

# VIEWPOINT

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October 2021



Photo/Joan Cusick

Brooke Kozak, left, is a second-grader at Capital Christian School, where her sister, Lauren, 4, is in preschool.

## How about a book club for kids under the trees?

By Brooke Kozak

I am Brooke and I am 7. I want to have a book club the first and third Saturdays of every month at 10 a.m. under the trees in Curtis Park – you know, the place where they do yoga in the north side of the park – starting Nov. 6.

I love reading and I want others to like it, too. I'm going to be the leader of the book club and will help others to like reading books more.

I'm going to help pick out the books I want

us to read, like chapter books. You can read the pictures if you want to, too, if you can't read.

I think kindergarten through third grade would be the perfect age to join. I will bring the books and we will all choose together.

My little sister Lauren is 4 and she can be my assistant. If it rains, we can bring umbrellas. (My mom says we can also do Zoom book club that day.)

I hope to hear from you soon. You can contact my mom, Melissa Kozak, by email at melissakozak@hotmail.com if you want to join the club.

## Hand-made quilts, notes of welcome greet first residents of X Street shelter

By Dennis Cusick

A hand-made quilt and a cardboard message on each bed greeted formerly homeless people at the city's new Navigation Center: "WELCOME! May all who enter as guests, leave as friends."

After years of planning, the shelter between X Street and Broadway was ready to accept 50 residents on Sept. 21. Another 50 will follow in the next month to reach the capacity of 100 residents in the dormitory on the south side of the one-acre property, just west of Alhambra Boulevard.

A separate building to the north houses the dining room and community room. The shelter complex also has storage space for residents' possessions and a kennel for their pets.

"We want to get people in so that they can have better services and get a better life," said

*Please see Shelter, Page 2*

## Blues society honors music promoter for lifetime achievements

By Patti Roberts

When Mindy Giles of 10th Avenue got a phone call recently from Sacramento Blues Society President Sally Katen, she thought it was to help coordinate an upcoming concert. But to Giles' surprise, Katen was calling to let her know she was being inducted into the blues society's Hall of Fame for her work promoting, producing, managing and supporting local and national blues musicians and the music community.

"I was shocked," Giles said of the phone call. "It's quite the honor to be recognized by your peers. I've

*Please see Promoter, Page 8*

### Taylor's new wine expert

As a sommelier, he makes wine suggestions to fit customers' tastes. Page 11



### Sparrows are social

Common neighborhood birds feed and roost in flocks. Page 13



### Physician on duty at Ten Acres Pharmacy

Doctor practices integrative medicine, enjoys living nearby on Portola Way. Page 14





# Shelter: Plan calls for identifying sites throughout the city

*Continued from Page 1*

Councilmember Jay Schenirer during an open house Sept. 14.

In the two weeks before the shelter opened, city staff reached out to residents of five homeless encampments within a five-block radius of the shelter. About 97% of the homeless people interviewed said they would be interested in relocating to the X Street shelter, said Nicholas Golling, program manager in the city's Office of Homeless Services.

"Hopefully we can get whole encampments to come in, rather than ones and twos," Schenirer said. He estimated that about 100 people were living in the five encampments, meaning that the shelter could accommodate all of them within a month of opening.

The city's goal is to persuade residents of all five encampments to relocate en masse to the shelter, with the understanding that signs prohibiting camping in the area would go up once the shelter had opened. "If there are encampments that spring up, we will have failed," Schenirer said.

With a capacity of 100 residents, and the expectation that residents will stay in the shelter about six months, Schenirer said, "If this place works really well we could cycle 200 people through it in a year." He cautioned, however, that there would be no drop-dead date



Photo/Joan Cusick

Hand-made quilts adorned dozens of beds when the first residents arrived.

to get residents out of the shelter: "It's really meeting them where they are" and addressing individual needs.

The X Street shelter is part of the city's Comprehensive Siting Plan to Address Homelessness, approved by City Council on Jan. 5. The plan calls for identifying sites throughout the city for temporary and long-term housing, including safe parking and camping, new shelters, transitional housing and permanent affordable housing.

The city has estimated that more

than 10,000 people were homeless in Sacramento County at some point of 2019.

Schenirer said it cost the city \$5 million to build the X Street shelter and \$7.7 million to operate it for two years, with \$5 million of the operating budget from a Kaiser Foundation grant. "We basically have funding for two years of operations," Schenirer said. "We're going to have to figure it out from there."

The city contracted with Volunteers

of America to operate the shelter. VOA's Local Chief Operating Officer Amani Sawires Rapaski, said the services provided at the shelter would focus on addressing barriers to housing, such as substance abuse, mental health and

**In the two weeks before the shelter opened, city staff reached out to residents of five homeless encampments within a five-block radius of the shelter.**

prior criminal records. Job readiness training will teach residents such skills as how to show up on time and conflict resolution.

VOA has assigned Amanda Bayard to be the shelter director.

Entrance to the shelter will be at a "welcome center" on X Street. The shelter will have a 9 p.m. curfew, 24-hour security and VOA staff on site at all times.

Kevin Carter, an advocate for the Poor People's Campaign, who attended the open house, urged the city to be patient with its homeless residents. "What you need to understand is a lot of these folks have been traumatized," Carter said. "This process is going to take a little time."

## Community support crucial to success of new Navigation Center

At long last, the X Street Navigation Center is open and I hope well on its way to becoming a model shelter for individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento.

After 2 ½ years of work and

### ***In the District***

overcoming many obstacles (including the Trump administration's objections to the site), the navigation center will be able to house up to 100 individuals at any one time, with the purpose of moving those folks onto a path of success, including permanent housing.

I want to personally thank Erik Fay, Mimi Budd and Bruce Pierini from SCNA for attending our open house and asking the hard questions. My goal from Day One has been to create a sense of ownership by the

**JAY  
SCHENIRER**  
**City  
Council  
Member  
District 5**



communities of Curtis Park and Oak Park, which the center straddles.

We have many terrific organizations within a couple of blocks of the center, including the Urban League, Asian Resources, the Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, WellSpace Health and others that we can partner with to provide services to the center residents.

We don't need to recreate the wheel, rather, we must build upon what we already have. Operating in

this fashion is a commitment that we have received from Volunteers of America, which will run the center.

In addition to the services that VOA and its partners will provide, I hope we can involve the community in the day-to-day operations of the center. On the economic front, we need to recycle funds used to support the center back into the community. We will do this by utilizing local restaurants in Oak Park and on the Broadway corridor to provide meals for the center. In addition, we will partner with the Culinary Academy at American Legion High School to prepare at least one meal per week.

Establishing relationships in the community through volunteer opportunities will be key to the success of the center. We have already received interest from local faith-based institutions to work with us. My

**My goal from Day One has been to create a sense of ownership by the communities of Curtis Park and Oak Park, which the center straddles.**

hope is that SCNA and the Oak Park Neighborhood Association can also organize individuals to volunteer by helping to serve meals, lead activities (arts, exercise, other life skills) and more.

SCNA has already been in touch with VOA and hopes to share an SCNA-sponsored activity soon. If you have other skills that would be helpful, please contact Victoria at Volunteers of America (vmonroe@voa-ncnn.org).

This will only be successful if we do it together.

## Sierra 2 volunteers are helping to create native plant garden

By Heather Hogan

Enthusiastic neighbor volunteers have helped clear the grass and weeds on a section of the front lawn at Sierra 2 Center in preparation for the new native plant garden to be installed in October.

The “dirt patch” method of preparing the soil involves continued watering and plucking any weeds that arise so the new plants can flourish.

The next steps in the garden plan are underway. Preliminary garden design concepts were agreed upon in early September and more detailed plans are in the works.

Once the garden is in place, seed-dispersing sculptures, made by Studio Tutto, with financial help from Councilmember Jay Schenirer, will be installed. There will be interpretive signs and activities to help share information about native plants, their benefits, care, uses and where you can buy them around town.



Photo/Billy Krimmel

**Completed walkway paves the way for native plants to be planted on either side.**

A question-and-answer session through the Learnery will be Wednesday, Nov. 3, at 6 p.m. to hear more about the plants and process from Billy Krimmel and Caroline Larsen-Bircher, founder and executive director, respectively, of Miridae Living Labs. They will also talk about their latest citizen-scientist initiative, the Seed Pile Project.

The Seed Pile Project was created by Miridae Living Labs and the UC Davis Department of Human Ecology to research which local native plant seeds are best at dispersing in human-altered places like cities and roadsides.

What happens to poppy seeds that fall onto a sidewalk or get blown into a vacant lot? Under what conditions do certain species of seed spread, survive, thrive or die? Studying questions like this can help inform the landscaping industry's decisions about what native plants to use and where to put them for the most ecological benefit and resilience.

For more information and to sign up to volunteer, please visit [sierra2.org/garden](http://sierra2.org/garden). The next volunteer workday is Saturday, Oct. 16, from 8 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will remove some concrete borders and an old Sierra 2 sign (to be replaced), and convert sprinklers to drip irrigation. Any neighbors who want to help or just observe and cheer on the team are welcome.

The last volunteer workday this month will be Saturday, Oct. 30, from 8 a.m. to noon. Volunteers will get the new plants into the ground and cover the soil with mulch. Remember to bring gloves, water, sun block, a mask and, perhaps, a shovel or spade.

## COVID infection rate still high in 95818 area

By Mike Scheible

The arrival of the delta variant resulted in a dramatic COVID-19 infection spike in August throughout Sacramento and in the 95818 ZIP code area. Recent data on infections in September are about the same.

The COVID-19 infection rate, as measured by the number of new daily infections per 100,000 people, was 25 in the first 20 days of September, close to the 26.7 in early August.

Some 329 new COVID-19 cases were reported between July 26 and Sept. 20, indicating that 1.5% of 95818 residents had tested positive for COVID during that period. About 6% of 95818 residents have had confirmed infections since the pandemic began in early 2020.

Local vaccinations continue to increase slowly. The fully vaccinated rate is now about 84% of the population age 16 or over, compared with 80% in early August, and 73% in mid-June.

Curtis Park has about 5,000 residents. It shares the 95818 ZIP code with another 17,000 residents of the Land Park, Newton Booth and Poverty Ridge neighborhoods. Statistics on COVID-19 infections and vaccinations are not available publicly at less than the ZIP code area.

## Curtis Park votes 'no' on recall of Newsom

*Over 90% in central precinct, highest rate in county*

By Mike Scheible

Curtis Park voters strongly favored keeping Gavin Newsom as governor, with 89% voting “no” to the recall question in the Sept. 14 election.

Rejection of the recall was more than 90% in the neighborhood's central precinct, the highest rejection rate in the county.

The “no” vote percentages in the neighborhood's northern and the southern precincts – 88% and 87% – were the fourth- and seventh-highest among the 600 precincts in Sacramento County.

A majority of Curtis Park voters, 58%, chose to leave the replacement part of the ballot blank. There was no clear preference among the 42% of neighbors who voted for a replacement. Democrat Kevin Paffrath received 21% of the replacement votes. Among Republicans, former San Diego Mayor Kevin Faulconer got 20%, and conservative talk-show host Larry Elder tallied 16%. The other 43 candidates split the remaining 43% of the votes with no candidate getting more than 10%.

Curtis Park turnout was 62% based on returns reported on Sept. 21, but this will grow when the remaining ballots are counted. Because final vote counts were not available, results are presented in percentages, which may change slightly as more ballots are counted.

The three Curtis Park precincts have 4,470

registered voters, a 3% increase since the 2020 election. The precincts are bounded by the W-X freeway on the north, Highway 99 on the east, Sutterville Road on the south and the Union Pacific railroad tracks and Freeport Boulevard on the west. The three precincts combined align with the SCNA boundaries in an area of about a square mile.

The three precincts and their boundaries are:

Precinct 44209, in the north and east part of Curtis Park, has an L shape. Part of it lies north of Castro Way, east of 21st Street, south of the W-X Freeway, and west of Highway 99; and the other part lies north of Sutterville Road and east of Franklin Boulevard. It has 1,387 voters.

Precinct 44255, in the northwest and center part of Curtis Park, also has an L shape. It includes a middle section from Portola Way north, east of 21st Street, south of Castro Way and west of Franklin Boulevard; and a northern leg east of Freeport Boulevard, south of the W-X Freeway and west of 21st Street. It has 1,432 voters.

Precinct 44337, on the southwest, is a rough rectangle. It lies south of Portola Way, west of Franklin Boulevard, north of Sutterville Road and east of the Union Pacific railroad tracks. It has 1,651 voters.

Up to date results, including precinct-level tallies, can be found at the Sacramento County election website – <https://results.saccounty.net>.

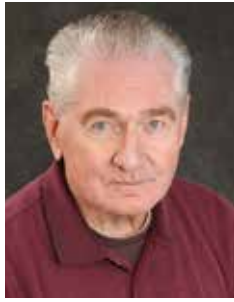
## Viewpoint wants your story ideas

Viewpoint appreciates neighbors who submit news about new neighbors, their babies, milestones and special events. This includes letters to the editor and opinions.

Please send your ideas and comments to: [denniscusick52@gmail.com](mailto:denniscusick52@gmail.com) with **Viewpoint** in the subject line. Deadline for Viewpoint copy is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to publication.



**BILL  
HOOVER**  
SCNA Board  
President



## *President's message* **Air, heat, COVID remind us we're not back to normal**

It appears all the wishing did not help as we were forced to cancel our August Music in the Park.

The air and temperatures seemed to conspire against us. However, compared to what thousands of other people living in and around the fire areas have had to endure, missing an outdoor event seems like a very small thing.

The cancellation was a reminder that we are not yet back up to normal operations, although that is primarily due to the delta variant of COVID-19. It's like taking two steps forward and one step back. Many Sierra 2 Center tenants are holding off on fully reopening. Rentals and theater bookings have slowed dramatically. The loss of a \$6,000 theater booking really brought that home.

The good news is that we have kept expenses down and should have sufficient funds for the balance of the year. Of course, you can thank yourselves for helping us reach that level of stability.

We do know there is a lot of pent up demand for Sierra 2 Center activities. I remain optimistic that next year will see a return to normal or nearly normal activities both for Sierra 2 and SCNA events. In fact, I expect the SCNA board will be even busier than it has been.

All of which brings me to the upcoming general membership meeting and board elections. Board service, like any community service, can be quite demanding at times and somewhat time-consuming. It does involve a sacrifice of time and energy. However, if you are interested and can make the time, please contact Bruce Pierini, chair of the Nominations Committee at [NCC@sierra2.org](mailto:NCC@sierra2.org), with "Nominations" in the subject line.

As you all know by now, the city has plans to place 200 "tiny homes" under the freeway from 18th to 24th streets. This plan has raised many questions and SCNA will sponsor a webinar Nov. 9 to provide information and stimulate discussion. More information will be disseminated as the webinar plans solidify.

Lastly, Gov. Gavin Newsom signed Senate Bills 9 and 10, regarding housing development, on Sept. 16. The legislative analyst says the bills' content regarding rezoning is a "modest tool" at best. Questions remain regarding the ability to lower housing costs or improve equity anywhere in the state. There are also unanswered questions about whether eliminating single-family zoning will impact property taxes.

Lots of questions – very few answers.

### *Notes from Sept. 1 SCNA board meeting*

## **Board endorses letter to city with concerns about housing**

The SCNA board ratified a letter sent by the Executive Committee to the city in support of allowing greater housing densities in R-1 zoning, though with serious reservations. The board also urged neighborhood involvement in decisions to approve multifamily housing construction. The vote was 10 in favor with one abstention.

All board members were asked to sell 10 tickets each to friends and neighbors for the Oct. 2 Porch Picnic fundraiser.

Music in the Park, scheduled for Aug. 29, was canceled. The first available date to reschedule the event may be in mid-October.

Committees turned in their budgets to Treasurer John Bailey and the Finance Committee for review on Sept. 15. It was suggested to Executive Director Terri Shettle that she do a quarterly budget rather than a nine-month budget due to uncertainty on income/expenses because of the delta variant of COVID.

There is some concern about low limbs on sidewalks but board member Dan Pskowski, a retired city arborist, told the individual who

brought the issue forward that SCNA is not a code enforcer.

A suggestion was made that SCNA let people know when the air quality index is above 101 because leaf blowers are then prohibited. People can call 311 to complain. But one individual who did complain reported that a city representative said the city does not enforce that ordinance. Dan Pskowski asked board members to provide names to the Neighborhood Concerns Committee of agencies not enforcing limits on use of such equipment by small landscape companies on days with hazardous air quality.

Two people interested in being candidates for the SCNA board in the December election have been identified. One of them, Sue Hida, was present at the board meeting to see how the board operates.

Plans are being made to include anti-racist groups at future meetings of the Racial Justice Committee.

The next SCNA board meeting will be Wednesday, Oct. 6, on Zoom.

— Bruce Pierini, board secretary

## VIEWPOINT

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# French Impressionism exhibition at Crocker has Curtis Park touch

By Lindsey Sin

Curtis Park resident William Breazeale has curated the Crocker Art Museum's first exhibition of 50 paintings by artists from the late 19th and early 20th centuries, "Monet to Matisse: Masterworks of French Impressionism from the Dixon Gallery and Gardens."

The exhibition opens Oct. 3 and runs through Jan. 9, 2022. The collection, on loan from the Dixon Gallery and Gardens in Memphis, Tenn., features works from some of the most influential artists of the Impressionist era, including Claude Monet, Pierre-Auguste Renoir and Henri Matisse.

Breazeale is responsible for all of the European art at the Crocker, including its collections of paintings, drawings, sculptures and Meissen porcelain. Breazeale received an undergraduate degree from Johns Hopkins University and a doctorate from the University of Maryland. His dissertation is on 16th century Italian sketchbooks.

Breazeale relocated to Sacramento in 2005 from Washington D.C., having worked at the National Gallery of Art. His expertise in European art aligned well with the Crocker's collection of Old Master and Italian drawings.

The Impressionist and Post-Impressionist works in the upcoming exhibition complement the museum's collection of European and American paintings and, according to Breazeale, "tell as much of the story as we can, between our permanent collection and our exhibitions."

The show includes two Monet paintings – "Port of Dieppe, Evening," and "Village Street." Breazeale



William Breazeale of 25th Street is responsible for all of the European art at the Crocker Art Museum, including its collections of paintings, drawings, sculptures and Meissen porcelain.

Photo/Lindsey Sin

pointed out that Monet completed "Village Street" about 1871, a few years before the first Impressionist exhibition took place in Paris. "Village Street" displays techniques of the genre, such as use of light and an off-center point of view, while still preserving a sense of symmetry across the painting.

Paul César Helleu's "The Final Touch" shows a woman adjusting her hair in the mirror before going out. "A typical gesture that's universal in a lot of ways," said Breazeale, the painting is an example of Impressionism's focus on everyday life.

One work in the exhibition is by Henry Ossawa Tanner, the first African American painter to receive critical international acclaim. Tanner moved to Paris in 1891 to paint and learn from his contemporaries. His "View of the Seine, Looking Towards Notre Dame" depicts a day on the River Seine during a rainstorm.

The museum will host a gala on Oct. 9, as well as lectures and painting classes on the same day.

The Crocker is currently open to visitors Thursday to Sunday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Masks are required.

## Nominees sought for SCNA board

The SCNA board Nominations Committee continues to seek nominees to run for several seats on the SCNA board in the December 2021 election.

Diversity is sought in the association's leadership – racial, ethnic, age and geographic, including neighbors in Crocker Village, along Franklin Boulevard and north of Second Avenue.

Nominees are sought who can lead and work collaboratively. They must agree to volunteer time and follow through with commitments.

Two potential candidates have expressed interest and one of them attended the September meeting of the SCNA board, but more candidates are needed.

Interested neighbors should contact Bruce Pierini, chair of the Nominations Committee, at [NCC@sierra2.org](mailto:NCC@sierra2.org), with "Nominations" in the subject line. Nominees must be SCNA members.

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## Webinar Nov. 9 on city's plans for tiny homes

The SCNA Neighborhood Concerns Committee will host an informational webinar on the city's Homeless Siting Master Plan from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 9 on Zoom.

The focus will be on how the Curtis Park neighborhood may be impacted by the proposal to install 200 tiny homes to house up to 400 people at a time under the W/X freeway between 18th and 24th streets.

Register for the webinar on the SCNA webpage at [Sierra2.org](http://Sierra2.org). Neighbors are encouraged to send questions and concerns regarding the city's plans to [NCC@sierra2.org](mailto:NCC@sierra2.org). More details will be available as plans progress at <https://sierra2.org/event/homeless-plan/>.



# THE LEARNERY

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FOR MORE INFORMATION: [www.sierra2.org/thelearnery](http://www.sierra2.org/thelearnery)

## INTRO TO POINTED PEN CALLIGRAPHY

This introductory class offers the basics of modern pointed pen calligraphy, which uses a nib and ink to create elegant fine-pointed letters often seen on wedding envelopes. This workshop will focus on traditional alphabets and learning the foundation of strokes. All supplies will be provided in addition to materials for practice at home. The take-home kit includes guide sheets, pen, nib, ink and ink dish.

Advance registration required; attendance limited: [sierra2.org/event/intro-to-pointed-pen-calligraphy-2/](http://sierra2.org/event/intro-to-pointed-pen-calligraphy-2/) **Room 7, Saturday, Oct. 9, 10 a.m.-noon** **Fee: \$50 (supplies included)**

## HALLOWEEN ZENTANGLE

The Zentangle® Method is an easy way of creating beautiful images by drawing structured patterns called tangles. This promotes mindfulness and fosters self-esteem, increases focus, promotes relaxation, ignites creativity and relieves stress. People of all ages and skill levels can participate. This class primarily focuses on the basics with an option to create Halloween-inspired designs. You will learn three or four Halloween-themed tangles. We will decorate a Halloween item, pumpkin or Halloween decoration.

Advance registration required: [sierra2.org/event/halloween-zentangle/](http://sierra2.org/event/halloween-zentangle/) **Monday, Oct. 11, 6-7:30 p.m. on Zoom** **Fee: \$35 with \$5 optional supply kit**

## INTUITIVE ABSTRACT PAINTING

Artist Cara Gregor teaches how to create art with layers of paint and combinations of colors. Painting in an abstract style, adding patterns, textures, drips and dabs, is great for people new to intuitive painting as well as those who have taken this class before. An 8-inch by 10-inch canvas will be supplied. Participants may choose to add a \$20 supply kit (a set of paints and brushes) to their registration or bring their own supplies to class. (See below.)

Advance registration required; attendance limited: [sierra2.org/event/intuitive-abstract-painting-workshop-3/](http://sierra2.org/event/intuitive-abstract-painting-workshop-3/) **Room 7, Saturday, Oct. 23, 10 a.m.-noon** **Fee: \$25/class with optional \$20 supply kit**

## HARVEST HIGH TEA KIT PICK UP

Celebrate glorious fall and its rich flavors with High Tea in your own home. The Novel Tea, in partnership with The Learnery, is offering individual High Tea kits. Each kit comes with all the food listed on the menu at [sierra2.org](http://sierra2.org) website and The Novel Tea's premium loose-leaf tea. You will be assigned a pickup time (12:30, 1 or 1:30 p.m.). Kits include instructions for adding final details to the menu items, as well as steeping instructions for the tea.

Garden Room Courtyard (near 24th Street Theatre)

Advance registration required: [sierra2.org/event/harvest-high-tea-kits/](http://sierra2.org/event/harvest-high-tea-kits/) **Saturday, Oct. 30, 12:30-1:30 p.m.** **Fee: \$45/per individual kit**

SIERRA 2 CENTER  
FOR THE ARTS & COMMUNITY

*Senior Center*

## EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Activities are free, except where noted.  
(Donations appreciated)

### LEISURE

#### BOOK CLUB

2nd Monday, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Meets on Zoom

**Sept. 13:** Transcendent Kingdom  
by Yaa Gyasi

**Oct. 11:** Let the Great World  
Spin by Collum McCann

#### NONFICTION BOOK CLUB

3rd Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon,  
Sierra 2 Green

behind Sierra 2 Center

**Sept. 16:** The Genius of Birds  
by Jennifer Ackerman

**Oct. 21:** Confederates in the  
Attic: Dispatches From an  
Unfinished Civil War  
by Tony Horwitz

#### LIFE HISTORY WRITING

Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12

#### STITCHERS CIRCLE

A social group for sewers,  
knitters and more.  
2nd Thursday & 4th Monday,  
2-4 p.m. Meets via zoom.

#### OPEN ART STUDIO

Fridays, 12-3 p.m. Room 11

### EDUCATION

#### MY STORY PROJECT

Mondays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12

### FITNESS

#### GENTLE YOGA

Wednesdays, 10-11:15 a.m.  
Fees: \$60/8 classes; \$30/4  
classes or \$10/drop-in. Room 12

#### STRENGTH & BALANCE

Thursdays, 10-11 a.m. Room 11

#### WELLNESS PROGRAM fees

apply. Punch cards: \$60/10  
classes; \$35/5 classes or \$10  
drop-in. Purchase cards in the  
Sierra 2 office or pay drop-in  
fee to instructors.

### CARDS & GAMES

#### MAHJONG

Mondays, 10 a.m.-noon.  
Room 12



#### FUN BRIDGE (Contract)

Thursdays, 1-3 p.m.  
Room 12

#### PINOCHLE

Fridays, 12-3 p.m. Room 12

## Intuitive painting focuses on creative process, not finished product

By Katie Byram

Intuitive painting focuses on the experience of painting and the inward creative process instead of the finished product. Some find it spiritual or therapeutic, tapping into feelings and expressing them through paint.

Others, like instructor Cara Gregor, find it



Photo/Cara Gregor  
Instructor Cara Gregor with her  
dog, Jacques Cousteau

can pave the way for more creativity. "This style of painting is incredibly freeing because you literally cannot do it 'wrong,'" Gregor said. "There is no wrong way to create and once you accept that, many other doors can open up in the creative process."

In the Learnery class, Intuitive Abstract Painting, participants use acrylic paint to apply color, shapes and patterns to their canvas. Participants can tap into internal feelings or take inspiration from external places. Gregor, for instance, often includes natural elements into her work and finds inspiration in different color combinations.

The class is designed to be a studio space for both new students and repeat participants. A \$20 supply kit can be added to class registration, which supplies participants with a set of acrylic paints and brushes. Alternatively, participants with their own supplies or

those who have signed up for an intuitive painting class before can skip the supply kit and join the class for another inspirational session under Gregor's guidance.

Gregor, who lives on Portola Way, is a self-taught artist who has been dedicated to her art practice for 15 years. She recently started taking art classes through Sacramento City College to build confidence as an artist and learn new skills. She also embarked on a painting challenge in which she painted every day for a full year, ending in mid-August.

Intuitive Abstract Painting will be offered from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, Oct. 23. There's a fee of \$25 per person and \$20 for the optional supply kit. Additional classes and registration information are available online at [sierra2.org/TheLearnery](http://sierra2.org/TheLearnery).



SIERRA 2 CENTER  
SIERRA CURTIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

*Due to health concerns related to the spread of the coronavirus variants, events listed below may change. Please contact groups directly with questions.*

### MUSIC

**Beginning Taiko Drumming**  
4-week class

No experience necessary  
Tuesdays, starting Oct. 12

6-7 p.m. in Studio 1; \$60  
**Intermediate Taiko Drumming**  
4-week class

Previous taiko experience required  
Tuesdays, starting Oct. 12  
7-8:30 p.m. in Studio 1; \$90  
Register: kristyoshiro@gmail.com

**Beginning Taiko Drumming**  
3-week class

No experience necessary  
Tuesdays, starting Nov. 9  
6-7 p.m. in Studio 1; \$45

**Intermediate Taiko Drumming**  
3-week class  
Previous taiko experience required  
Tuesdays, starting Nov. 9  
7-8:30 p.m. in Studio 1; \$75  
Register: kristyoshiro@gmail.com

### MARTIAL ARTS

Tai Chi, Qi Gong, Kung Fu  
Yi family Tai Chi/Qi Gong,  
Shaolin Martial Arts/Qi Gong  
Thursdays, 7-8 p.m.;  
Saturdays, 10-11 a.m., in Studio 2  
Byron, Lohan36@sbcglobal.net

### ADULT DANCE

**Two Rivers Dance Center/**  
**River City Taps**  
Mondays/Thursdays/Saturdays  
Richard, richard@  
tworiversdancecenter.com

### Irish Folk Dancing

All ages and skill levels welcome  
1st and 3rd Mondays, 7-9 p.m.  
Studio 1. Veronica, 916 977-0714

### OTHER

**Glass Acts Mosaics Collective**  
All skill levels welcome.  
Tuesdays, noon-3 p.m., Room 11  
Drop-in fee is \$12; monthly fees are  
\$40 (includes supplies)  
Karen, karensharp51@gmail.com

**Friday Way Out Group**  
**of Alcoholics Anonymous**  
**Open Hybrid Meeting –**  
**in person and Zoom**  
Fridays, 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Room 11  
Helen Sundet, 916 769-7471

## LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Local live music concerts continue.  
Masks may be required. Questions?  
Check the venue websites.



Photo/John Taber

Darol Anger, Joe Craven,  
Peter Wilson, John Gorton

### THE SIDE DOOR

**2900 Franklin Blvd.**  
**<https://www.thesidedoor.net>**  
**All shows 7 p.m. Tickets: \$20**

Oct. 2..... Joni Harms (Western Music Hall of Fame honoree)  
Oct. 21..... Darol Anger, Joe Craven, Peter Wilson, John Gorton  
..... (Nationally known star power – Bluegrass/jazz/world music)  
Oct. 29..... Daisy Caire (Award-winning teen flatpicking guitarist,  
..... vocalist, fiddler and songwriter)

### TWO RIVERS CIDER CO.

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**<https://www.tworiverscider.com>**  
**All shows 6:30-9 p.m. Table reservations suggested.**

Oct. 1..... Blu Egyptian (World/soul/funk)  
Oct. 2..... Jon Emery & The Unconventionals (Folk/blues)  
Oct. 4..... Nosotros (Latin/salsa)  
Oct. 8..... Danger Force Five (Surf rock)  
Oct. 9..... Campfire Crooners (Americana)  
Oct. 15..... Loose Engines (Americana/blues/country)  
Oct. 17..... Red Dirt Ruckus (Rudegrass/folk/jam band)  
Oct. 18..... Northbound Train (Grateful Dead)  
Oct. 29..... Lantz Lazwell & The Vibe Tribe (Rock/soul/world music)  
Oct. 30..... The Sugar Pushers (Halloween jams)

### Acoustic Wednesdays

Oct. 6..... Anna May (alt tragic Americana)  
Oct. 13..... Ross Hammond (instrumental Delta blues)  
Oct. 20..... Katie Rose (original folk/pop sound)



**Oct. 28-31: 12th annual EL PANTEÓN de SACRAMENTO**

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– Mindy Giles

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# Congratulations!

## BRAVO! on your ACCOMPLISHMENT

### Neighborhood authors win national literary acclaim

By Dennis Cusick

Two authors who live in Curtis Park have been honored by the 14th annual Killer Nashville Silver Falchion Awards for their recent novels.

Richard Meredith of Portola Way received the Silver Falchion Award for best action adventure for his second novel, “The Crow’s Nest,” the story of a tuna boat crew member who gets trapped on a minisub loaded with 10 tons of cocaine.

Anne Da Vigo of Ninth Avenue was a finalist in the best thriller category for “Bakersfield Boys Club,” which was inspired by a series of murders allegedly committed in the 1970s and 1980s by men characterized in the press as the “Lords of Bakersfield.”

“To be eligible for the Silver Falchion Award, works must be published the year previous to the competition and must be readily available to a North American audience,” the Killer Nashville website says. The awards recognize “the best stories from the previous year told through various media utilizing the elements of mystery, thriller, and/or suspense.” Judges include writers,



Photo/Carol Meredith

Anne Da Vigo and Richard Meredith

book reviewers, librarians and academics.

Killer Nashville is a volunteer-run organization that publishes a 6,000-subscriber newsletter and puts on an annual conference intended to help writers become successful. The website quotes Publishers Weekly as saying it plays “an essential role in defining which books become bestsellers [throughout] the nation’s book culture.”

“The Crow’s Nest” and “Bakersfield Boys Club” are available through amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com.

### Neighborhood resident gets state communications post

Monica Hernandez of 10th Avenue has been appointed deputy director of communications at the California Department of Housing and Community Development.



Monica Hernandez

Hernandez has been with the Sacramento Area Council of Governments since 2007 and has been director of innovation and partnerships since 2018. She has a master’s degree in communication from Purdue University.

In announcing her departure, SACOG quoted Hernandez as crediting the agency for preparing her “to see and empathize with the spectrum of political opinions and views. It’s important to understand and identify with people who might disagree and bring those perspectives together to serve outcomes.”

The office of Gov. Gavin Newsom announced the appointment. — Dennis Cusick

## Promoter: Swell Productions is partnership with Curtis Park neighbor

Continued from Page 1

always been the one to shine the light on other people, and now I’m going to have to be center stage instead of backstage.”

The awards ceremony was Sept. 26 at Harlow’s Restaurant & Nightclub on J Street to recognize Giles’ longtime support of blues music.

The Sacramento Blues Society chooses its honorees each year in recognition of their contributions to the preservation and promotion of the blues in Sacramento for at least 20 years.

“Mindy came to Sacramento to be marketing director for Bayside Entertainment Distribution (Tower Records) in 1997, leading her into becoming a vital part of the area music scene,” Katen said. Giles has produced the main stage at the annual Sacramento Music Festival and the Isleton Cajun & Blues Fest, and has served in numerous roles that currently include the Sacramento Blues Society’s Blues in the Schools projects.

“Since Mindy arrived in Sacramento, she has immersed herself in the Sacramento blues music scene and has been instrumental in bringing name entertainment to the area,” Katen said. “With Mindy’s 40-year background in artist management, record labels, publicity, marketing and event promotion, she has a wealth of knowledge on how to successfully produce a quality production and graciously shares her knowledge. And on top of all this, she knows everyone.”

After leaving Tower Records, Giles formed a partnership with Curtis Park neighbor and fellow Tower Records alumnus Steve Nikkel under the name of Swell Productions.

They soon realized that the 24th Street Theatre was a fading jewel. In 2003, they held a fundraiser along with Friends of the 24th Street Theatre Committee. Eventually, the auditorium was completely renovated, including a new roof, carpeting, seats, audiovisual equipment and a speaker system.

Over the years, Giles and Nikkel have arranged and coordinated more than 40 shows at the 24th Street Theatre, as well as performances at other venues. Giles also hosts “Blues & Bourbon Wednesdays” at the Starlet Room, an intimate club above Harlow’s.

Giles became passionate about music at a young age in Columbus, Ind., when her older brother David flooded their house with vinyl records by Little Richard, Fats Domino and early Beatles. She became obsessed with visiting a local record store and started begging the owner to hire her. He told her she had to be 16 years old, so on the morning of her 16th birthday, she hopped on her bike, went to town, and banged on the door until the owner opened it up and agreed to hire her.

“I was over the moon,” she recalled.

And thus began her professional musical career. She said the blues resonated with her because “it expresses deep emotions – both joy and pain. Blues will be alive forever – storytelling from one person to another. It’s a true American art form.”



Photo/Phil Kampel

Giles also hosts “Blues & Bourbon Wednesdays” at the Starlet Room, an intimate club above Harlow’s.



# Congratulations

## on the **SUCCESS** of **CURTIS PARK NEIGHBORS**

### Rob Archie's roots are key to popular beer and restaurants

By Andrea Rosen

Urban Roots Brewing won the Brewery of the Year award at the 2021 California Craft Brewers Cup competition. It recognizes the many talents of entrepreneur, neighbor and dedicated community champion Rob Archie and his brew team, headed by master brewer Peter Hoey.

Out of 60 categories, Urban Roots placed in four: first place in Specialty Saison and wood- and barrel-aged wine; second place in international-style pilsner and chocolate beer. So many Sacramento craft brew entrants won awards that the Sacramento Area Brewers Guild won Brewers Guild of the Year.

Archie and his family moved to Curtis Park from Elk Grove in 2009, a year after he opened Pangaea Bier Café on Franklin Boulevard. He liked the lack of pretense in neighbors. His appreciation of the neighborhood has only grown; he and his family will move soon into one of the new houses in Crocker Village.

Archie served on the SCNA



Photo/Courtesy of Urban Roots  
Rob Archie and his master brewer Peter Hoey

board soon after his arrival in the neighborhood. During his tenure, he suggested the addition of a beer garden at the annual Wine Tasting fundraiser. It turned out to be a huge hit and even won over some wine drinkers.

Archie started Pangaea with a certain concept in mind, unsure of whether it would work. He had lived in Europe for some years, playing pro basketball among other things. He grew

accustomed to the social and community building role of its café and pub culture. He wanted to create that kind of space in Curtis Park and Oak Park.

This was the idea behind Pangaea. Archie believes that Pangaea is unique, partly because it brought hard-to-find Belgian beer to Curtis Park, but he credits the residents of the two neighborhoods for making it their own spot. Over time he added food and a bottle shop. He has always tried to support other craft brewers, noting that Track 7, Bike Dog and Blue Note all started their business plans in Pangaea.

Building on the success of Pangaea, Archie opened Urban Roots Brewing at 14th and V streets in 2018 and BAWK! on the R Street Corridor in 2019.

One of the ideas behind Urban Roots was to bring the country to the city, a theme reflected in his farmhouse ales or "rustic ales" often featured at this restaurant. It is a reflection of his heritage: Archie grew up in Woodland, where he often rode with his father as he hauled agriculture products including grain.

When COVID delivered a sudden shock to everyone last year, including Archie's recently established brewery and restaurants, his experience with prior adversity helped guide his response. When public health orders shut down his businesses, employees

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**Archie believes that Pangaea is unique, partly because it brought hard-to-find Belgian beer to Curtis Park, but he credits the residents of the two neighborhoods for making it their own spot.**

---

were furloughed, and management suddenly did all the work.

Later, when restaurants were permitted to serve food to go, Archie's customers responded. He was able to increase beer production and the size of his brew team. His previously cultivated relationships with distributors paid off.

Adversity shaped Archie's character and contributed to his success. When confronting mistakes and challenges, he asks what he can learn from them rather than becoming angry and frustrated. His T-shirt logo is emblematic of his attitude: "All Good, Never Better."

### Award-winning home designs

BlackPine Communities homes in Crocker Village have won two awards in *The Retail Observer* magazine's annual competition. For the grand award, the Alley Row Collection was chosen "for multiple reasons, including the collection's ability to be a new modern product that blends well with the established Sacramento neighborhood."

The home with the arched doorway at left also won for best single-family detached home (1,800-2,499 square feet). The magazine says its 32,000 subscribers represent retailers of major appliances, consumer electronics and home furnishings. "This is like winning the Academy Award for best picture but for home design and finishes," said Crocker Village developer Paul Petrovich.

Photo/Joan Cusick





# Land Park homicide victim was familiar face at Sierra 2 Vote Center

By Patti Roberts

For those who worked or voted at the Sierra 2 Vote Center, Kate Tibbitts was a familiar face with her endless dedication, her eye for detail and her passion for the electoral process.

Tibbitts volunteered in many election positions and was promoted in 2018 to Sierra 2 Vote Center inspector, serving through the 2020 presidential election.

Tibbitts, 61, and her two dogs were found dead Sept. 3 inside her home on 11th Avenue in the Land Park neighborhood where she had lived for 10 years. Police said Tibbitts and her dogs were killed in a random act of violence and the house set afire. The suspect was described as a transient man with a criminal history who did not know the victim.

More than 100 community members, family, friends and neighbors attended a vigil Sept. 9 at Plaza Cervantes Park in Land Park, according to KXTV-10 television station.

Tibbitts recently retired as a state employee. She was a 25-year volunteer with the Sacramento SPCA

and also was a local polling place worker since 1996.

"We were very lucky to work with Kate and have that trusted person assist our voters, time after time," said Courtney Bailey-Kanelos, Sacramento County registrar of voters. "She genuinely cared about the community and voters she served. Kate taught me a lot about how to conduct these procedures, with accuracy and integrity."

Helen Corbett of the Sacramento County Department of Technology, said, "The challenges of elections are made bearable when there are trusted individuals such as Kate whom we can count on. As someone who has worked in elections for 20 years, I feel like we lost a beloved aunt, with Kate's listening ear and helping hand. The shocking circumstances make it especially painful."

The Sacramento SPCA created the Kate Tibbitts Memorial Fund to help with the medical care of older dogs, *The Sacramento Bee* reported. Tibbitts' family said in a statement that she "was a major champion of homeless dogs and cats, and a continual volunteer at the SPCA."



Photo/Courtesy of Sacramento County Registrar of Voters  
Kate Tibbitts at an Appreciation Party given in her honor in 2017.



Jim Tashima

Photo/Courtesy of Mary Purvis

## Marshall Way resident Jim Tashima dies at 74

Longtime neighborhood resident Jim Tashima of Marshall Way died Sept. 3 of a sudden heart attack at age 74.

He was born in Turlock, the son of Takayuki and Frances Tashima, and grew up on a Central Valley farm. A football player at Livingston High School, he later graduated from University of the Pacific.

He spent several years in the Peace Corps, working on agricultural projects in Lesotho and Botswana, where he met his wife, Mary.

They returned to California, eventually settling in Sacramento, where they raised two children. He worked at the California Department of Social Services for 42 years. He also consulted internationally on civil rights, according to his LinkedIn profile.

He was one of the volunteer builders of the Sierra 2 Center's first playground, and was an expert pancake flipper for Bret Harte Elementary School's pancake breakfasts. He also served on the boards of the Ruth Rosenberg Dance Studio and Mandarins Drum and Bugle Corps.

He is survived by his wife of 46 years, Mary Purvis; son Robert; daughter Jean; granddaughter Lyra Price; and sister Susan Toppenberg.

A celebration of his life will be Sunday, Oct. 24. Masks will be required. Email jimsparty2021@gmail.com for details.

The family requested that any memorial donations be made to Sacramento SPCA at [sspc.org](http://sspc.org) or SCNA at [sierra2.org](http://sierra2.org).

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## Taylor's wine buyer lets customers' tastes guide his wine tips

By Bruce Pierini

Keith Fergel, who recently took over the duties of wine buyer at Taylor's Market, chooses the wines for both the market and Taylor's Kitchen, which he has managed for 10 years.

"I try to find the tastes of the customer, then suggest wines they'll like," Fergel said.

Fergel has 20 years of experience in the wine business. Formerly, he was assistant sommelier at the French Laundry, worked in restaurant management in San Francisco and was director of operations for a small restaurant in a resort in Baja California. He has passed the advanced study for master sommelier. In 2002 won the Chaine des Rotisseurs as best young sommelier in the United States.

Fergel said Dick Ebert, who was wine manager of Taylor's Market for 14 years, "broadened the spectrum of wines for the market. He preferred Rhone varieties," referring to a wine-growing region of southern France.

Fergel said selecting the wines at Taylor's is a "balancing act where I want to provide new and exciting wines but want to give people what they're comfortable with drinking. "People can come here or go to Safeway for Kendall-Jackson chardonnay, but I would offer, for example, Ippolito's Greco Bianco-based Mare Chiaro Ciró from southern Italy in the same



Photo/Joan Cusick

Keith Fergel takes a break from unboxing wine at Taylor's Market.

general price range for the person who wants to broaden their horizons."

Taylor's wines have a global reach, including varieties from Australia, South Africa, Austria, Hungary and Portugal. "I even had one from Uruguay recently," Fergel said.

What about local wines?

"Yes we offer those, too, but wine isn't like tomatoes," Fergel said. "Wines can be shelved. You

don't need 'farm-to-fork' freshness."

Some local wines have "hidden" value, he said. For example, he recently took a trip to several Lodi vintners raising biodynamic grapes in sandy soils. The old-rooted vines are not grafts but old rootstock.

"In many parts of the world, phylloxera made much of the world go to grafts, to avoid that blight," Fergel said. "With its sandy soil, which doesn't promote phylloxera, Lodi wines can be from its own rootstock, providing wines with depth."

Taylor's offers one for \$23, a Turley Bechtold Old Vine Cinsault.

Fergel believes you don't have to spend a lot of money to get delicious, interesting wines. When Taylor's did a blind tasting on Bastille Day in July, it had a mix of high-end and more modest champagnes. "The well-made but relatively less expensive Veuve Cliquot Yellow Label won," he said.

Which wines are not favored by the Taylor's customers?

"Merlot sells more slowly," Fergel said. He thinks it's the residual damage done to merlot in the movie "Sideways." But Fergel adds: "People miss the point of that movie. The protagonist didn't know himself well enough to know that he actually loved great merlot."

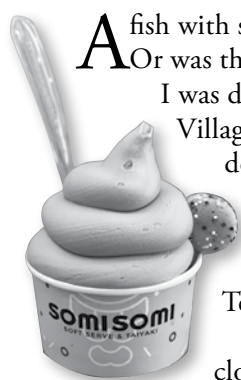
Taylor's offers two wine tastings per month. In October, the first tasting is Friday, Oct. 1, from 4 to 6 p.m. – outside if the weather cooperates. It will feature a dozen wines from the market. The second tasting, at 5 p.m. Oct. 14 inside Taylor's Kitchen, will focus on Nebbiolo.

Reservations are not required for the first tasting, but are required for the sit-down tasting Oct. 14.

## To his own taste

## Somisomi offers dessert and savory snacks

By Martin Pierucci



A fish with soft-serve ice cream? Or was that red bean? Kind of.

I was driving past Crocker Village which I seem to do at least four times a day, and I saw a "Now Open" sign for "Soft Serve and Teriyaki."

What? Upon closer observation the

sign read "Soft Serve and Taiyaki."

Well, that makes more sense!

Somisomi is a new experience in the neighborhood. A fish-shaped waffle cone served with either a soft-serve or a variety of red bean cream cheese or taro fillings that have been cooked. I am not kidding.

The fish, taiyaki, is in the shape of the "lucky" bream (an expensive species in the Japanese waters) and the Koreans call it "Ah-Boong."

And it was really delicious. We had

soft-serve swirl in the waffle cone and red bean-filled fish waffles (not really fish).

Now that you are intrigued, you will have to Google the whole origin story or just stop by and do your own research.

Somisomi is at 3590 Crocker Drive, Suite 130. Its offerings are for takeout only. For more information, <https://www.somisomi.com/>.

Martin Pierucci, an SCNA board member, lives on 27th Street.



Photos/Kathryn Beltrami

Somisomi is a fish-shaped waffle cone served with either a soft-serve or a variety of cooked fillings.

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## Trees in Curtis Park

# Risk assessment can prevent removal of large mature trees

By Dan Pskowski

Does your large mature tree pose a risk? Has your tree recently dropped a large branch? Is an arborist recommending tree removal? Then seek out a qualified arborist for an in-depth risk assessment of your tree, which will answer these questions. Maybe your tree might not need to be removed after all.

The International Society of Arboriculture, commonly known as ISA, is an international nonprofit professional organization founded in 1924. ISA is dedicated to continuing education for arborists, tree care research and promoting a greater awareness of the benefits of trees.

Tree Risk Assessment Qualified (TRAQ) arborists have taken a two-day, in-person training course followed by a half-day examination. Arborists qualify for this course by having at least one of the following credentials: ISA certified arborist, ISA board certified master arborist, or a degree in arboriculture, urban forestry, horticulture or related field.

Trees provide many benefits to people and neighborhoods. Wherever trees are present, people,

homes and activities are potentially at risk of injury or damage. It is not possible to eliminate all risks associated with trees. Therefore, the goal of tree risk assessment is to provide a systematic approach by which the risks can be assessed and managed to a reasonable level. This avoids automatically condemning a tree just to be on the safe side.

There are three levels of risk assessments: Level 1, a limited visual assessment; Level 2, a basic assessment; and Level 3, an advanced assessment.

TRAQ arborists use a standardized form in their assessment which looks at a wide range of variables: target assessment, site factors, tree condition, defects in the roots, root collar, trunk, crown, branches and how they affect the likelihood of failure. These variables are entered in a likelihood- and/or risk-rating matrix.

The conclusion is a tree risk rating with overall residual risk. It also lists any risk mitigation options such as pruning, installing structural support system, lightning protection, improving growing conditions, or monitoring the tree. This is very important because the tree can be preserved if risk mitigation actions are taken.



Photo/Joan Cusick

Trees with split trunks were recently removed from the park.

Tree risk assessment is a proactive approach that identifies high-risk situations, how to address them, and information to enhance tree health and longevity. Request it for your mature trees.

## POINT OF VIEW

# How about naming one of the parklets after Eva Rutland?

By Joan Cusick

If you've walked through the northern tips of the park – those half-blocks between Donner Way and Curtis Way, north of the William Curtis Park oval – you may have noticed yoga classes, a croquet game or family outings. But if you're planning a meet-up in those small parklets separated by 26th Street, what do you call them?

Naming the two green spaces would give each a distinct identity. But perhaps more importantly, parklet names could honor longtime Curtis Park residents who have contributed to our community. For example, Eva Rutland. The granddaughter of a former slave, she graduated from Spelman College in 1937.

Eva and her husband Bill moved to Sacramento

in the early 1950s and settled into Curtis Park to raise their four children. Eva wrote more than 20 romance novels and numerous essays for national magazines, but she still found time to serve as president of the PTA at Sierra Elementary School. Her daughter, Ginger, still lives nearby on Donner Way.

So I began to wonder: What if the eastern parklet could be named in memory of Eva Rutland? And what could I do to help make that happen?

The answer to the second question appeared in front of me in the park. As my husband and I were walking our dog, we ran into John Mathews, a longtime member of SCNA's Neighborhood Concerns Committee. We discussed the naming process, and I followed up with a proposal for the committee's Sept. 22 meeting.

Naming the two parklets will be a long process.

The committee will do its research and report to the full SCNA board. The board will send any recommendation to City Councilmember Jay Schenirer, our District 5 representative. Schenirer will submit any recommendation to the city's Parks and Community Enrichment Commission, which approves park names.

I share this first-person story for a couple of reasons. Of course, I want to gain support for the Eva Rutland naming proposal. But it's not just about that. Whenever you have an idea to make Curtis Park a better place, there's a process to be followed – a suggestion to the board, a story in *Viewpoint* or even a chance meeting in the park.

We need good ideas as much as we need good neighbors. Both make Curtis Park an even better place to live.

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Photos/Dan Murphy

From left, the male with the black chest patch, female and immature house sparrow have adapted to novel challenges of living amidst humans.

## Birds of Curtis Park

# House sparrows adapted to humans' high-starch diets

By Dan Murphy

The neighborhood bird most likely to be overlooked is the house sparrow. While many bird species have been adversely affected by humans, house sparrows have benefited. They are a human-commensal species, meaning that the association between species is that one benefits and the other derives neither benefit nor harm.

The relationship began long ago with the introduction and spread of agriculture. Two points of genetic divergence from house sparrow progenitors are more robust skulls and bills and a gene from a group linked to adaptation to high-starch diets in humans and dogs. Both of these traits enhance the ability to feed on the tougher starchy seeds of domesticated crops.

House sparrows were introduced on the East Coast from Europe circa 1850 in an attempt to suppress inchworms in New York City's Central Park

and as part of the movement to replicate species mentioned in Shakespeare and familiar to European immigrants. They were introduced in San Francisco in 1871-72, and spread from both coasts throughout North America.

House sparrows are very social, feeding and roosting in flocks, sometimes in large flocks when not breeding. Such behavior aids species' success by helping birds to find and exploit food sources and avoid predation. Social creatures use social structures, such as dominance hierarchies, to minimize conflicts. In house sparrows, male dominance is indicated by the size of the black chest patch. The biological mechanism governing chest patch sizes is unclear, but larger size does correlate closely with fighting ability.

Social behavior in birds correlates with intelligence, as does not having to migrate, and high brain weight relative to body weight, all of which are

house sparrow characteristics. This high intelligence is borne out by their boldness and adaptability to the novel challenges of living amidst humans.

House sparrows are versatile nesters, using nooks and crannies on and in buildings and other structures, holes in cliffs and trees, nest boxes, etc. They are monogamous and can raise up to four broods of four or five eggs per year.

Nest site competition with other species is fierce and can be lethal. House sparrows are aggressive and the robust skull and bill trait enables them to drive off and even kill larger birds such as bluebirds and purple martins.

But life is tough on house sparrows, too. While the record for survival in the wild is a little over 13 years, few house sparrows endure nearly that long. The average rate of survival during the first year of life is about 20%. Even among adults, mortality is high; the annual rate of survival is only about 57%.

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# Doctor building practice at Ten Acres Pharmacy

By Judy Green Scheible

Talk about a challenge. Dr. Thomas Anker at Ten Acres Pharmacy on Freeport Boulevard has talked to many unvaccinated people about getting their shots. With a wincing smile, he told *Viewpoint* that he has had some success.

That challenge is part of Anker's new private practice tucked into an office at the pharmacy.

Anker is a graduate in genetics and theater from UC Davis and in family medicine from Nova Southeastern University's College of Osteopathic Medicine in Davie, Fla. He moved from Los Angeles to Curtis Park in June 2020 with his wife, Julia, and their two young sons, Liam and Finn. They live on Portola Way.

Anker practices integrative medicine, which

the Mayo Clinic defines as "an approach to health care that includes practices not traditionally part of conventional medicine, such as herbs, acupuncture, massage, yoga and meditation."

Anker sees patients who are insured and uninsured, vaccinated and unvaccinated. Some appointments are virtual and others are in-person.

Anker said he grew up working in the theater from his home in Woodland Hills. He said he's a member of the Screen Actors Guild. However, from the moment he took a class in genetics, he was hooked on the science and focused on becoming a doctor. Being on stage at UC Davis, however, led to his encounter with Julia, who became his wife.

For now, as he and his family continue to settle in and he builds his practice, Anker smiles when talking about Curtis Park and its friendliness.



Photo/Judy Harper

Dr. Thomas Anker, wife Julia and sons Finn, left, and Liam are settling into their Portola Way home.

## POINT OF VIEW

### Former resident still feels neighborhood vibe

By Bruce Pierini

In 1971, a young Adrian Woodfork became the first African American to go on the air at KCRA-3 television station.

While working at the station, Woodfork met and became good friends with a camera operator who lived in Curtis Park and appreciated the ambiance and character of the neighborhood streets. In 1978, Woodfork found a pretty cottage with a "For Sale" sign at 2157 Fourth Ave. He knocked on the door and, after a brief interview, the owners decided to sell to him.

Woodfork immediately loved the neighborhood – its vibrant atmosphere, block parties and proximity to Freeport Boulevard and Taylor's Market. He still shops at Taylor's two or three times a week. "It's one of the best boutique markets in the region," he said, "and it's close to Freeport Bakery. It was a great place to raise my 1-year-old son."

He liked the welcoming neighbors and diversity of races, ages and occupations. Two other African Americans, both women, lived nearby.

He recalls that in 1978 change was in the air and that neighbors warmly reached out to him and



Photo/Joan Cusick

Adrian Woodfork brings an orchid to his former next door neighbor, Karen Nunes.

that made it easy to make friends here. The camera operator lived right around the corner and introduced him to lots of people.

"My neighbors were teachers, politicians, architects, people with whom I had a lot of shared interests," Woodfork said. "They brought gifts and bottles of wine. We got together for Neighborhood Watch meetings each month."

But there was that one neighbor.

"He was an older white guy, who I never met, who objected to my living there," Woodfork recalled. "I was told to stay away from him. That broke up the Neighborhood Watch group – they didn't meet anymore. My neighbors rejected that guy and it made them all the more determined to be accepting."

Woodfork stayed in the neighborhood for 24 years. But when he and his wife began having children, they needed a larger home. One neighbor, Karen Nunes, distraught at the thought of losing him, even showed him plans to build up, as she and her husband had previously done. Woodfork recalled looking out his window at the neighbors bringing food, wine and gifts to his going-away party and how sad he felt about leaving.

Woodfork now lives in a larger home in a comfortable neighborhood near Executive Airport.

"This house does not compare to the craftsmanship of my Fourth Avenue home," he said. "It looks pretty on the outside, but it's structurally weak and all the houses look the same. There isn't at all the vibe like that of my old neighborhood here."

That's why you might see him and say hello as he shops at Taylor's Market or walks his dogs at Curtis Park, still enjoying that vibe.

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# COMMUNITY CORNER



Photo/Rachel Brownsey

## Celebrating a life of love

Judy and John Brush of Third Avenue pulled out all the stops to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary at Sierra 2's Curtis Hall. Tables with white linen and semi-formal place settings accommodated guests inside and in the patio. Steam tables offered several hors d'oeuvres and an indoor buffet presented a robust Italian dinner prepared by Sampino's. About 90 family members and lifetime friends came from as far away as Chicago. The DJ played music popular in 1971. Judy and John entertained everyone with a slide show down memory lane, and then took to the dance floor.

— Judy Green Scheible

## Farmers market extends season

Fresh fruits and vegetables will be available through the end of November at the Oak Park Farmers Market, according to its manager,

Joany Titherington, "We're working toward making the market year round," she said. The market is in McClatchy Park at 35th Street and Fifth Avenue. It is open 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays.

This year's expanded offerings include flowers, soaps, fresh cooked foods and tables with links to community services. Other tables with art supplies keep youngsters busy while parents shop.

The Wednesday evening market ended its season Sept. 29.

— Judy Green Scheible



## Talented 'deli lama' creates sandwiches in Curtis Park Market

By Judy Green Scheible

Neighbors, office workers and trades people in the area have discovered sandwiches worth waiting for at the 2nd Avenue Deli in Curtis Park Market at 24th Street and Second Avenue.

During two recent visits, these hungry folk came in a steady stream to pick up their phone orders or wait patiently at one of the white Formica tables for their lunch or dinner sandwich or salad.

What keeps customers returning is the gregarious and talented sandwich master Mick Stevenson. For the last seven months, he has wielded his knives in a whirlwind of activity to make a dozen combos and custom orders in a compact space at the back of the market.

He and his business partner, Michael Littlefield, took over the deli shop seven months ago after the previous tenant left. Stevenson has a deep resume in Sacramento bars and restaurants. Two took COVID dives. The earliest one, Dad's Deli on S Street, was home to many of the imaginatively named sandwiches on his current menu.

Among Stevenson's creations is the Rootbeer Pulled Pork, a specialty he brought from his home in North Carolina. It's made with slow-cooked pulled pork, shredded cabbage, pickled onions and BBQ sauce, served on a ciabatta roll.

After John Brush of Third Avenue had this sandwich he noted, "The sauce ... was sweet and tasty but the best thing about the sandwich was the pickled onion that enhanced the overall flavor."

Stevenson said his best seller is The Jive Turkey, which includes provolone, bacon, pesto, roasted garlic spread, spinach and tomato on sliced sourdough bread. One satisfied diner said the pesto and garlic were rich and bold.

Another happy customer is Andrea Rosen of Portola Way who stopped by the 2nd Avenue Deli when she was yearning for some real Jewish deli food for dinner. She said her hot pastrami sandwich was



Photos/Judy Green Scheible

The gregarious sandwich maker Mick Stevenson, dubbed the "deli lama" by one of his admirers, keeps customers coming back for his creations at the 2nd Avenue Deli.

delicious, loaded with grilled onions, cheese and dressing on a ciabatta roll.

Stevenson lives in Southside Park with his wife and 10-year-old daughter. He came to Sacramento 20 years ago with his guitar to play in a band. He wound up working for seven years in the 4th Street Grille at Fourth and L streets. While there, he made an off-the-menu sandwich he called the Turnpike. After one bite of the sandwich with its secret sauce, a customer dubbed Stevenson "the deli lama." The name stuck. Stevenson reveals that the sauce included balsamic vinegar.

That sandwich is on his 2nd Avenue menu as the Deli Lama's Turnpike. It's one of five cold sandwiches; the other seven are served hot.

Sandwiches are generally \$10.95 for a whole, \$6.50 for a half. Custom sandwiches have custom prices. Salads are \$6.95.

The deli is open 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 11 a.m. to mid-afternoon Saturdays, but closed Sundays. The phone number is 916 456-6488.

Stevenson also markets his own brand of double IPA called Deli Lama. It is sold at the market.







Photos/Lauren Gothard

Mrs. Bunney's first-graders waited, left, to go into the classroom, where a sign welcomed "Our Class of Terrific Kids!" Mrs. Lim led her second-graders into class, right.

## Big smiles on students' faces with return to in-person learning

Full instructional days of in-person learning and the afterschool program are back at Bret Harte Elementary School, something much closer to the pre-pandemic school day.

Students with new backpacks and big smiles eagerly awaited entry to the campus on the first day of school Sept. 2. Children and parents greeted each other from 6 feet apart as they waited for student health screenings.

"My sense is that families and students feel safe coming back to in-person learning," said Principal James Tucker. "Our health and safety protocols have made most families feel at ease. The first day was long as we got our students acclimated to health and safety protocols. Now we can get everyone on campus easily."

COVID-19 mitigation protocols from last spring's brief return remain in place, including mandatory masks, daily health screenings, air purifiers and increased hand hygiene. The Sacramento City Unified School District has introduced optional COVID-19 testing, which is available for Bret Harte students who have signed up.

But, for the most part, things feel surprisingly normal.



**LAUREN  
GOTHARD  
and  
LINDSEY  
SIN**

Most of Bret Harte's previous students have returned for in-person learning this school year. Added to that are new kindergartners and a few new students in other grades, for about 208 total students for the 2021-22 school year. A small percentage of students have opted for the district's independent study program.

While the first week of school is always a special time for students to reunite with friends and teachers they've missed over summer, such significant time away required readjustment for physical distancing, being away from family and socializing with peers.

All things considered, Principal Tucker is looking forward to the new school year. "I am really excited that our new kindergarten students are able to come for their first experience at school," Tucker said. "They

are excited and adjusting to the new guidelines."

Some things remain impacted by the pandemic, such as the continued restriction of school-wide events, which would otherwise allow parents and families to be actively on the campus. Per district policy, the only non-staff who are allowed on campus must be academically focused, such as for reading or testing support.

For the time being, the early months of the school year will not include such past activities as the Halloween dance and the field trip to a local pumpkin patch, both of which received high family participation. This means the larger community will have to get creative to support students and teachers.

The Bret Harte Parent Teacher Association held its first meeting of the school year Sept. 13. Participation was the highest in at least several years with many parents enthusiastically volunteering to help.

Now, after three months of summer break, the school bell rings every morning, ushering students into their classrooms, and the day is punctuated by shouts and laughter from the playground once again.



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