents. By 8:00 a.m. we were on the trail toward the Whitney summit five miles ahead of us.

Our slow, steady climb brought us to Trail Crest at 13,600 feet by 10:40 a.m. Overall, the trail was very well designed with only two or three spots where caution was warranted. Had the weather not been as good, the footing might have been more of a concern. But it couldn't have been much better. Just beyond Trail Crest, a sign post announcing 1.9 miles to the summit was a mixed blessing—that relatively short distance translated to nearly two hard hours of hiking the remaining nearly 1,000 feet of elevation gain.

At 12:50 p.m. we reached the summit, took the obligatory photos and signed the record in a flat metal box outside the stone hut. For a brief moment, each of us was the highest human in the lower 48 states. As billed, the views from the top of the mountain didn't disap-

point. It had been a hard "up" but it was worth the effort. Yet there was a growing chill in the steady 20-25 knot wind and clouds were forming in the distance. Urged on by the visible reminders that weather could change quickly in the High Sierras, we started our measured retreat at 1:45 p.m., already looking forward to our second night on the trail.

We reached Trail Camp by 5:30 p.m. with daylight to spare, grateful there was no sign of furry visitors in our tents. As if on cue, the scattered clouds which had been swirling near the peaks earlier in the day had moved on. There was no rain that night and the stars were brilliant with the Milky Way stretched like a misty contrail across the night sky. The next morning we woke early, leisurely breaking camp as we contemplated the six mile descent before us. On the trail by 8:30 a.m., we arrived at the Whitney Portal parking lot by 12:45 p.m.

Our Whitney trek was a grand adventure but it was not easy, even with three full days on the trail. We had each put about 50,000 foot strikes in the 11 miles to the summit and back down. Even with our relatively light day packs above 12,000 feet, the higher we climbed, the shorter the time between brief stops to catch our breath. The training hikes in the weeks before definitely made the ascent more doable.

Summiting Mt. Whitney can be done in less time. In fact, many day hikers complete the 22-mile round trip in about 18-20 hours or more. Generally, they start at Whitney Portal at 2 a.m., reach the summit by noon and finish at Whitney Portal between 8 and 10 p.m. Almost half of their time on the trail is in the dark, which can be a bit dicey in spots and not nearly as scenic. Personally, I would recommend at least one overnight on the trail—two if you are lucky.

It was a long drive home but we were glad to have the time to decompress and reflect on what we and all the others on the Mt. Whitney Trail had accomplished. We had met hikers from all over the U.S. and around the world, some from as far away as eastern Canada, Mexico, Germany, France, Australia and Asia. The experience was definitely a high point. After a recovery week or two, we are already imagining what the next adventure will be.

Hike on! The trail beckons!

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# Matias Bombal's Hollywood

## TRUTH

The MPAA has rated this R

Sony Pictures Classics brings us "Truth", a drama set in 2004 in the New York CBS newsrooms where the television show "60 Minutes" is produced. Writer and director James Vanderbilt based his screenplay on the Mary Mapes book "Truth and Duty: The Press, The President, and The Privilege of Power".

Mapes is the central figure in this story of a woman holding the highest ideals of producing whilst struggling to get out the truth in the corporate structure of television news, which remains influenced, if not controlled, by big money. Mary Mapes is played by Cate Blanchett, and the movie opens with a visit to an attorney, which will set in motion the story, told in flashback.

Mapes produced many pieces with long time friend and legendary broadcaster, Dan Rather. Famously, it is the controversy over one of the most long running and respected news magazine format programs in the history of television, "60 Minutes" in which she and Rather were involved, that created her undoing. Alternately known as "Rathergate" or "Memogate", it was a controversy over what was known as the Killian documents. These six documents related to President George W. Bush's time served in the Texas Air National Guard in 1972 and 1973.

This movie tells the story of the discovery of the documents, and how CBS, under Mapes direction, presented them.

Playing Dan Rather is Robert Redford. While he looks nothing like Rather, he has captured the newsman's verbal phrasing perfectly, and a strange thing begins to occur as you watch the picture. Both iconic men are similar in age and stature, and after a while your mind swaps one iconic face for the other, and you forget you are watching Redford. Seems Redford still has the chops.

From this moment on the picture deals with the discovery of the documents, and the subsequent investigation of them by the news department under Mapes' direction. Along the way you'll encounter solid performances by Dennis Quaid, Topher Grace, Dermot Mulroney, Mad Men's Elisabeth Moss, and that great scene stealer, Sta-

cy Keach as Lt. Colonel Bill Burkett, who was the source of the documents in question.

As the investigation continues, the once central pieces of evidence are discredited after the story ran on television. The Killian documents were found to be forged, after the additional analysis of typography and typewriter experts. Things become difficult for Mapes and the pressure is on, prompting a visit from Dan Rather who tells her something she does not want to hear.

This is a terrific movie with solid and great performances, engaging and thoughtful. Everything comes together as it should, which so rarely happens with movies. It is a reminder that you really can't believe what you read or see in the media, and that all news should be carefully considered before digested. This really is Cate Blanchett's movie, she is fantastic, and you should not miss it.



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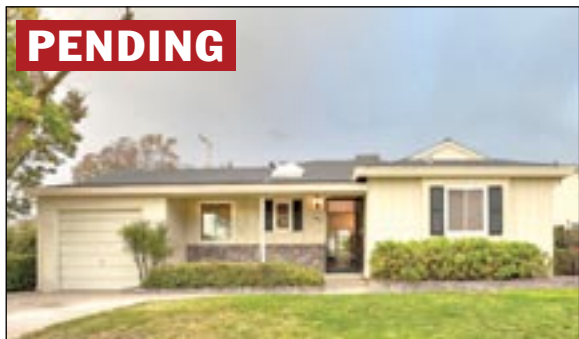
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