

# VIEWPOINT

A publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association since 1979

Vol. 43, No. 9

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May 2022

## SCOUTS' HONOR IN COMMUNITY SERVICE



Photo/Alison Steffensen

A group of 6- and 7-year-old girls from Girl Scout Troop 410 stand in front of Happy Tails Pet Sanctuary with their donation items from the proceeds of their cookie sales. First-time cookie sellers are, left to right, Evelyn, Hazel, Elin, Lenny, Reagan, Annabelle, June, Ava, Gwen, Daphne, Lily, Isla and Hilah. They delivered

\$300 of pet supplies, toys and food to Happy Tails, and were thrilled to meet and pet some of the cats there. Troop leaders are Cassie Pinnell of Curtis Way, Andrea Johnson of Fourth Avenue and Alison Steffensen of McKinley Boulevard. Troop members live in Curtis Park, Land Park and East Sacramento.

## Neighborhoods want all voices heard in update of city's 2040 General Plan

By Bruce Pierini and Erik Fay

SCNA and 19 other neighborhood associations have sent a letter to Mayor Darrell Steinberg and City Council objecting to what they consider the city's lack of responsiveness and very short deadlines for community input on complex issues.

SCNA board members have been meeting with representatives of the other associations over the last few months. The letter is a key result of that collaboration.

After several workshops, the associations agreed that a coalition from Natomas to Meadowview had to petition the city with concerns regarding the 2040 General Plan, which appears to be significantly different from the 2035 General Plan. The 2040 General Plan will be the blueprint for land use, commercial

corridor development, transportation, sustainability, equity and livability for the city.

The associations are asking for three things: 1) that the City Council give at least a 90-day public review period before deciding to adopt the plan; 2) that the massive plan be rolled out in manageable increments that allow for serious community input; and 3) that the city make a serious and sustained effort to solicit input from the neighborhood associations within the City Council districts.

Most neighborhood associations, like SCNA, are made up of volunteers who are not professional city planners or land-use attorneys, and, therefore, need sufficient time to read, analyze and respond to a series of massive documents in the 2040 General Plan.

The city plans to roll out the 2040 General Plan over the course of months, beginning in summer.

The letter requests more time – variously 90 and 30 days – on large sections of the 2040 General Plan. The plan will shape the city and its neighborhoods for a generation. Consequently, the associations want to ensure that neighborhood voices are heard.

To read the text of the letter from the neighborhood associations, see Page 3.

## Court order sought for gas station

Petrovich Development Co. has filed a petition for writ of mandate asking Sacramento Superior Court to order City Council to grant a conditional use permit for a gas station in Crocker Village.

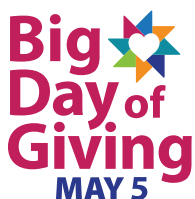
City Council has twice rejected developer Paul Petrovich's requests for such a permit. In 2015, the vote was 7-2. But a Superior Court judge overturned that decision and ordered a rehearing. At the rehearing in January, City Council voted 7-0 against issuing a permit.

The petition argues that because the city's planning staff recommended approval of the conditional use permit after finding that it met all general plan, zoning and planned unit development guidelines, City Council "abused its discretion and exceeded its jurisdiction" in voting to reject the application.

The petition identifies SCNA, former SCNA President Eric Johnson and current SCNA board member Andrea Rosen as "real parties in interest." Johnson and Rosen issued a statement: "Mr. Petrovich's ongoing failure to accept City Council's decision following a fair hearing of our appeal is apparently intended to harass and intimidate us, and have a chilling effect on public participation in local government."

City spokesman Tim Swanson said the city had received the petition "and is in the process of evaluating it and determining the appropriate next steps."

## Mark the Calendar for these Special Events



Please donate to SCNA/Sierra 2 Center at <https://www.bigdayofgiving.org/sierra2center>. Help us return strong.

**Curtis Park  
Neighborhood  
Yard Sale  
May 21**

To get on the Yard Sale map, register at [sierra2.org](http://sierra2.org). See details on Page 3.



10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, June 26  
in William Curtis Park, see Page 5.



Concerts begin at 6 p.m. on the last Sunday of June, July and August.

# New police chief wants to address needs of high-crime communities

By Kathy Les

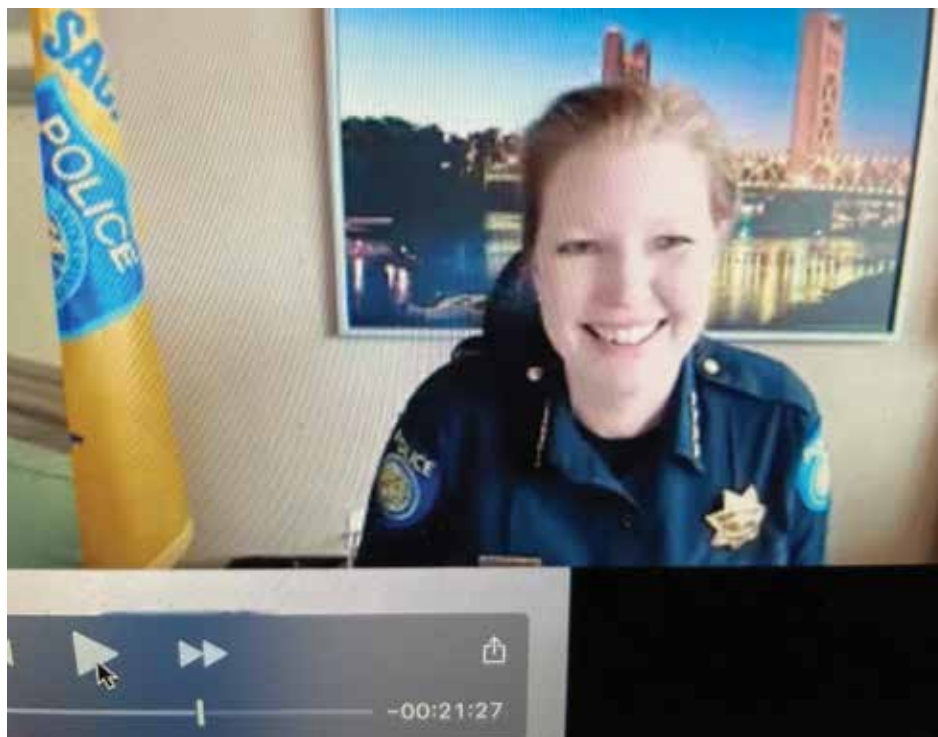
Police Chief Kathy Lester, just a month into her new post and merely days after downtown's worst mass shooting in Sacramento history, took time to meet with SCNA's Racial Justice Committee to talk about her plans and vision for the Sacramento Police Department.

After the city conducted a nationwide search for a new chief, Lester became Sacramento's first female police chief on March 18. This after her challenging start in life as a high school dropout, single mother and initial position with the Sacramento department as a dispatcher.

Lester joined the Army, graduated from Sacramento State and held many posts throughout her time with the Police Department, becoming known for her efforts to foster equity and diversity.

"I had a lot of support to get here," Lester said of her mentors and role models over her 27 years with the department. "You need to create pathways for people" to move up the ladder, she said. To that end, she strongly believes it's incumbent on the department to hire and train the best people from a wide range of backgrounds and to provide entry-level opportunities for young people.

"Up to 40% of our police cadets do not finish the academy," she said. Lester believes this is the result of admitting some who are not yet quite prepared for the rigor of the program.



Photo/Bruce Pierini

Police Chief Kathy Lester met with SCNA's Racial Justice Committee via Zoom.

She aims to change that by adapting the program to provide extra training for those otherwise qualified. In some cases, cadets need extra driving or firearms training. The extra month or two of training, she said, makes a big difference.

During the last recession, the city shaved its budget by laying off a host of young people just admitted to the police department, Lester said. Now there's a gap in represented ages that she wants to repair by returning to a practice of having many entry-level positions and attracting diverse candidates. "You develop the best culture by having the best people," she said. Lester says it takes time to build a strong, well-trained force; she likes that more women are applying for positions also.

After the downtown shooting, the Racial Justice Committee was eager to hear of Lester's plans for handling crime. Lester said the shooting requires a really complex investigation. A lot of social media is being analyzed, but

Lester credited her investigative team with pursuing more. "We understand the significance to our community and the impact on our image," she said of the shooting. She is trying to share as much information as possible, while enlisting the public's help uncovering more evidence.

"Most crime is done by small groups in small geographic areas," Lester said. She aims to focus on these areas of the city by sending in police to acquaint themselves with residents to seek their needs and concerns. She calls this approach "focused deterrence." The department is working with their federal partners to try to eliminate a one-size-fits-all approach to crime. In the past, a zero-tolerance approach resulted in widespread seizing of guns but it also created harm in vulnerable communities.

With Sacramento being relatively small compared to major U.S. cities, Lester believes it's likely more useful to invest time in high-crime neighborhoods, fostering relationships

with residents and learning, in her words, "Why do people resort to violence?" Lester wants to know why high-crime communities like the south area and North Sacramento "were once thriving and are now changed. I'm very open to talking about what city efforts failed them, which disparities should be rectified," she said.

The Sacramento Police Department has 769 officers, about 80 fewer than in previous years. Lester says their diversity statistics have not changed much in recent years. She has announced a "30 x 30" initiative to recruit a force that would be 30% female by 2030.

To achieve this, Lester acknowledges that some modifications will have to be made. She noted there are many women hired at the bottom but there are far fewer at the top. "Women get hired in their prime years but become mothers and then consider how they want to work; that influences their applying for promotions," she stated. Currently, only 15% of the force is female.

Lester is committed to having a police force that looks like the community it serves. "Women are possibly better at de-escalating some situations," she said.

Also in attendance was Capt. Dan Monk, who supervises an area that includes Curtis Park. Monk emphasized that the department will be treating shootings and crime with illegal firearms with a new strategy of more on-the-ground involvement in high-crime communities. He said the department will be taking a new multi-faceted, holistic approach, involving more proactive policing and discussions with residents in those neighborhoods.

"We want to be able to ask at-risk individuals, 'How do we get you out of this lifestyle?'" Monk said.

Both Monk and Lester acknowledged that general enforcement and accountability are still important to their approach. While they focus on the big crime picture, they won't lose sight of smaller infractions. The recent plague of package theft, for instance, has been met with a decoy strategy that seems to be helping deter further porch theft.

Lester and Monk emphasized their interest in transparency. The city police department website lists officer-involved shootings, education and training materials, the body-worn camera project and more. Visit <http://www.cityofsacramento.org/Police/Transparency> to see all categories of information.

A recording of the Zoom interview with Lester and Monk may be viewed at <https://sierra2.org/racial-justice/>.

## DA candidates forum May 9 in Curtis Hall

By Lily M. Harris

SCNA will host Sacramento County district attorney candidates Thien Ho and Alana Mathews at a forum, 6:30 p.m. May 9, at Curtis Hall in the Sierra 2 Center.

The League of Women Voters will moderate the forum. The candidates will have an opportunity to introduce themselves, with a question-and-answer session following their presentations.

The office of district attorney is among the positions up



Thien Ho



Alana Mathews

for election on June 7. The incumbent district attorney, Anne Marie Schubert, is running for state attorney general.

Ho and Mathews both have experience in the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office. Ho has been a deputy district attorney since 2004. He supervises the Justice and Community Relations Bureau. Mathews served as a deputy district attorney for eight years before helping to start the enforcement unit for the California Energy Commission. She now works for the Prosecutors Alliance of California, a coalition of prosecutors promoting statewide criminal justice reform.

The DA candidates forum will not be broadcast virtually. Limited outdoor seating will be available by advance reservation at <https://sierra2.org/event/daforum22/>. There is no charge for this event.



## Text of letter from neighborhood associations

Honorable Mayor Steinberg and Council Members:

We are a coalition of neighborhood associations throughout the city writing to ask for changes to the 2040 General Plan schedule and improvements in the public engagement process. These changes will help maximize the value of public input and better link representative government to decision-making, implementation, and accountability.

Specifically, we are asking that:

1. The new 2023 City Council be the deciding body for the 2040 General Plan and that there be at least a 90-day public comment period. Because over a third of Sacramento residents may be under new representation due to redistricting and elections of the City Council, it is important that the newly elected City Council be the one to make the decision about the 2040 General Plan. Given the significant changes from the 2035 General Plan and the complexities of the 2040 Plan and the EIR, it is critical to provide a longer public comment period that is at least 90 days.

2. There be a staged release of draft 2040 General Plan Elements (Land Use & Corridor Development, Transportation, Sustainability, Equity and Livability), City-commissioned studies and the Community Plans.

It is critical that the City Council and public have adequate time to read through and provide feedback on the various General Plan elements and the geographically-specific Community Plans. Therefore, these draft documents cannot be released all at once, rather they should be made available to the public in stages with at least 30 days between releases.

The results of the studies commissioned by the City to address concerns regarding “Missing-Middle” Housing placement, infrastructure, sustainability, equity, gentrification and parking should be provided to the public and Council prior to the release of the element addressing Land Use and Corridor Development.

There should be at least a 60-day public review period for each Community Plan.

3. The city improve the plan for public engagement and input into General Plan, its elements and the Community Plans. Public engagement to date has been inadequate, biased, inequitable and inaccessible to less advantaged areas.

Prior to the release of documents in #2

above, the city should have a Council-approved comprehensive plan to assure and maximize public input. At a minimum, this plan should include outreach to every neighborhood association. It should also incorporate town hall meetings in each district that include the City Council member, any candidates and neighborhood associations and organizations.

The purpose of this public engagement is to elicit the diversity of community views and suggestions by providing a forum to hear both representatives’ positions and residents’ concerns.

We ask that you respond to this message by April 25 with your commitment to support implementation of these requests. We are happy to answer any questions you have regarding this proposal.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure the process of planning our future is fair and equitable for all of Sacramento.

Sincerely,

- Valley View Acres Neighbors Working Together (District 1)
- Robla Parks Neighborhood Association (Districts 1 & 2)
- Del Paso Heights Community Association (District 2)
- Noralto Neighborhood Association (District 2)
- Woodlake Preservation (District 2)
- Natomas Community Association (District 3)
- East Sacramento Preservation (District 4)
- Midtown-East Sacramento Advocates (District 4)
- Mangan Park Neighborhood Association (District 5)
- Elmhurst Neighborhood Association (District 6)
- Land Park Community Association (District 7)
- Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association (District 7)
- Deerfield Mesa Grande Neighborhood Association (District 8)
- Meadowview Neighborhood Association (District 8)
- Save Sacramento Neighborhoods (City wide) (District numbers above are post-redistricting.)

## Curtis Park neighborhood yard sale May 21

By Judy Green Scheible

One person’s junk may be another’s treasure. You never know what you’ll find at a neighborhood yard sale.

An abundance of those choices will surface at Curtis Park’s annual neighborhood yard sale from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, May 21. Up to 100 neighbors are expected to fill their front yards and driveways with goods they no longer need. It’s a treasure hunter’s paradise.

Neighbors who want to get their sale site on the SCNA map need to register at <https://sierra2.org/event/yard-sale/>, which is on the Sierra2.org website. A few days before the sale, SCNA will publish the map in several ads in local media.

This annual event started more than 30 years ago on the Sierra 2 Green. There were close to 100 booths circling the yard. It was a great time to visit and a great time to clean out closets, attics, garages and basements.

Clever shoppers hunted bargains in children’s books, toys and bikes. Others went to the unusual, like old kitchen tools or maybe a hunter’s trophy.

## COVID infections decline again in 95818 ZIP code

By Mike Scheible

The roller coaster of COVID infections reached another low point in April in the 95818 ZIP code area.

However, the virus is still active, with about 15 confirmed cases weekly and many more milder, unconfirmed infections. Additionally, as the history of the last 16 months shows, there is no guarantee that a new surge will not soon emerge. Continued caution along with full vaccinations plus booster shots are still prudent to reduce personal risk and protect others.

Since *Viewpoint* started reporting local COVID levels, we’ve seen several ups and downs. A surge in December 2020 and January 2021 resulted in about 130 new infections per month. By July 2021, the monthly number of new infections had dropped to 15, but rapidly jumped to 170 by September as the delta variant broke out. This was followed by a decline to about 60 monthly cases in December 2021. The lull was short-lived as the omicron variant produced the highest spike yet – more than 800 new cases in January 2022. Thankfully, that has dipped to 60 cases in the most recent 30 days.

Curtis Park has about 5,000 residents. It shares the 95818 ZIP code with 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.

## Correction

Due to editing errors, the profile in the April issue of *Viewpoint* about Marc Grossman of East Curtis Drive incorrectly identified him as having been the campaign manager of Sacramento Mayor Joe Serna’s 1996 re-election campaign and as having worked as a lobbyist.

## Broadway Village proposal

The city has received an inquiry for a traffic study for a proposed development known as Broadway Village at 2110 Broadway, *The Sacramento Business Journal* has reported. The development reportedly would include more than 500 housing units, a grocery store and other retail.

## President's message

# Sierra 2 beginning to come alive again

Since March of 2020, COVID and its variants have been at the center of our lives. However, at long last, the pandemic appears to be nearing its end. The lifting of restrictions and mandates signals a return to something approaching normalcy.

This means we can look forward to a return of SCNA-sponsored events – both outdoors and at Sierra 2. Curtis Fest and three Music in the Park performances (June, July and August) are examples of events currently scheduled. And, unlike previous efforts, we fully expect them to take place. The feasibility of a modified Wine Tasting event in the fall, perhaps linked to a variation of our Porch Picnic theme, is also being explored.

The SCNA board has been extremely busy trying to keep on top of the many issues affecting us and other neighborhood organizations. These include issues such as the General Plan 2040, the seemingly intractable homeless situation, affordable housing, a proposal for a delivery-only cannabis dispensary on 21st and X streets (behind the Broadway post office) and the upcoming district attorney's race.

**BILL  
HOOVER**  
SCNA Board  
President



SCNA, in collaboration with the League of Women Voters, is sponsoring a forum for the candidates on May 9. For details, see Lily Harris' article on Page 2.

The Sierra 2 Center is beginning to come alive again as we address the pent up demand for use of its space.

According to Executive Director Terri Shettle, business is brisk. She looks forward to a positive cash flow in the not too distant future. If projections hold up, Sierra 2 should be in the black at the end of 2022 for the first time in over two years.

However, projections are just that – projections. As revenues increase, so will expenses. And, as I pointed out last month, even with donations and grants we are still operating at a deficit of \$3,000 per month and we need to repay our Reserve For Replacement fund.

The Big Day of Giving on May 5 provides the opportunity to give us a platform on which to build for the future.

Please consider a donation to support SCNA and Sierra 2 Center.

If you are not now an SCNA member, please consider joining. It is easy to do online at [Sierra2.org](http://Sierra2.org); the cost for an individual or family annual membership is nominal.

Keep thinking positive thoughts!



## VIEWPOINT

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### Please send your story ideas to:

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

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

### ADVERTISE in Viewpoint.

Call Fran Coletti: 916 452-3005 x210  
or [fran@sierra2.org](mailto:fran@sierra2.org)

## Notes from April 6 SCNA board meeting

# Fourth-quarter budget signs positive

Treasurer **John Bailey** presented an overview of the fourth-quarter budget for fiscal year 2021-22 that the SCNA board adopted unanimously.

Total income for the quarter is budgeted at \$247,148. Expenses total \$205,585, including \$18,000 in depreciation. The budgeted net proceeds are \$41,563, a significant swing from the budgeted loss of \$28,803 in the third quarter. This change is primarily due to increased revenue from operations with the easing of COVID restrictions and a lofty Big Day of Giving goal of \$50,000 in May.

**Henry Adkisson** from Councilmember **Rick Jennings'** office updated the board about

confusion over City Council redistricting maps. After legal review, councilmembers will represent the previous district boundaries until elections are held. The city attorney was reviewing the issue and was expected to make recommendations within three weeks.

**Kathy Les** outlined the structure and timeline for this year's Big Day of Giving on May 5. Board members are expected to each raise a minimum of \$1,000 from friends, neighbors or by a personal donation. SCNA President **Bill Hoover** suggested that a board member could meet the commitment by matching up to \$500 from other donors.

**Gerre Buehler** reported for Facilities Committee that due to added costs for staff and utilities, the committee would discuss tenant rate increases. She noted that the native plant garden is receiving positive comments from the neighborhood.

**Kathy Les** reported for Development Committee that sponsors for Music in the Park and Curtis Fest include Presenting Sponsor Steffan Brown (\$3,000); Councilmember Jennings (\$2,000); and SMUD (\$1,000). Additional sponsors are anticipated. Curtis Fest will operate on a smaller scale this year. No consumables will be sold from the booths, but food trucks will be available. Activities

for children will be designed to avoid touching when possible.

**Erik Fay** reported for Neighborhood Concerns Committee on an effort to consider fencing off part of the Sierra 2 Green area to serve as an expanded children's play area. He has received reports that some dogs are not well controlled and that owners often ignore the signage and do not follow the posted rules.

The district attorney candidates forum is scheduled for May 9 in partnership with the League of Women Voters. The forum will be in Curtis Hall with seating provided outside for those who prefer.

The next SCNA board meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. May 4 on Zoom.

– Mimi Budd, board secretary



# SCNA encourages neighbors to ride in 'May Is Bike Month'

By Sue Hida

SCNA is offering two ways to participate in May Is Bike Month.

Recognizing that not all people feel comfortable on bicycles, SCNA is hosting a one-hour bicycle-safety class taught by a city transportation planner, "Urban Bicycling and Scooting 101," at 6:30 p.m., Monday, June 27 in Curtis Hall at the Sierra 2 Center. The class is free and open to the public.

The class will include discussion of the value of bicycle lanes, locations where bike/pedestrian collisions have most frequently occurred, reducing risk, cyclist comfort levels and the positive effects of cycling. Other topics will include how to check your

equipment, helmet guidelines, rules of the road, hand signals, and tips for families and kids.

The second way to participate is to join the neighborhood's team of cyclists participating in "Love to Ride," a program sponsored by the Sacramento Area Council of Governments and the Sacramento Area Bicycle Advocates to encourage more people to ride bikes.

The focus of Love to Ride is on the number of trips, commuting to work, reducing the carbon footprint and motivating new riders. One point is earned per mile ridden, 10 points per day ridden,



50 points for encouraging an existing rider and 100 points for cajoling a new rider. The more points you have, the more chances you have to win badges, bike socks and other cool stuff.

See <https://www.lovetoride.net/sacregion>.

## SIERRA CURTIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

### ANNUAL EVENTS

SAVE THE DATES!



Music  
in the Park

#### ARTISAN FAIR UNDER THE TREES

June 26 • 10 am-4 pm • Free  
Wm. Curtis Park

**MUSIC:** Betty Masenko (opener, solo singer/acoustic guitar)  
The Pandemic Jazz Project (quartet with neighborhood musicians)

#### FAMILY FUN, PICNICS & MUSIC

June 26 (UnSupervised – R&B, funk)  
July 31 (Vivian Lee – Jazz Quartet)  
Aug. 28 (Classic rock band – On Air)

6-8 pm • Free

Last Sunday of the month  
in Wm. Curtis Park

## Oak Park Farmers Market will be on Sundays this year



By Judy Green Scheible

Change is in the air for the Oak Park Farmers Market. Its new management has switched the day to Sunday, at the same hours, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., and same location, McClatchy Park at 35th Street and Fifth Avenue.

Some of the vendors are the same and some are new.

The market will open for the season Sunday, May 1. It may take a few weeks for habits to change, but neighbors will want to see what's up.

Putting it together is Shandenia Piper, the new director who replaces longtime director Joany Titherington. Piper, who moved here from Houston, Texas in December, said that changing from Saturday to Sunday "was a better fit for some vendors." She said she's still working on firming up the vendors but she expects about 30 on opening day.

Among the new ones are Jazz's Saucy Sauce of Sacramento, micro greens by ETUM Organics in Elk Grove, Pittador Brews (coffee and tea) of Rio Linda and New Roots farm in West Sacramento.

At the New Roots farm stand, neighbors will meet the refugees who work the 5-acre farm in West Sacramento. The refugees are from many countries, including Nepal, Afghanistan, Syria and Burma. The enterprise is sponsored by the International Rescue Committee.

Jazz's Saucy Sauce, a business born during the pandemic, offers three sauces (original, spicy and smokey) that have multiple uses on food that needs a kick. The business was developed through the Alchemists Incubation Program.

The Oak Park Farmers Market is managed by NeighborWorks Sacramento, which is based near Oak Park at 2411 Alhambra Blvd.

## Graduates to appear in June edition

It's time to send portraits and information about this year's high school and college graduates to *Viewpoint*.

This can be done by email to [carolxo@comcast.net](mailto:carolxo@comcast.net) or by mail to *Viewpoint*, 2791 24th St., Sacramento, CA 95818.

For each graduate, please include name, parents' names, street in Curtis Park, graduate's school, plans for college, travel or employment or military service and phone number.

Please send photos in high-resolution jpeg format.

The deadline is May 10.

## At HOME in Curtis Park.

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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

## MAY ACTIVITIES

*Due to health concerns related to the spread of the coronavirus variants, events listed here may change. Questions, please contact groups directly.*

### FITNESS

#### NEW!

#### Gentle, Breath-Centered Yoga

Tuesdays and Thursdays,  
4:30-5:40 p.m., Room 9  
Saturdays, 8:30-9:40 a.m.  
(no class 2nd Sat), Studio 2  
mad@madyoga.org, 916 290-2693

#### WW Studio Workshop

Th/Fri/Sat, 8:30-10:00 a.m., Room 10  
800 374-9191, weightwatchers.com

### ADULT DANCE

#### Two Rivers Dance Center/ River City Taps

Mondays-Thursdays/Saturdays  
For times, contact Richard, richard@  
tworiversdancecenter.com

#### Dancing with Heidi

Monday, 7-8:30 p.m. Adult/Teen  
Basic Ballet, Studio 2  
Wednesday, 3-4:30 p.m. Adult/Teen  
Mixed Level Ballet, Studio 2  
Thursday, 6-7:30 p.m. Adult/Teen  
Intermed./Advanced Ballet, Studio 1  
Thursday, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Adult/Teen  
Pointe/Pre-Pointe, Studio 1  
dancingwithheidi@gmail.com  
Dancingwithheidi.com

### SPIRITUAL

#### Winners Chapel International

Sundays, 10 a.m.-noon, Room 10

### MUSIC

#### Beginning Taiko Drumming

3-week class  
No experience necessary.  
Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m. Studio 1; \$45

#### Intermediate Taiko Drumming

3-week class  
Previous taiko experience required.  
Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. Studio 1; \$75  
Register: kristyoshiro@gmail.com

### ART

#### Glass Acts Mosaics Collective

All skill levels welcome.  
Tuesdays, noon-3 p.m.,  
Room 11  
Drop-in fee is \$12; monthly fee  
is \$40 (includes supplies)  
karensarp51@gmail.com

### MARTIAL ARTS

#### Yi family Tai Chi/Qi Gong, Shaolin Martial Arts

Thursdays, 7-8 p.m.;  
Saturdays, 10-11 a.m.,  
Studio 2  
Byron, Lohan36@sbcglobal.net

#### Eagle Claw Kung Fu

Monday: 6-7 p.m.  
Wednesday: 6-7:15 p.m.  
Saturday: 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.  
Studio 2  
Sifu Mary Melliza 916 802-3144  
sacramentoeagleclaw.com

SIERRA 2 CENTER  
FOR THE ARTS & COMMUNITY

## Senior Center

### EVERYONE IS WELCOME

Activities are free, except where noted.

(Donations appreciated)

Room 12 • 916 455-6339. For more information: Sierra2.org.

### LEISURE

#### BOOK CLUB

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

**May 9** – “These Precious Days,”  
by Ann Patchett

#### NONFICTION BOOK CLUB

3rd Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon,  
Room 12  
3rd Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon,  
Room 12

**May 19** – “A Country Year: Living  
the Questions,” by Sue Hubbell

#### 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

### CARDS & GAMES

#### MAHJONG

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

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May 7.....Hard Luck Daddies (Rock 'n' roll, twisted country)

May 13.....Schwamigos (Folky funk)

May 14.....Ten Foot Tiger (Jam/funk – members of Nibblers/  
Mumbo Gumbo, Gold Souls)

May 15.....Bongo Furys (3 p.m.) (Zappa-esque jam progressive)

May 16.....Grateful Monday w/The Nippers

May 20.....Nickel Slots (Americana/country rock)

May 21.....Sugarbeast Band (Positive alt-rock)

May 27.....Jelly Bread (Funk rock from Reno)

May 28.....Brother G (Roots reggae from Montego Bay)

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**Vaccination card & mask required**

May 14.....Crying Time (from Oakland)

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– Mindy Giles



Photo/Miles Boisen  
Crying Time at The Side Door May 14

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**Friday, May 6, 6-8 p.m., Room 7**

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The menu includes a traditional tea service, served on vintage china with three-tiered stands with a bottom tier of savories and sandwiches, a middle tier of scones and breads, and a top tier of desserts,

as well as two kinds of limited-edition tea.

Bring proof of completed COVID vaccination. Vaccinated children ages 10 and up are welcome to attend.

We are also offering the same tea service in a takeout box, if you'd like to share your tea at home. Instructions for pickup will be emailed to you the week of the event.

**Sunday, May 8, 12:30-2 p.m.**

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## Redistricting won't interrupt neighborhood services

City Council is in the midst of discussions regarding the redistricting process. At the moment, it is in question when exactly the newly drawn Council districts will go into effect, which would also call into question exactly when I officially begin to represent Curtis Park. In response to this discussion, I wanted to devote this month's column to the topic and set the record straight.

We do not plan to let this technicality interrupt our new positive relationship with the people of Curtis Park. I have been in contact with Councilmember Jay Schenirer, and we will continue to work together to make sure your community's needs are met. Over the

last several months, I have been happy to welcome Curtis Park into my family, and you should not expect to see any interruption of services and support from my office.

These services and support also extend to events and sponsorships, and I am happy to share that we

**RICK  
JENNINGS**

**City  
Council  
Member  
District 7**



have a full set of events planned from May through September. They include family-friendly events throughout District 7 as well as our financial support for the Music in the Park series in collaboration with the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association. These events will go on regardless of redistricting logistics, and we can't wait to see you there!

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding redistricting (or any topic for that matter), please do not hesitate to contact my office at [rjennings@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:rjennings@cityofsacramento.org). As always, it is my immense privilege to be your councilmember, and have a great rest of your month!

## Giving thanks is appropriate all year long

Sacramento is facing unprecedented challenges as a city and as a community. As we recover from the pandemic, we still have daily reminders of our city's challenges with homelessness, gun violence and incivility in our relationships. The list goes on.

As the mayor, City Council and city staff continue to do everything possible to focus on these most significant challenges, we also need to be cognizant of the little things the city continues to do to make Sacramento prosper.

**JAY  
SCHENIRER**

**City  
Council  
Member  
District 5**



Every day, I am fortunate to be able to walk my dog around many of our beautiful parks, thankful for our Department of Youth, Parks, & Community Enrichment staff maintaining the grounds. I constantly

receive emails asking for assistance – this past weekend it was repairing the horseshoe pits at Mangan Park to be ready for a competition. Thanks to our staff for getting it done. I am thankful when I see city trucks in my neighborhoods doing minor (and major) repairs on our water and sewer systems.

A few weeks ago, I had a Curtis Park neighbor call me with a drain problem in her front yard. (I won't go into details.) City staff came out within hours that evening to effectuate repairs. There are many days when I get (very)

early morning texts from our fire and police folks letting me know of serious activities happening in the district. I am thankful knowing they are on the job 24/7.

So even though it is not Thanksgiving, I just want to say thank you and recognize all of our city staff for their continuing work through the past two years, keeping the city moving forward and doing their best to support us all. While we attack the big problems, it's just as important to stay on top of the little challenges and keep our city running.

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## Birds of Curtis Park

# Be kind to American crows – they hold grudges for years

By Dan Murphy

The most intelligent bird you are likely to see in the neighborhood is the American crow. Like primates, crows have exceptionally large forebrains, the domain of problem-solving, thought and flexible behavior.

Crows show intelligence in using tools. For example, crows modify wood pieces to create probes used to get food out of holes too deep or narrow for their bills. Crows remember human faces and hold grudges against humans connected to crow misfortune, sometimes for years thereafter. They attend to the death of another crow, gathering when a corpse is found. Crows also play, both as juveniles and adults.

Intelligence is not desired in a competitor, and crows are culled by humans as an agricultural pest. Nonetheless, American crows have increased in numbers and range as a result of post-Columbian modification of the landscape. Forest clearing helped, because crows need open landscapes, with

some trees for nesting. As opportunistic omnivores (a trait correlated with intelligence), they have exploited the many food sources, including garbage our land uses provide.

Crows are highly social, a characteristic correlated with intelligence. At night, crows roost in large communal groups, often at sites used for many years. Our local crows roost in the vicinity of City Hall. They can be seen commuting out to their foraging grounds in the morning and back to the roost in the evening. Crows often engage in cooperative breeding; children of the mating pair may assist them in subsequent years with feeding the nestlings and defending the nest.

Crows forage, usually on the ground, alone, in pairs, in families or in small to large flocks. They feed on a wide variety of invertebrates: amphibians, reptiles, small birds and mammals, birds' eggs, nestlings and fledglings. They also feed on grain crops, seeds and fruits, carrion and discarded human food.

They have a talent for mimicry. In



Photo/Dan Murphy

Crows can imitate other birds, cats, dogs and even the human voice.

addition to imitating other birds, they can imitate cats, dogs and the human voice. Their basic call is a caw sound, with variations for many purposes. Birders pay attention when the caws rise in number and volume, as it often indicates the crows are harassing an avian predator such as an owl or hawk.

Male and female crows have the same plumage. Males as a group run slightly larger than females. The blue to gray iris of young crows turns to brown when they reach adulthood. A young crow has plumage that is brownish and less glossy than an adult. The oldest crow reported in the wild was 14 years 7 months.

## Trees in Curtis Park

# Test soil before fertilizing sick trees

By Dan Pskowski

When homeowners have a shade or ornamental tree that appears unhealthy, some may automatically apply a fertilizer in hopes of it solving the problem. When I inspect trees with a health issue, such as dead branches, leaf drop or stunted growth, the owner will inquire about fertilizing the sick tree.

For some arborists, fertilizer is a standard practice of care for trees experiencing a health issue. Fertilizer is good for trees; it can't hurt to apply some.

However, I always recommend a soil test before the application of chemical fertilizers. Why? Fertilizers

could exacerbate the problem the tree is experiencing by promoting new leaf growth. If there is a root problem and the root system cannot maintain the existing foliage, how will it be able to supply this new flush of growth? Or, if the tree's health issues are caused by aphids, then the young, tender shoots that they prefer to feed on can cause their population to explode.

A soil test should be conducted before fertilizing a shade or ornamental tree. Sacramento is fortunate to have Sunland Analytical testing lab located in Rancho Cordova. This company offers an array of different tests from soil amendment analysis, water tests and soil

test packages for landscape gardening. Test samples can be mailed, or hand-delivered. Sunland's web page has all the information on the different tests and how to sample correctly to get accurate results.

If you recently purchased a home in Crocker Village, a soil test is recommended before you have your landscape installed. There was a significant amount of soil excavated and moved around this site due to the preconstruction cleanup of toxins. Some fill soil was also brought in. It is easier to correct soil problems before installing the trees, turf and plant materials. Amending the soil, especially if it is a heavy clay, will

improve drainage that is crucial for plant health and ensure that the landscape will grow and thrive.

Fruit trees will benefit from being on a regular fertilizer program. But you need to check because citrus has different requirements than peaches and nectarines. The University of California Cooperative Extension has information available online at [https://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The\\_Big\\_Picture/Fertilization/](https://homeorchard.ucanr.edu/The_Big_Picture/Fertilization/)

If you must fertilize your landscape, consider the organic products available where you purchase your gardening supplies. My experience has shown that you have fewer problems when you work in harmony with nature.

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# Highland Avenue resident stages Music Circus comeback

*The bright lights of Broadway shine again*

By Patti Roberts

After two years of darkness due to COVID lockdowns, lights are coming back on this summer for Broadway At Music Circus performances. Highland Avenue resident Scott Klier is right in the middle of pre-season preparation for the much-anticipated return of audiences.

"I'm excited to just have a season again," said Klier, Broadway Sacramento's producing artistic director and chief operating officer. He is grateful to continue the 70-year-old Sacramento summer theater tradition. "We're still defining what we'll have to do to keep our casts and guests safe, but you can feel the excitement in the air."

This season Music Circus will include six plays, beginning with "Kinky Boots" on June 14.

When asked how the theater world was impacted by the shutdowns, Klier said it was both the loss of jobs and the loss of audiences that struck him the most.

"It put our entire industry into a deep-freeze and forced thousands out of work," Klier said. "My job was thankfully spared, and I spent the better part of the last two years writing and rewriting dozens of restart plans."

Though he feels the pressure, Klier also knows the joy reopening will bring both to the theater community and theater patrons. He has already experienced the positive energy when Broadway On Tour shows reopened in the fall with "Hamilton."

"The audiences were incredibly enthusiastic," he said. "The old adage holds true: Absence has made our audience's hearts grow fonder." There have been four shows so far housed at the new SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center building, where Klier also lends a hand.

"I wear many hats for Broadway Sacramento, chief among them producing their summer season, Broadway At Music Circus," he said.

Unlike the Broadway On Tour shows that arrive at the Performing Arts Center with everything already in place, such as the casts, musical numbers and



Photo/Joan Cusick

Scott Klier likes that Curtis Park neighborhood has attributes similar to those he found in the theater community.

production elements, including sets, costumes and props, Klier has to start from scratch for Broadway At Music Circus. This involves selection of shows for the season, budgeting, auditioning, casting, rehearsing and hiring creative teams, including directors, conductors, musicians and choreographers.

"It's a seven-day-a-week, 12-plus-hour-a-day schedule, June through August. And I love almost every minute of it," Klier explained. "I love the fact that every single show has the potential to surprise and delight audiences. I get such satisfaction when I feel the joy from the audience, as well as bringing talented people together to make magic in this theater."

"My colleagues are an extraordinarily talented and generous group. Our success relies on every member of our company, and watching our shows come together through their efforts is indescribably satisfying."

Klier was bitten by the drama bug when he was a kid growing up in Sacramento.

He still remembers the moments he was moved by musicals – first seeing the movie "Sound of Music" when he was in first grade, and then when his grandfather took him to see "Hello, Dolly!" at Music Circus when he was 8 years old.

Klier got involved in theater at Jesuit High School, interned at Music Circus summers while getting his degree at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles, and then high-tailed it to the bright lights of Broadway in New York. He had a 10-year stint stage-managing on Broadway and then returned to his hometown in 2003 to serve as Broadway Sacramento's production manager.

When Klier was looking to buy a house six years ago, he was familiar with Curtis Park, since some of his colleagues and friends already lived here. He found that the Curtis Park neighborhood has many of the same attributes he found in the theater community.

"From the start, everyone was so welcoming," Klier said. "There is so much social interaction, so much acceptance. It met all the criteria I was looking for: houses with character and history; proximity to my work, restaurants and shopping; and like-minded, friendly neighbors. The neighborhood has delivered tenfold — my neighbors quickly became friends and many now feel like family."

"Broadway Sacramento, like Curtis Park, has a long and rich history in our town, and I feel privileged to call both of them home."

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## Barbara Cook, 81, is remembered as community 'pillar'

Neighbors across the Curtis Park neighborhood have expressed their sorrow and admiration for Barbara Cook, who died in April at age 81. Three of them offer their recollections:

**Martin Pierucci** – As a real estate broker who worked with Frank and Barb at Cook Realty for almost 20 years, I was so impressed with her intelligence and sense of humor. Friends and neighbors have used comments like “Royalty of Curtis Park,” “pillar of the community” and “true friend to SCNA.” She was “Barb” to friends and family. She knew Sacramento and our neighborhoods with the understanding of a longtime resident with family roots stretching back for generations.

My wife Kathryn and I knew her family for years before we came to know Barb as a friend and neighbor.

Her generosity of spirit was apparent when we first met her, and our friendship grew with our mutual appreciation of rare books and the opera.

To know Barb was also to appreciate her intelligence. “Whip smart” would be a term I would use. We benefited from her knowledge of first-edition books, which can be very arcane to say the least. We traveled to San Francisco for annual International Antiquarian Book Shows many times.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by children Kristin Faust, Trey Bonetti, Lindsay Filby and



Barbara Cook

Photo from Cook family

Stephanie Cook; brother David Hays; sister Kathy Hays; and several grandchildren.

We shall miss our dear friend. Our neighborhood will shine a little less with her passing.

**Craig McCulloch** – I met Barbara in the early 1970s, when we sold our first house on

Donner Way. She and her husband, Frank, helped us purchase our current home on 25th Street, and became our neighbors and friends across the street.

Long ago, neighbors on our street began two traditions of a barbecue on Labor Day weekend and a holiday party in December. We often met at the Cooks' home in December. Barbara was a gracious and generous host with

some of the best desserts from Freeport Bakery. She contributed much to making our neighborhood one of the best in Sacramento.

**Linda Haines** – We became friends when I helped her prepare her story about growing up a “free range kid” in Land Park during the 1950s for the My Story Project at Sierra 2.

Such a gracious, generous person! Just one example of her thoughtfulness is that after completing a major remodel on their house, she gave a box of See's candy to all the neighbors who had been affected by the construction.

Two years ago Barbara gave me an orchid, which is now blooming in my garden window. Barbara once told me she was surprised that my orchid bloomed again after it had died back, since she hadn't been able to get hers to do that. That was amazing to me, since she was such a master gardener.

I'm so grateful now to have the gift of her blooming flowers as a reminder of Barbara's friendship, grace and beautiful fighting spirit. I miss her.

## My Story creator Bob Ralston, 95

Bob Ralston, a longtime resident of Curtis Park, died April 17 at 95. He was an active participant of Sierra 2 Senior Center activities, especially the Life Writing class and the My Story Project that he founded.

He was born in Los Angeles in 1926. At the age of 10, he attended a lecture by Ernest Lawrence and learned of his invention of the cyclotron, the first “atom smasher.” After the lecture, the young boy decided to become a scientist, hoping to work for Lawrence some day.

After his discharge from the Navy in 1946, Ralston attended UC Berkeley, graduating with a degree in physics in 1950. He fulfilled his



Bob Ralston at 80

childhood dream, landing a job working for Lawrence as a staff physicist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. Ralston worked there for 30 years on nuclear safety, waste disposal and environmental studies.

He retired to Sacramento and lived in Curtis Park for 35 years.

Six months after retirement, he got bored and began a business in computer consulting.

He was a prolific writer. An autobiography, “God, Physics, and Me: A Physicist's Lifelong Search for God,” was published in 2012 by Outskirts Press.

Surviving are his children, Deborah and David; and grandchildren, Rachael and Rafael.



## Reflections of a lighthouse

“After the Rain,” a photo by Carol Mott-Binkley, Seventh Avenue, shows Point Cabrillo Light Station state historic park at sunset. It is among her works that will be on display June 7 to Aug. 7 in the PBS KVIE Gallery exhibition “Take Me With You.” Mott-Binkley's photos have been shown in galleries and fundraisers in Sacramento, Carmichael, Davis, Woodland and Roseville. The PBS KVIE Gallery, 2030 W. El Camino Ave., is open from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday.

Photo/Carol Mott-Binkley

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# Sixth-graders have many feelings about transition to middle school



**LAUREN  
GOTHARD  
and  
LINDSEY  
SIN**

As the end of the school year approaches, Bret Harte Elementary School's sixth-graders are feeling a range of emotions about moving on to middle school in the fall.

Some are anxious. Some are looking forward to the newness of it all – classes, friends and experiences. Most share how much they'll miss their friends and teachers at Bret Harte.

For a young person, the elementary-to-middle school transition is significant; one that's not lost on Bret Harte's sixth-graders "I am nervous to start middle school. It is a pretty big thing in life," said sixth-grader Angela.

Among the sixth-grade class, nearly all expressed competing feelings of nervousness and excitement about the upcoming school year. The opportunity to meet new friends was also a top reason they were looking forward to middle school. "I am looking forward to meeting people and learning new curriculum," said Julian.

Packed schedules of multiple classes and teachers, a new school, and the onset of puberty represent a new level of independence and self-discovery in the journey from childhood to adulthood. Preparing students to be successful as they venture off from the small community of Bret Harte starts on day one, but the final leg of the long journey is the responsibility of the sixth-grade teacher, Michael Rule.

New to Bret Harte this year, Rule recognizes that while it's his job to help prepare students academically for the seventh grade, it's not the only measure of success in the world beyond elementary school.



Photo/Lindsey Sin

Bret Harte sixth graders and teacher Michael Rule gather together in front of the school garden.

"I want them to have critical thinking skills to make their own choices and to be responsible people who care about the world around them," Rule said. "I work with my students to help them see a place for themselves in the community, to help them feel empowered with their choices and not feel limited to what is chosen for them."

In the classroom, Rule emphasizes organizational skills and the importance of students taking responsibility for their own education. "I have always encouraged my sixth-graders to look for different opportunities and to select the school that will best fit their needs," Rule said.

Most students will transfer to Cal Middle School, but other choices within the district include the School of Engineering & Sciences in the Pocket neighborhood and Sutter Middle School in East Sacramento.

While some sixth-graders have attended Bret Harte for their entire elementary education, even newer students quickly formed relationships with their peers and teachers. "I will miss the people the most. All of them have been here for me, from the students to the afterschool program staff," said student Chloe, who came to Bret Harte in third grade. Kevin, who

has attended Bret Harte since fourth grade, feels the same. "I am going to miss the teachers," he said. "I have grown a pretty good relationship with every single teacher."

Despite some apprehension for this future journey, most know what it takes to be prepared for seventh grade. Several students shared that confidence and the right mindset were the most important things they'd need to prepare for next year. Other students were more practical in their approach. "Honestly, I'm ready for seventh grade. I will have to get more supplies, but other than that, I'm already prepared," said Isaiah.

Rule seems to agree. "This class has worked beyond my own expectations this school year to catch up from time spent in distance learning," he said. "They are just a fantastic group of young people and I can't wait to hear back from them in the coming years about all the great experiences and opportunities they have had."

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Bret Harte will participate in the Curtis Park Neighborhood Yard Sale from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday May 21. All profits from the yard sale will go to the school's music program.

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