

City Council unanimous in rejecting gas station

By Dennis Cusick

Imagine yourself traveling back in time and making a decision based on the conditions and rules as they were six years ago.

That is the challenge the members of City Council faced in reconsidering the 2015 decision to reject developer Paul Petrovich's request to build a 16-nozzle gas station in what has become the Crocker Village shopping center.

Petrovich reminded the councilmembers at their Jan. 18 meeting that they were limited to the law and the facts as they existed on Nov. 17, 2015, when Council heard more than four hours of arguments from proponents and opponents before voting 7-2 to deny a conditional use permit that was needed to build a gas station at the site.

Several years of litigation later, Council rejected the proposal again, this time by a unanimous 7-0 vote, after a rehearing that lasted nearly another four hours.

The litigation may not be over. "I will be filing another writ of mandate asking the courts to issue" a conditional use permit, Petrovich wrote to *Viewpoint* after the vote. "I have a less difficult challenge obtaining this one than last time. The city now has established a pattern of unlawful acts violating my property rights."

Councilmember Rick Jennings, who now represents Curtis Park as the result of the recent redistricting, made the motion to reject Petrovich's proposal. Jennings said he felt a gas station at the site was not consistent with the city's general plan or with city policy of promoting transit-oriented development. He also said he felt a gas station at the site would be detrimental to public health.

District 5 Councilmember Jay Schenirer, who represented Curtis Park prior to redistricting, was

Please see Rehearing, Page 5



Pharmacist Sonya Frausto of Ten Acres Pharmacy gives the Moderna booster shot to Marianne Adams of Sixth Avenue in Curtis Park.

Photo/
Judy Green Scheible

Ten Acres pharmacist says she'll do 'whatever it takes' to confront COVID

By Judy Green Scheible

"It's been totally crazy since Thanksgiving," said pharmacist Sonya Frausto at her Ten Acres Pharmacy on Freeport Boulevard. "We're testing, doing vaccines and boosters. Most of our patients are children," Frausto said.

However, there's another category of patients that gets an almost unheard of service from Frausto – home visits. Frausto visits patients who are homebound. Some are paralyzed; some are in hospice care or a nursing home. One patient had been homeless and was temporarily housed in a motel but unable to move into a board-and-care home until he was vaccinated.

"Whatever it takes to get us out of this pandemic together," Frausto said about her determination to serve the public. "I was a little scared about going to a motel, but I wanted this homeless person to be safe and warm, so I did it."

She mentioned one patient who was confined to a

bed in Elk Grove and unable to get a booster shot. His family tried to rent a U-Haul truck to take him to a pharmacy in his bed, but the pharmacist said he would not go out to the parking lot for the injection.

Frausto said she does not charge for the home visit but thought maybe she should. The vaccines are free. She charges the patient's insurance for the medicine.

"These people want to see their families, and the vaccine makes that possible," she said. She's also given shingles shots and flu vaccines. She makes home visits Tuesdays and Thursdays within a range of about 20 miles from the pharmacy. She has a second pharmacist, Miriam Pulispher, on staff who covers the shop during Frausto's absence.

Pucci's Pharmacy also makes outside visits, but only to group homes, not private residences, according to Frausto.

Lately, selling test kits has been a major part of Ten Acres' business. Getting test kits has been a challenge.

Please see Pharmacist, Page 2

February Feast

Deadline near to sign up for lasagna dinner.

Page 2



Thiebaud was here

Young art teacher's home was filled with colorful people.

Page 9



Passion for tea

'Classy Hippie' founder hopes for the return of comfortable gatherings.

Page 11



SCNA's First Fundraiser of 2022 A Neighborhood Dinner-To-Go

Order dinner tickets by Feb. 7
Dinner pick-up at Sierra 2: Feb. 11

Raffle Prizes: (Gift Cards) Meet and Eat,
Plant Foundry, Gunther's and more!

Tickets are online at sierra2.org or
at the Sierra 2 office: 916 452-3005 ext. 200



February FEAST

Be sure to order your February Feast dinner online at sierra2.org or at the Sierra 2 office: 916 452-3005 ext. 200 by Feb. 7 to support SCNA's first fundraiser of 2022.

Jeff and Leo at La Famiglia Catering, a Sierra 2 tenant, will prepare a three-course lasagna dinner for two.

Dinner pickups in the parking lot at the rear door of Sierra 2 Center off 4th Avenue, will be staggered between 4 to 6 p.m. on Friday, Feb. 11. Please select a time preference when you purchase your ticket – by special order in advance only.

Dinners for two are \$75. Red and white wines may be purchased for \$20 per bottle.

For those who buy tickets, additional offerings will include links to romantic classic movies, a trivia contest and a raffle.

Appetizer

Caprese skewers
Salad on a stick made of fresh mozzarella,
tomatoes and sweet basil

Entrée

Lasagna Bolognese
Delicate layers of pasta coated in a luxurious mix
of hearty ragù bolognese (slow-cooked meat sauce)
and creamy béchamel (white sauce).

or

Vegetarian Lasagna Alfredo
Layers of vegetables, cheese and pasta
in a creamy Alfredo sauce

Garlic breadsticks

Caesar salad

Dessert

Two Cannoli
Italian pastries made of tube-shaped shells
of fried pastry dough, filled with a sweet,
creamy filling

This event is a major fundraiser for the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association and Sierra 2 Center. Please order your tickets soon!

Omicron causes COVID infection rate to explode in 95818

By Mike Scheible

If you or your neighbors have suffered recent COVID infections, you have lots of company. COVID-19 infections, which had dropped to about two cases daily in November, soared to 35 per day in January in the 95818 ZIP code area. There were 847 new infections reported in the 30 days ending Jan. 24.

At the current infection rate, 1-2% of the 95818 population is contracting a confirmed COVID infection weekly. However, the actual rate is much higher, as many infections are asymptomatic or are never confirmed via tests reported to Sacramento County health officials.

Despite the winter surge caused by Omicron and the wide availability of free vaccines for the 95% of the local population over 4 years of age, the

fully vaccinated rate of those eligible in 95818 has only slightly improved. The vaccination rate was 76% in mid-November. It had risen to 83% in mid-January, likely because of the vaccination of children ages 5 to 11 who became eligible Oct. 29.

More than 5,000 residents in 95818 are not yet vaccinated – 1,100 children under age 5 and 3,600 other residents who are eligible. The unvaccinated continue to be most at risk for severe COVID infections.

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.

Pharmacist: Most people test too early; test sickest person first

Continued from Page 1

The first batch of 800 sold out in eight hours. Several weeks later, the second batch of 200 sold out overnight. In mid-January, Frausto was waiting for her third shipment of 200 test kits.

"I tried it (the test kit) on myself before selling them," Frausto said. "I wanted to be sure the directions were clear – that the test was easy to take." She sells the iHealth test kits for \$24.99 for two kits – the same kits the Sacramento City Unified School District uses.

Frausto said she limits customers to two kits so there are enough for everyone. She recommends people have the kits on hand in case they become symptomatic and need them in order to decide whether to go to school or work. In-person PCR tests are hard to arrange; most appointments are a week out.

Frausto said the at-home test kits are reliable if they are done correctly, which means one kit for one person. The first swab is followed by a second one in 36 hours. "The results are not always the same because of the time it takes for the virus to develop," Frausto said.

Home tour canceled

Because of the current COVID surge and the need for at least a few months' lead time, the committee organizing the spring Home & Garden Tour decided it was necessary to put it off to a future year.

Before the pandemic, the annual



Photo/Judy Green Scheible

Sonya Frausto is devoted to helping people with vaccines and testing.

If several people in a family are symptomatic but the household has only two kits, Frausto recommends testing the sickest person first.

"Most people are testing too early," Frausto said. She recommends a person who has been exposed should wait three days for a PCR test or five days for a personal test. No symptoms indicate no need for a test.

Ten Acres Pharmacy's full range of services, including pet medicines and body scans, is outlined on the web site tenacrespharmacy.com.

home tour had been one of SCNA's signature fundraising events.

The committee hopes to welcome back neighbors and the community to participate in what has always been a really fun day when it is safe to do so.

— Lori Harder

New board members eager to get involved

Sue Hida – advocate for equity

By Kelsey Wehls

Sue Hida was elected to the SCNA board in December. A resident of Curtis Park for 17 years, she wanted to get involved in the community.

"I've been a member for over 16 years, and appreciated that the board saw fit to create an ad-hoc Racial Justice

Committee," Hida said. "It was time to give a little back and help raise awareness of equity issues at the board level." Hida's passion for equity issues stems from her father's internment in his teenage years due to his Japanese ancestry.

Born in Wisconsin, Hida received a degree in civil structural engineering from Purdue University, completing her thesis on seismic hazards. She worked as a structural engineer in Corvallis, Ore., before coming to California for a job at the California Department of Transportation. She retired as assistant state bridge engineer in 2020, after nearly 30 years with Caltrans.

In October 2021, she became president of the Capital Branch of the



Sue Hida

Photo/Kelsey Wehls

American Society of Civil Engineers.

Hida moved to the Pocket neighborhood in 1992. She moved to her Curtis Way home in 2004 to be closer to work and have a house with architectural character.

She has become the SCNA board's coordinator for the Clean California

project, a grant program offered by the state to help improve the look of neighborhoods. The Oak Park Neighborhood Association has been working on a project to fund a mural in the Second Avenue tunnel. Hida's role will collect input and also assist with finding an artist for the mural. "I also saw a need for someone to advocate for bike lanes on Franklin (Boulevard) and the Fifth Avenue overpass to Oak Park," she said.

In her free time, Hida can be found cycling, Nordic skiing and traveling.

She married her husband Jimmy in 2017 after they met on a bike trip along the Washington coast. He relocated from Chicago and is also a member of SCNA.

Emily Lemei – Curtis Park native

By Kelsey Wehls

Curtis Park native Emily Lemei was elected to the SCNA board in December. "I thought it would be a great opportunity to get more involved in neighborhood issues, support events and meet neighbors," she said.

Growing up on Portola Way, Lemei attended the local schools – Bret Harte Elementary, Cal Middle and McClatchy High School. She enjoyed neighborhood summer block parties, Music in the Park and taking dance classes at Sierra 2. One of her favorite things was and is Gunther's Ice Cream, "It's the best!"

After attending George Washington University in Washington, D.C., she returned to California in 2006 for its slower pace and relaxed nature.

Lemei works for a joint powers agency that represents municipal utilities in Northern California. "I'm interested in transportation electrification and building electrification – ask me about electric vehicles! Or induction cooking!" Her husband Galen also works in the energy



Emily Lemei

Photo/Emily Lemei

field as an attorney for the California Public Utilities Commission.

The couple moved to Baldwin Street in Crocker Village in 2020. Although they looked at traditional homes in Curtis Park, the Crocker Village house became available at the right time.

"I love the sense of community in Curtis Park, and that there are great community resources like Sierra 2, Curtis Park and local businesses and restaurants," she said.

Lemei hopes to add value to SCNA by learning more about the board and helping to address neighborhood issues. "I appreciate the opportunity to build connections between the original Curtis Park neighborhood and the new Crocker Village neighborhood," she said.

With 3-year-old toddler Casper, Lemei stays busy exploring Sacramento. She does crossword puzzles, reads "far too many" murder mysteries and enjoys musical theater. She spends time with her parents, who still live in her childhood home; and with her brother, who lives in Land Park.

Notes from Jan. 12 SCNA board meeting

SCNA board re-elects 3 top leaders

The SCNA board re-elected three members of the leadership team at its January meeting: **Bill Hoover**, president; **Kathy Les**, vice president; and **John Bailey**, treasurer. **Mimi Budd** was elected secretary and **Bruce Pierini** was elected member-at-large of the Executive Committee.

New board members **Sue Hida** and **Emily Lemei**, who were elected at the December meeting, were introduced. Seven directors were re-elected in December: Hoover, Les, Bailey, and **Gerre Buehler**, **Erik Fay**, **Bill French** and **Andrea Rosen**.

Bailey reported an \$11,000 loss in the fourth quarter of 2021. He said the rapid spread of the Omicron variant of COVID has had a negative effect on SCNA's budget.

As of Dec. 16, there was \$100,000 in the checking account and more than \$400,000 in the portfolio.

SCNA will apply for a city grant of up to \$20,000.

The board decided to continue with quarterly budgets.

Hida reported on CalTrans' new project to build sloped sound walls along Highway 99.

Sacramento Performing Arts Company is the new tenant in the Sierra cottage.

SCNA's "February Feast" fundraiser has had low ticket sales for the Feb. 11 event. The last day to purchase tickets is Feb. 7.

A survey of X Street Navigation Center residents indicated a majority of residents are 55 years of age or older and 70% are

intravenous drug users. Several residents are interested in returning to the workforce, one of the aims of the center.

Pierini gave an overview of the Sacramento Independent Redistricting Commission's reconfiguration of districts. All of Curtis Park west of Franklin Boulevard is now in District 7, represented by Councilmember **Rick Jennings**. The area between Franklin Boulevard and Highway 99 remains in District 5, represented by Councilmember **Jay Schenirer**.

An informal gathering of several members of the Racial Justice Committee is planned with local Black real estate agent **Keisha Mathews** and several of her colleagues. Les and Budd met Mathews when they appeared on her radio program to discuss the committee's work.

The Clean and Quiet Yard Care Committee will host a meeting on Zoom and in person regarding the replacement of gas landscaping equipment with electric versions.

The next meeting of the SCNA board will be at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 3 on Zoom.

– *Bruce Pierini, board secretary*

Clarification:

The SCNA board meeting notes in the December issue of *Viewpoint* said nine homeowners on Montgomery Way had agreed to include their homes in the "proposed Montgomery Way Historic District." Actually, the homeowners have applied to have their homes listed as individual historic landmarks on the Sacramento Register of Historic and Cultural Resources. No historic district is being proposed.

Curtis Park should take leadership role in advocating for other neighborhoods

In my 11 years on City Council, I have gone through two city redistricting processes, both resulting in unsatisfactory boundaries.

The first, after my election to the Council in 2010, was a disaster. I was squeezed between two political camps and infighting between some members of the Council and then-Mayor Kevin Johnson. The outcome was that the UC Davis Medical Center was stripped out of its home in District 5.

Some strange district lines were drawn to meet the desires of individual Council members. While the medical center move was later rectified, it was a pretty horrible experience and led to a city charter vote to create an independent redistricting commission appointed by the City Ethics Commission.

In this second redistricting process, the Sacramento Independent Redistricting Commission approved a redistricting map, which drastically shifted boundaries for my district and others, effective Dec. 16, 2021.

District 5, which I was elected to represent, now straddles Highway 99 from Oak Park south all the way past Mack Road and includes about eight neighborhoods in the south area that used to be in Districts 7 and 8. The district no longer includes most of Curtis Park, South Land Park, Colonial Heights, Lawrence Park and Z'berg Park. The part of Curtis Park that remains in District 5 is between

**JAY
SCHENIRER**

**City
Council
Member
District 5**



Franklin Boulevard and Highway 99.

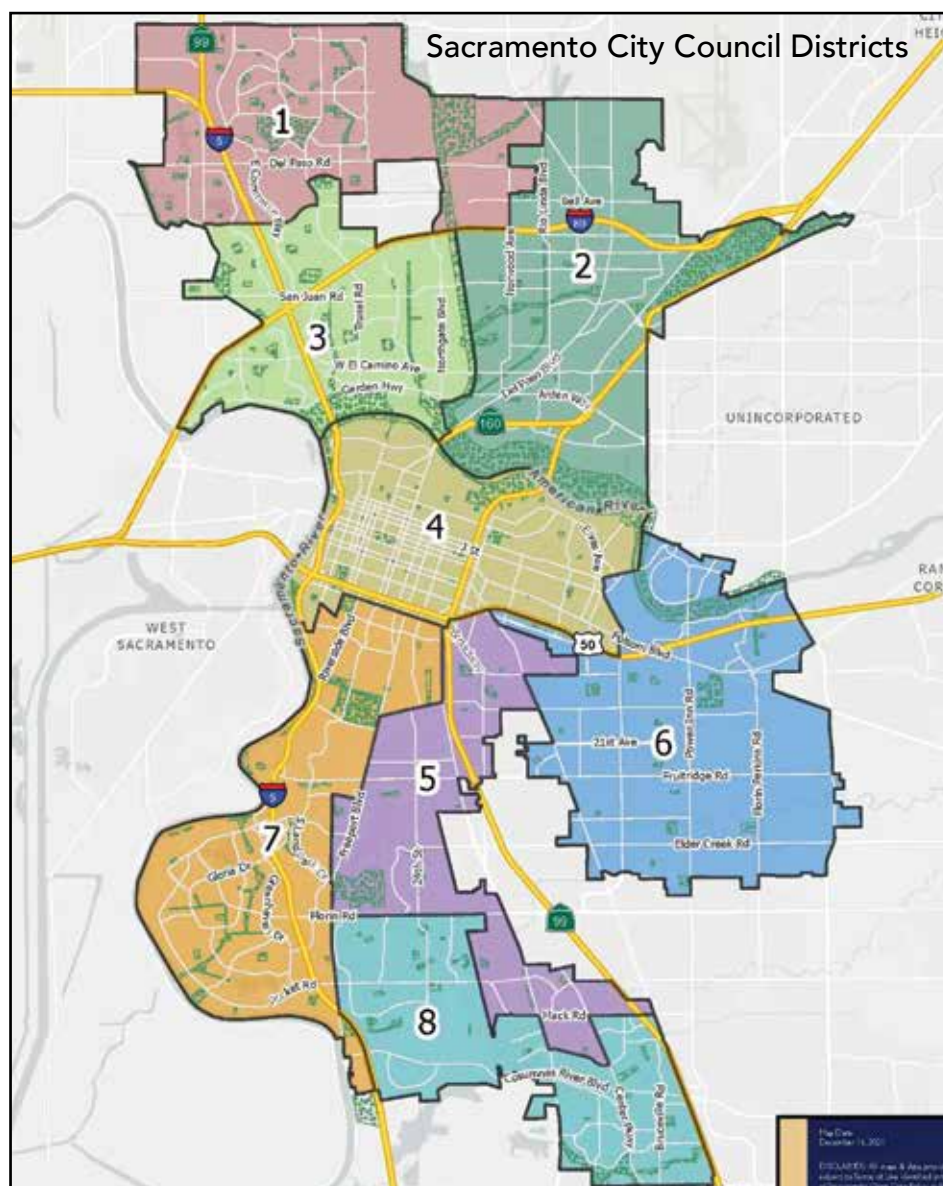
The shift of affluence was dramatic – the median household income is 16% lower in District 5 than before redistricting and 13% higher in District 7. These were the largest swings in the city from redistricting.

The changes in district boundaries were made based on public discussions and influenced by data, public input and politics. The boundary changes in Curtis Park were done very late in the discussions and were very much unexpected.

Meeting the challenges of the city over the next 10 years will require leadership and collaboration from many – in whatever district you are located. The business community will need to step up, community advocates and stakeholders will need to work collaboratively and the city must be open to new ideas and ways of doing business.

Importantly, our neighborhoods will need to lead.

My hope is that Curtis Park, most of which is now part of a district with fewer needs and more privilege than other



Courtesy of City of Sacramento

Council districts were redrawn by the Sacramento Independent Redistricting Commission, which adopted the final City Council district map on Dec. 16.

districts, will take a leadership role on the important issues of the day. These include addressing homelessness and racial equity and elevating the needs and voices of under-resourced neighborhoods with regard to city investments.

I have always been proud of Curtis Park, where I have lived for more than 30 years. Even though I no longer represent most of the neighborhood, I am confident of our continuing, positive role in the city.

My focus in City Council is on quality-of-life issues

I am honored and excited to be representing Curtis Park on the City Council.

The Independent Redistricting Commission reconfigured all eight City Council districts, including District 7, which I represent. Our new district adds Curtis Park, Little Pocket, South Land Park, Land Park and Z'berg Park to the existing Pocket/Greenhaven communities to complete District 7.

My wife and I moved to Sacramento more than 36 years ago. I was working for Xerox and Cassandra was working for the Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency. Moving to Sacramento has been one of the best decisions of our lives. We bought our home, raised our children and made a life here. Sacramento has had a significant influence on our family and inspired me

**RICK
JENNINGS**

**City
Council
Member
District 7**



to give back to our community.

In addition to being your representative on the City Council, I am also the CEO of the Center for Fathers and Families, which addresses the needs of fathers and families by offering programs and services that lead to family growth, enrichment and empowerment. We serve more than 800 fathers and 1,700 children.

As your councilmember, I am here to listen and be your advocate. My staff

and I want to hear from you. What needs in our community can I help address? What is working and what is not? How can we improve our services? What can we do differently? I am always open to new ideas and look forward to hearing directly from you.

My focus is on quality-of-life issues. First and foremost, we need to feel safe in our neighborhoods. I graduated from the University of Maryland with a degree in criminology. Had I not been drafted by the Oakland Raiders in 1976, I likely would have become a police officer.

For me, public safety includes our police and fire departments, but they cannot do this job alone. While they are the first responders, we also need to supplement them with additional services when a public safety officer might not be the best response.

I also believe we need to focus on maintaining parks, supporting libraries and making sure the basic services of municipal government are working by picking up trash, sweeping streets and ensuring a high quality of life for our residents.

I am excited to get to know the many small businesses in the "new" District 7 and look forward to hearing from them about how we can help them thrive. I am the son of a small business owner. I learned many life lessons working in my parents' small store. Those lessons have served me well, including making sure I take my grandchildren to both Gunther's and Vic's for ice cream!

To get in touch with my office, please email rjennings@cityofsacramento.org. I believe in TEAM – Together Everyone Achieves More.

Rehearing: Mayor rejected request that he recuse himself

Continued from Page 1

prohibited from participating in the rehearing by court order. Superior Court Judge Michael Kenny ruled in 2018 that Schenirer had demonstrated “an unacceptable probability of actual bias” and had failed to act in an open-minded manner before the 2015 vote to reject the gas-station project. Kenny’s decision ordering the rehearing was upheld by the appellate courts.

District 4 Councilmember Katie Valenzuela recused herself from the rehearing, explaining that she had made public comments about the gas-station proposal before she was on City Council.

Petrovich’s attorneys also requested that Mayor Darrell Steinberg recuse himself because he had discussed the issue with a resident of Crocker Village in 2018. Steinberg refused to do so. “I can and do have an open mind and will listen tonight to all of the arguments and render a decision that is best for our community,” the mayor said at the start of the rehearing.

Petrovich presented his own case, asking the Council to follow the advice of its planning staff, which recommended approval of the project with what he called “an incredible amount of valuable and unwavering information.” Petrovich quoted a planning staff report that said a gas station at the site was “consistent with the applicable standards.”

The 2015 Council hearing was the result of SCNA’s appeal of a city planning commission decision to approve the conditional use permit.

SCNA President Bill Hoover, board member Andrea Rosen and former SCNA President Eric Johnson reiterated SCNA’s position at the rehearing. Hoover referred to the gas-station proposal as “the wrong idea in the wrong place at the wrong time.” Rosen urged Council to exercise its discretion to deny a “Costco-style regional fuel center.” She said traffic leading to the gas pumps “would be creating a pedestrian death trap in that parking lot.” And Johnson, who was SCNA president at the time of the 2015 hearing, said a gas station isn’t necessary for the shopping center’s profitability: “This location is already a success.”

Almost three dozen members of the public spoke for up to two minutes



As the mayor spoke, Zoom thumbnails showed Councilmembers Harris, Loloee and Ashby, and developer Paul Petrovich, second from bottom.

Photo/City of Sacramento via Zoom

each, about two-thirds of them in favor of a gas station. Proponents mostly identified themselves as residents of Crocker Village or owners or managers of businesses there. “If you don’t approve this, it will be a crucial blow to my business,” said Roma Vilash, who identified herself as owner of the Baskin-Robbins ice cream franchise.

Opponents were mostly Curtis Park residents, several of them current or former members of the SCNA board. SCNA Treasurer John Bailey said Safeway had projected sales of 7.5 million gallons of gasoline a year, four times the average gas station volume. He estimated there would be 2,753 vehicles per day, or 115 per hour, which would contribute to safety and health issues.

One by one, the councilmembers commented on the proposal before voting.

Councilmember Jeff Harris said he drives an electric vehicle. “My hope,” he said to Petrovich, “is if you build this gas station, in 15 years it will be completely obsolete and you will take it out.”

Mai Vang, who seconded Councilmember Jennings’ motion, said a 16-nozzle gas station “counters the collective work we’re doing as a city.”

Eric Guerra said the question was whether the proposal comported with land-use decisions in 2015 – and he didn’t think so. “For me, it does go back to that fundamental question.”

Sean Loloee said he could

understand Safeway’s concerns because he too is in the retail food industry with low margins. “Going back to 2015 guidelines, it’s going to be a very tough decision,” Loloee said.

Angelique Ashby noted that she was the only councilmember in the rehearing who was on Council in 2010, when the agreement to develop what became Crocker Village was reached. She acknowledged those who made public comments in support of the project, but said: “Some of the reasons people are saying it is a good site are the very reasons I think it’s not.” She said the plan called for too many pumps and would be too crowded at the site, and

the area is already oversaturated with gas stations.

Steinberg was the last to speak before the vote. “I think it has been a fair hearing, an even-handed hearing. I think everyone has been heard, really without time limitation,” he said. “And given the years of controversy, I think it is very important that we take the hours or whatever time is necessary to make sure that everyone is in fact heard.”

He also recognized the passions on both sides of the issue. “I wish there wasn’t so much rancor and anger over one piece of an otherwise tremendous project – a gas station,” Steinberg said. “But that is what it is.”



To get the neighborhood news online, here's the easy and direct way to SUBSCRIBE

The Sierra2/SCNA website is updated regularly with news of the SCNA neighborhood. To receive email concerning Curtis Park, **SUBSCRIBE at: <https://sierra2.org/neighborhood-scna/>.**

It's the quick way to access ongoing Sierra 2 and SCNA news.

All you do is add your email address and click subscribe.



Become an SCNA member: Check out sierra2.org



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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FEBRUARY 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

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

FITNESS

U-Jam Fitness

All ages and fitness levels

Thursdays, 6:30-7:30 p.m., Studio 1

Dr. Tracie Hall-Burks

Backrowdiva2014@gmail.com

GENTLE YOGA

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m.,

Room 12

Fees: \$60/8 classes; \$30/4 classes;

\$10/drop-in.

STRENGTH & BALANCE

Thursdays, 11 a.m.-noon, Room 11

Wellness program fees

apply. Punch cards: \$60/10

classes; \$35/5 classes; \$10

drop-in. Purchase cards in the

Sierra 2 office or pay drop-in

fee to instructors.

ADULT DANCE

Two Rivers Dance Center/
River City Taps

Mondays-Thursdays/Saturdays

Richard, richard@

tworiversdancecenter.com

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All ages and skill levels welcome

1st and 3rd Mondays, 7-9 p.m.

Studio 1. Veronica, 916 977-0714

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

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

of Alcoholics Anonymous

Open Hybrid Meeting –

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Fridays, 6:30-7:30 p.m. in Room 11

Helen Sundet, 916 769-7471

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EDUCATION

MY STORY PROJECT

Mondays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12

FITNESS

GENTLE YOGA

Wednesdays, 11 a.m.-noon

Fees: \$60/8 classes; \$30/4

classes or \$10/drop-in. Room 12

STRENGTH & BALANCE

Thursdays, 11 a.m.-noon, 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

LEISURE

BOOK CLUB

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

Meets on Zoom

Feb. 14: "Miss Benson's Beetle,"

by Rachel Joyce

NONFICTION BOOK CLUB

3rd Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon,

Sierra 2 Green

behind Sierra 2 Center

Feb. 17: "How Democracies Die,"

by Steven Livitsky and

Daniel Ziblatt

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. Room 11.

OPEN ART STUDIO

Fridays, 12-3 p.m. Room 11

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PAINT & SIP CLASS

Enjoy a painting class with a twist. Unleash your creativity with your favorite beverage in one hand, paintbrush in the other and discover the artist within. No previous experience is required. You'll be guided step by step by artist Cara Gregor, who will help you create your own original canvas mixed-media painting, "Bouquet of Camellias."

Join with friends or take part solo, bring your favorite drink (wine and beer are great, no cocktails please), a glass and a snack. Enjoy painting in a casual party atmosphere. An 8-by-10 canvas and gold leaf are supplied.

You can either purchase or bring your own acrylic paints and brushes. Masks and proof of vaccination are required.

Wednesday, Feb. 9 6-8 p.m., Room 7

Fee: \$25 for class with optional \$20 art kit (paint and brushes)

Advance registration required: sierra2.org/event/paint-sip-class/



Viewpoint wants your story ideas

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

Please send your ideas to denniscusick52@gmail.com with *Viewpoint* in the subject field. Deadline for *Viewpoint* copy is the 15th of the month prior to publication.

LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

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



Photo/Courtesy of Evie Ladin

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— Mindy Giles



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From left are local northern flickers: hybrid woodpecker, local yellow-shafted and red-shafted.

Photos/Dan Murphy

Birds of Curtis Park

Common woodpecker lives in neighborhood year-round

By Dan Murphy

One of the more colorful birds in our neighborhood is the northern flicker, a common type of woodpecker. The color manifests when the flicker springs into flight displaying bright orange-red underwings. The flicker also displays a large white rump patch in flight.

The flicker's flight has an undulating trace, typical of woodpeckers. Bursts of wing-flapping alternate with non-flapping phases during which wings are folded against the body.

The flicker can be found in open woodland regions all over North America. The flicker is well adapted to habitats altered by humans, commonly breeding in urban as well as suburban and rural environments and visiting backyard bird feeders.

Some of our local flickers are year-round residents. However, the population increases in winter when

snowbird migrants from farther north join with us.

Local flickers are of the red-shafted subspecies. East of the Rocky Mountains, the flicker subspecies is yellow-shafted with bright yellow underwings. While yellow-shafted flickers are rare in California, they are seen occasionally. Hybrid birds, red-shafted but with a black cheek stripe or a red-marked neck back characteristic of yellow-shafted birds, are seen regularly.

At 12 inches in length with a 20-inch wingspan, the flicker is our second-largest woodpecker. For most of the year, the major food item in the flicker diet is ants, but ground beetles are also important. Flickers have a sticky tongue that darts out approximately 1.5 inches beyond the bill tip as it laps up adult and larval ants. Flickers shift to fruits in late fall and winter, and some forage extensively on crop pests, such as corn borers, in winter.

Although the northern flicker remains

abundant, there has been a significant declining trend in population. This trend is viewed with concern because flickers are a keystone species, excavating tree cavities later used by other hole-nesting species.

Flickers can live as long as nine years, but they are subject to the harsh mortality risks common in the avian world. One study discovered that 9% of adult radio-tagged flickers were killed by hawks while foraging during a three-month breeding season. As many as 20% of flicker nests are lost to other predators, such as red squirrels and snakes. The annual survival rate for adult flickers is about 43%.

Perhaps as a result of the predation risk from hawks, adult flickers forage nearer to trees, saplings and forest edges where there is cover to escape, than the availability of food would dictate. They also forage in loose flocks and sometimes with robins or starlings to aid in predator detection.

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Portrait of an artist at 26th and Portola Way – his fame yet to come

By Dennis Cusick

Before Wayne Thiebaud was an internationally famous artist whose paintings would sell for as much as \$8.46 million, he was a young art instructor, living in Curtis Park for most of the 1950s with his wife, three daughters and an Airedale named Rembrandt.

Thiebaud died on Christmas Day at his home in Land Park. He was 101. *The New York Times* obituary called him “a virtuoso of the everyday and its deep, subtle symbolism.”

Daughter Twinka summarized on Facebook: “Master painter, art professor, tennis player, joke teller extraordinaire, beloved husband, father, grandfather, uncle and friend, Wayne Thiebaud has packed up his brushes in search of new scenery to paint, new canvasses to conquer. He will always be our favourite Father Christmas. Rest in sweet peace, Papa.”

Shortly after joining the Sacramento Junior College faculty in 1951, Thiebaud and family moved from Oak Park to a cottage at 26th Street and Portola Way. He was fresh out of Sacramento

State, where he received bachelor’s and master’s degrees in quick succession.

Like many of his generation, Thiebaud’s college education came after military service in World War II, most of which he spent as a graphic artist at Mather Field, drawing cartoons and illustrations for the base’s weekly magazine, *Wing Tips*.

Even before completing his degree, he caught the attention of *Sacramento Bee* art critic William Glackin in 1950 with “Farm and Hills,” a painting in a Kingsley Art Club show at the E.B. Crocker Art Gallery. Glackin called it “a magnificent landscape dominated by shades of gray and green and accenting the varying planes of the subject.”

Thiebaud’s time in Curtis Park was busy. In addition to teaching, he designed theater sets for college and Eaglet Theater productions, exhibited art at the Crocker Art Gallery and at the State Fair, gave lectures to community groups on modern art, and

made a series of educational animated films about “Mr. Stubby Pencil & Friends” in the basement of the Thiebaud home.

“We’ll never get rich, I guess,” Thiebaud said of the animation, a collaborative effort with his wife Patricia and another artist, Pat Dullanty. “But it looks like the thing has been successful, and it’s been a great experience. ... And we do feel that these we’ve made are worthwhile, not only to the students who will use them but to us, too, and they’ve been a real pleasure to make.”

Twinka, the middle of the three daughters, confirms that the family wasn’t affluent in the Curtis Park days. “We had little money but I never thought we were anything but RICH! There was beauty in our home – beautiful art, good jazz, classical, opera and Broadway shows blasted from the HiFi,” she wrote to *Viewpoint*. “Dad read to us from poetry books and the occasional novel.

He was very frugal but found ways to stretch a dollar, even supplying me with acting and ballet classes. ... Our home was filled with colorful, smart, creative people.

Never a dull moment. Best years of my childhood – if not my life.”

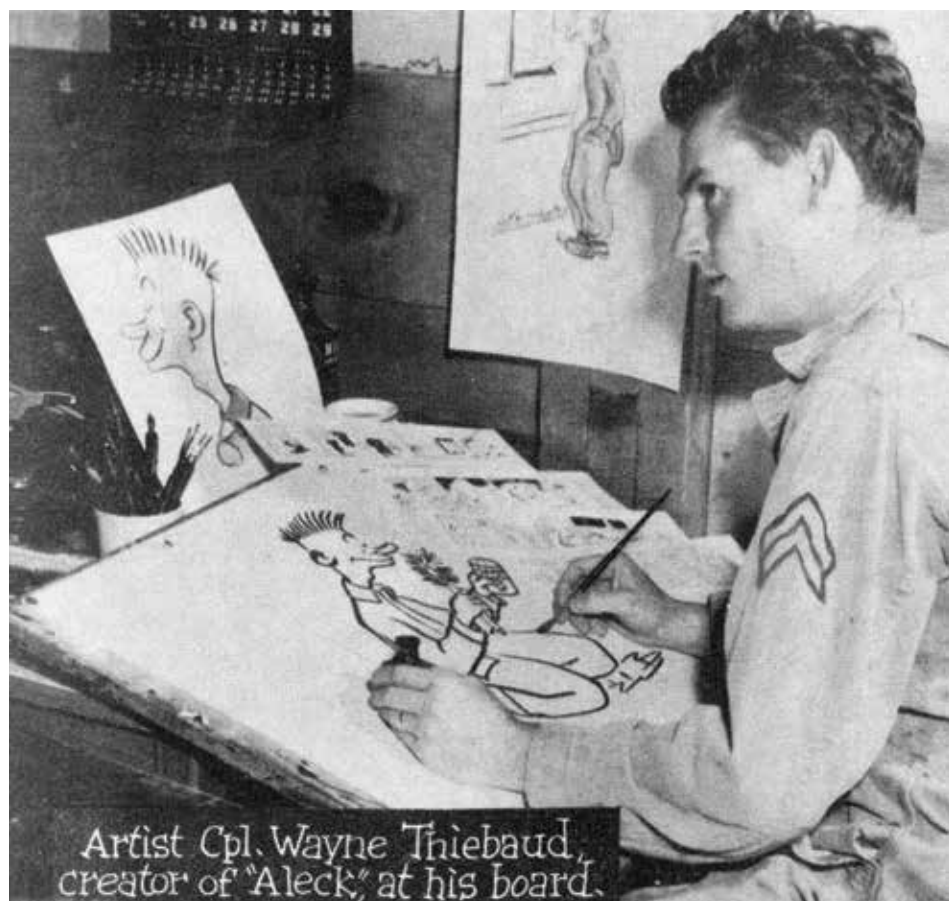
In the fall of 1956, Thiebaud took a sabbatical in New York, where he made the acquaintance of many of the great names in modern art, including Franz Kline and Willem and Elaine de Kooning.

While Thiebaud was in New York, an exhibition of a dozen of his paintings from the previous four years opened at Sacramento State. In reviewing the show, Glackin described Thiebaud’s evolution as an artist, and predicted:

Thiebaud made a series of educational animated films about “Mr. Stubby Pencil & Friends” in the basement of the family home.



This “Aleck” cartoon is from the July 28, 1945 issue of *Wing Tips*.



Photo/Courtesy of Sacramento Room at Sacramento Central Library
At his drawing board at Mather Field during World War II, Cpl. Wayne Thiebaud works on the “Aleck” cartoon for the base’s weekly magazine, *Wing Tips*.

“I have a hunch, knowing something of the painter’s deeply thoughtful qualities of mind, that what he turns to next may be the deeper elements in American life as he sees it and lives it.”

In 1957, Thiebaud resumed his duties as art department chair at the junior college.

The following year, architects designing a new SMUD headquarters building at 62nd and S streets reached out to Thiebaud to create an exterior mural. His design, which *The Bee* described as of “a large city affected by water,” started as five panels, 5 inches by 30 inches, and evolved into 90 panels 3 feet wide and 15 feet tall. The resulting work in Italian tile, *The Bee* said, “is a mosaic mural which is destined to become a must see for all who enjoy the beauties of such art work.”

By 1959, everything was changing. The Thiebauds had divorced. The house in Curtis Park was listed for sale in April. The real estate ad had an odd caveat for an artist’s residence: “Needs Some Paint.”

In December, Thiebaud married Betty Jean Bult, in a private ceremony in the River Park home of fellow art instructor Gregory Kondos. The couple moved to Land Park.

Thiebaud began teaching at UC Davis in 1960, lured away, he said, by the promise of an endless supply of canvas and free time to paint. He taught at UC Davis for more than 40 years, even after becoming an emeritus professor in 1991.

But he never stopped painting. Last year, the Laguna Art Museum had a show entitled “Clowns” that included 55 of his works, almost all of them painted between 2014 and 2020.

Thiebaud paintings appeared on the cover of *The New Yorker* magazine a number of times, including the issue of August 17, 2020, in celebration of his 100th birthday. A telephone interview with him appeared inside the magazine, under the headline “Wayne Thiebaud’s ‘Double Scoop,’” a reference to the title of the painting on the cover. The interviewer concluded by asking: Were his representational paintings of the commonplace, such as ice cream and cake, “also telling stories?”

Thiebaud replied: “I’m very interested in my images being seen or read. I don’t see myself as an avant-gardist or an elitist. People and love of people is a great part of my life. I’m very interested in the human condition, and that means we have to correct how we live with one other.”

New regulations will require zero-emission lawn equipment

SCNA to offer Zoom workshop on conversion

By Kathy Les

The California Air Resources Board has approved new regulations requiring all leaf blowers, lawn mowers and other yard equipment to have zero emissions starting in 2024.

As a result, gas-powered lawn equipment will no longer be available for sale in less than two years.

Board chair Liane Randolph described the new regulations as “a significant step toward improving air quality in the state,” that “will definitely help us meet stringent federal air quality standards.” The regulations, which were

approved in December, “essentially eliminate exposure to harmful fumes for equipment operators and anyone nearby,” Randolph said.

To smooth the transition to electric lawn care for gardeners and homeowners who employ them, SCNA’s Clean & Quiet Yard Care Committee will host a free hour-long Zoom workshop at 6 p.m. Feb. 15. The workshop will include information about the health and safety benefits of electric vs. gas lawn care as well as upcoming financial assistance for replacing gas with electric equipment.

Gas lawn equipment is deceptively polluting. The cumulative smog-forming

emissions from gas yard equipment are now annually greater than that generated by all the light-duty passenger cars in California, according to state data. More than 15 million small gas engines exist in California, exceeding the number of cars on the road.

Running a gas mower for one hour is the smog equivalent of driving an automobile four hours. A gas leaf blower running for an hour generates the equivalent smog of a car driving 15 hours or 1,100 miles, about the distance from Sacramento to Denver.

The most common zero-emission alternative is electric blowers and mowers.

The SCNA workshop will be taught by Dan Mabe, nationally known electric yard care expert and founder of the American Green Zone Alliance. The workshop is for homeowners who hire lawn service, but those who care for their own yards are also welcome.

The workshop will feature best practices on how to keep your yard habitat healthy and offer reasonable expectations from electric lawn service.

To sign up for the workshop and receive the Zoom link, email Terri@sierra2.org.

Any questions in advance can be directed to kathy.les321@gmail.com.

POINT OF VIEW

Lack of transparency in city’s tree removal notification

By Dan Pskowski

When the city’s urban forest management plan was developed in 1993, there was broad support from residents to protect all trees and not just native oaks, California sycamore and Northern California black walnuts.

A Sacramento Tree Foundation “State of the Trees Report” in 2000 indicated that 75% of Sacramento’s estimated six million trees were under the management and control of private property owners.

A management plan recommended that tree ordinance revisions include protecting any tree that measured 31.8 inches in diameter and was in good condition. Permits were required to prune or remove a heritage tree. Removal permits were only issued if trees were structurally unsound due to cracks or extensive decay or in declining health with at least 50% of the canopy dead, or had Dutch elm disease or extensive mistletoe infestation.

The program worked well for many years until Urban Forestry shifted its focus in 2007 to getting the customer to success. Subsequently, trees could be removed if considered a nuisance. The 30-day notification period was reduced to 10 days.

Sacramento residents first took notice of this change when entire blocks of street trees were removed

for downtown projects. Less visible was the increase in residential removal permits issued from 10-12 a year to more than 75. Concerned citizens petitioned the city to provide better notification.

The notification process was improved when the revised tree ordinance was adopted by the City Council in 2016. Heritage trees were now called private protected trees. City and private protected trees would require a 15-day notification period. In addition to a sign on the tree, removals would be listed on the Urban Forestry website.

However, the information on the webpage did not include the tree species or diameter. This lack of transparency was brought to Urban Forestry’s attention when the webpage was released. However, the public was told the program would only allow six lines of text in addition to a photo.

After five years, the webpage still doesn’t list the tree’s size and species. Why? Listing the size and species would alert the public to all the large trees being removed. I was recently involved in a tree appeal for a coast redwood in East Sacramento. The tree measured 72 inches in diameter, making it one of the largest single-trunk redwoods in the city. In the same listing was another coast redwood approved for removal that measured 59 inches in diameter.

This past spring, the removal of a neighborhood

Neighbors need to know...

Residents are responsible for keeping the public sidewalk in front of their property pedestrian friendly. Even when roots from a city tree causes the displacement. Take action before someone trips and calls the city’s 311 Call Center.

— Dan Pskowski

private protected tree was raised at an SCNA board meeting. The sign was posted out front; from the street a large valley oak was visible in the backyard. The SCNA board considered filing a last-minute appeal, which would cost \$298, but a call to Urban Forestry revealed the oak being removed was not the large one in the backyard but a 13-inch diameter valley oak in the side yard.

This incident prompted the SCNA board to send a letter to Mayor Darrell Steinberg and the City Council in May requesting more transparency in the removal notification webpage. SCNA and the Elmhurst Neighborhood Association endorsed a letter that Trees 4 Sacramento sent Oct. 14 to the director of Public Works requesting transparency in the removal notification. It not only requested tree species and diameter but a system that would list the city arborist’s comments and any arborist reports on the tree. The Public Works director responded that the notification process is consistent with the direction of City Council, that the system has worked well and that no funding is available to convert the tree removal notification process to a different platform.

A simple solution to improve transparency would be to insert the species and diameter on the line with the number of trees, or revise the line that lists the date the removal sign was posted on the tree to list the species and diameter.

Isn’t it more important to know the size and species of the tree rather than the date the sign was put on the tree? This will be the question posed to the mayor and city council to improve transparency in the tree removal notification process.

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Donner Way resident Jeff Hunts dies at 59

By Gerre Buehler

Longtime Donner Way resident **Jeffery L. Hunts** died Dec. 1 at age 59 of brain cancer.

Born and raised in Cupertino, he graduated from UC Berkeley. After three years in New York, he moved to Sacramento and began work with the California Environmental Protection Agency, where he would remain for 27 years. He managed its electronic waste program before retiring in 2017 due to the progression of the brain cancer that was first diagnosed in 2008.

Hunts and his wife Karen moved to Donner Way in 1992 and raised

daughters Madeline and Eleanor there.

Hunts was active in neighborhood events. He wrote for *Viewpoint* and participated in SCNA's tree and traffic-calming committees.

"Jeff had contacted me about a tree article that he was submitting to the *Viewpoint*," recalled Dan Pskowski, a former SCNA board member and retired city arborist. "This began a long-term camaraderie based on trees."

Hunts helped organize the city's annual Arbor Day tree-planting celebration in William Curtis Park.

"Anytime there was a park tree-planting event you could always count on Jeff to help organize it," said Pskowski. "The

most recent park tree-planting event was in March 2013 when 18 valley oaks were planted as part of the mitigation for trees removed for the Crocker Village project. Jeff would always contact me when he saw a city tree with a problem that required maintenance." Some neighbors called Hunts "Mr. Tree Man."

Hunts had many interests. He enjoyed working in his garden, trying to find the best plant for that special spot. He commuted to his office at 10th and I streets by bicycle, generally wearing flip-flops and shorts, regardless of the weather. He also had passions for astronomy, playing ukulele, snorkeling in Maui and rooting for the Liverpool FC soccer team.

In addition to his wife and daughters, he is survived by his parents, James and Colleen Hunts and siblings Susan, Jim and Shannon.



Photo/Courtesy of Karen Uyeno

Jeff Hunts, right, in 1996 with neighbor Tim Denham, led tree planting days in William Land Park.

Classy Hippy Tea founder is true believer in his product

By Mindy Giles

For an entrepreneur with an ever-present twinkle in his eye and an effervescent positive spirit, the last two years may have had Classy Hippy Tea Co. founder **Leo Hickman** checking the mirror more than a few times a day.

A post-9/11 combat Air Force engineer and backpacking world traveler, Hickman is a true tea believer and certified tea sommelier. "I can travel the world with tea and it's nonconfrontational," he said. "Love and attention are very, very easily communicated when you give a bag of tea to someone. That's the beauty of it for me."

Hickman's core vision is built into his company name: T.E.A. stands for Travel + Events + Activism – just about everything these times of pandemic are not.

"COVID changed everything," he said. "All my plans, which were working, are now 'COVID permitting.'"

The latest iteration of his vision brings his health and nutrition consciousness to Oak Park, and from that, expands his community. In March 2021, a "Location Available" sign appeared in the window of the shuttered-due-to-



Photo/George Holden

Leo Hickman welcomes guests to his shop.

pandemic Broadway Coffee at 32nd Street and Broadway. "I rode by on my bike within hours of the sign going up and I called immediately," Hickman said.

Five months later, a cozy Classy Hippy Tea Co. re-emerged to the public.

Classy Hippy Tea Co. at Broadway Coffee began with a soft opening in

late August 2021. Hickman, ever intrepid, said, "I know teas. And we are quickly learning coffees. Tea people are different than coffee people." Lemon Ginger Tea Latte, a seasonal favorite, has become a hit with the regulars. It's just one of more than 100 loose-leaf teas and blends on hand.

The main food feature is the traditional fresh Afghanistan flatbread, stuffed with a variety of fresh vegetables and grains made by Bolani Flatbread Co. (www.bolani.co), a local company seen at farmers markets.

Spider Monkey Dessert Studios stocks the dessert bar.

Hickman's original Classy Hippy Tea Co., one block east, closed in the lockdown of March 2020. In the last three years, it had multi-tasked as his retail tea shop, a multi-room peaceful gathering space for like-minded nonprofits, a yoga and meditation center and a live music patio venue. It was part of an evolving Oak Park, with a Friday night potluck, gumbo, rice & beans, and peach pie.

With the lockdown, the original location evolved into a private warehouse for his urban hydroponic farm Herbal Allies, growing micro-greens for salads. Hickman and his team introduced Sacramento High School students to the urban indoor hydroponic farm and worked with them on a community garden at the high school.

In January, because of the Omicron variant, all involvement in school projects was put on hold. Hickman closed his warehouse and reduced staff.

Ever hopeful for the Oak Park community, Hickman always looks ahead. A beer and wine license is still in his vision, local jazz and funk shows still dance in his head.

"Depending on how things look in the future, we will return to those projects with the students," he said. "Keep an eye out for our event schedule as we want to reopen in the evening for fun experiences."

Classy Hippy Tea Co. at Broadway Coffee has hours that cater to the breakfast and lunch crowd – 7 a.m. to 1 p.m., seven days a week.

Visit classyhippyteaco.com.



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Bret Harte community is involved in selection of next principal



**LAUREN
GOTHARD
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SIN**

A search for a new principal at Bret Harte Elementary School has been going on since the school community received unexpected news in November that Principal James Tucker was leaving.

After more than five years as the school's principal, Tucker announced he had accepted a new principal position in the Folsom Cordova Unified School District, starting in January.

While the announcement surprised staff and families, Tucker departed the school on good terms. The results of his leadership remain evident, including improved academic evaluation and increased student attendance.



"In the last five years together as a community, we had accomplished a school-wide phonics program, social-emotional learning, the garden program and strengthening and growing our special education programs,"

Tucker said. "I am most proud of the increase in student and parent engagement."

"I am thankful for the active PTA and School Site Council. I am also thankful to the staff for having a growth mindset and all of the new implementation we did together."

Skip Landon, a retired principal whose career in education spans 47 years, is serving as interim principal.

The district has involved the Bret Harte community in the search for a permanent principal. In early December, teachers and families suggested qualities of an ideal candidate – someone who values relationships and the diverse experiences, backgrounds



Photo/Lindsey Sin

Bret Harte parent Kengo Akiyama of Sloat Way with daughters May, left, and Isla, wants to maintain social and academic progress with new principal.

and educational needs of Bret Harte students and families. The district also encouraged teachers and parents to serve on the interview panel.

"The most important theme that I took from the conversation was the desire to follow a holistic approach at our school: caring for the whole child, not just their educational development but also their emotional and mental wellbeing," said Bret Harte PTA President Adam Gothard. "It is important for us to foster growth in these areas, both individually meeting each student where they are and accounting for their unique needs, as well as, on a larger scale, growing together in these areas as a whole school community."

Bret Harte parent Kengo Akiyama made similar observations. "I think there's a broadly shared sense

that Bret Harte has made great strides in the last few years, and everyone – teachers, parents and community members – is eager to sustain the school's social and academic progress," he said.

Akiyama said the next principal should be someone who is highly communicative and who has a "commitment to inclusion and justice, especially in view of the long history of residential and school segregation that shaped and continues to shape the demographic makeup, access to resources and academic performance of schools like Bret Harte."

While the initial feedback meeting with the school community seemed productive, the Bret Harte PTA sent a letter to the district to express concerns with the hiring and selection process after candidate interviews in early December.

"I think the hiring process has led to some turmoil and frustration, which can be attributed to misalignment of expectations," Gothard said. "It seems the school district is following their standard guidelines and procedures; however, these were not clearly communicated from the beginning."

The PTA letter cited concerns with what seemed like a quick turnaround to gather community feedback and hold the first round of interviews, as well as a lack of representation from the Bret Harte community on the hiring panel.

Dr. Tiffany Smith-Simmons, the district's human resources director, said the first round of interviews was unsuccessful but the search would continue. District staff contacted additional parents and teachers to serve as panelists on the next round of interviews. District staff also discussed the hiring process and answered questions at the January PTA meeting.

If the next round of candidate selection and interviews is successful, the district board may approve hiring the next principal at a public meeting in February.

...

Kindergarten enrollment at neighborhood schools for the 2022-2023 school year was Jan. 11 to 25. Open enrollment is Feb. 2 to 15.



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