

# VIEWPOINT

A publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association since 1979

Vol. 44, No. 4

2791 - 24th Street, Sacramento, CA 95818 • 916 452-3005 • [www.sierra2.org/viewpoint-community-newspaper/](http://www.sierra2.org/viewpoint-community-newspaper/)

November 2022

## A Curtis Park trailblazer dies

*Editorial cartoonist Dennis Renault played a key role in launching Sierra 2*

By Judy Green Scheible

Our world has lost one of its brightest stars. On Oct. 19 Dennis Renault died in a single car accident at Fremont Peak State Park. His wife, Marty, watched as his van failed to make a turn and tumbled into a ravine. Marty said Dennis may have suffered a heart attack or the car's brakes may have failed because "he was always a cautious driver."

Curtis Park neighbors knew Renault as the friendly, fun powerhouse behind starting the Sierra School Neighborhood Association, now the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association, in 1979. He also launched the *Viewpoint* newspaper.

Outside of the neighborhood, Renault was known for his funny yet biting editorial cartoons. He was the political cartoonist for McClatchy Newspapers from 1971 to 1998.

Even though Renault left Curtis Park more than two decades ago to return to his hometown region of Monterey, his imprint on the neighborhood remains indelible. In the mid-1970s when rumors flew around that Sierra School would be demolished for a parking lot, neighbors were alarmed.

Renault saw the deteriorating building's potential as a community center. He was one of the leaders who convinced the city and the school district to let the neighbors take over the school. Some of these longtime neighbors were happy to talk about Renault's influence.

Among them is **Judy Schroeter**, who was the center's volunteer project coordinator from 1980 to 1983. Talking through tears from her home in Portland, Ore., Schroeter said, "Dennis was a treasured friend to many, his insight and humor and talent a valued touchstone. Our hearts are breaking."

Carpentry work at the Sierra 2 Center and bicycling drew **John Brush** of Third Avenue to Renault. Brush said, "Dennis had the strength of character like nobody else. You could always count on him to have the

best judgment. We talked a lot about cycling. Dennis was a very down to earth guy."

In 1984, **Mark Helmar** of Rochon Way was president of the neighborhood association. He fondly recalls Renault's many talents and passionate energy in working on the creation of Sierra 2. "Dennis was a champion of saving Sierra School, even getting his hands dirty knocking out walls to make the theater's projection and sound booth.

"His artwork promoted SCNA membership drives and fundraising activities like 'Nighttime in the Railyard.' He was inspirational in making Curtis Park the community we all enjoy today."

For five years during the 1980s, **Carol Conti** of Florence Place worked with Renault when she was executive director of the Sierra 2 Center. "I thought he was a pillar of the neighborhood. He brought everyone together through the newspaper, the *Viewpoint*. At that time, we were mostly rehabbing the school. The neighbors were amazing. It was awesome how many people stepped up. And that was because of Dennis."

From the first edition of the *Viewpoint* in 1979, **Carol Blackman** of 26th Street has held the paper together with her graphic and organizational talents. Her friendship with Renault is deep and rich. In her words, "Dennis was a visionary guy who mobilized our neighborhood to save Sierra School from demolition in 1978. He was my mentor.

"Always a man with a cause, he would drop fliers under our doormat (about) meetings we must attend, fundraising events to organize and so on. I will miss his dry wit and sensitive spirit. Even though he moved away, he stayed connected to the neighbors and *Viewpoint*."

Another key player in the neighborhood's early projects was **Genevieve Shiroma** of Portola Way. She remembers Renault as a key player in her two decades of research and advocacy to clean up toxic waste in the railyard.



In suspenders, Dennis and, and wife Marty, with hatchet, get ready to launch a pumpkin with their pumpkin-tossing invention, "El Toro," at the annual Pumpkin Toss, Sierra 2 Green, 1984.



Dennis and Marty Renault at Mount Lassen in 2017



Self portrait:  
"The Power of the Pen"

"Dennis helped in the cleanup campaign and going up against Union Pacific," Shiroma said. "He was a very involved neighbor.... He stood up for the right stuff."

Shiroma added, "Dennis drew a cartoon for the T-shirt we made for the concert Nighttime in the Railyard," which raised money for the campaign. "Dennis autographed mine."

Twenty-seventh Street neighbor **Martin Pierucci** lived across the street from Renault's home on Rochon Way. He recalls Renault's generosity. "Dennis was generous in sharing his original artwork. He loved my father's politics and gave him numerous inscribed cartoons.... I still have about 15 paperback collections of Playboy cartoons, many of them by Dennis."

Neighbor activist **Andrea Rosen**

of Portola Way recalled her years of working with Renault on issues and *Viewpoint*.

"Dennis was a talented artist and a tireless and effective neighborhood activist. He recruited me in the effort to get Western Pacific to stop their nightly noise bombs we endured when they dropped huge trailers onto flat cars. Living near the railyard, I was especially affected. Dennis will be missed."

Marty Renault told *Viewpoint* that Dennis did not want a memorial service. She said that people can remember him by donating to the Big Sur Land Trust, 509 Hartnell St., Monterey, CA 93940.

Readers can find out more about Dennis Renault by watching this My Story video. Here's the link: <https://vimeo.com/762986313/17d27a3b46>



## SCNA's Racial Justice Committee meeting set for Nov. 9

Graciela Cabrillo-Krings, chair of the Sacramento Community Police Review Commission, will join the Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee at its meeting at 10 a.m. Nov. 9. The commission provides community participation in review and recommendation of police department policies, practices and procedures.

The chair will update the committee on the status of the commission's work. Neighbors interested in attending should contact [mimibudd@comcast.net](mailto:mimibudd@comcast.net) to add your name to the Zoom invitation list.

## Angel Tree will be set up Nov. 21 for you to choose your angel

By Stacy Gray, Sierra 2 Booking Specialist

This is the seventh year that Sierra 2 Center and Curtis Park neighbors have participated in the Angel Tree Program sponsored by The Salvation Army. Neighbors can pick out Angel Tree tag(s) from the tree starting Nov. 21.

The Angel Tree will be decorated in the hallway across from the Garden Room. Be sure to

**Deadline for returning gifts to Sierra 2 office is Dec. 14.**

SIGN OUT on the log sheet so that office staff can keep track of our Angels. One hundred tags will be hung on the tree. The goal is to have every "angel" receive a gift upon delivery to The Salvation Army. Please drop off unwrapped Angel Tree gifts at the main office at the Sierra 2 Center by Dec. 14. Office hours are 8 a.m.- 4:30 p.m. Monday-Thursday and Friday 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m.

If you have any questions, please contact Stacy Gray at [stacy@sierra2.org](mailto:stacy@sierra2.org) or 916 452-3005 x200. Stacy will be tracking the distribution of tags and receipt of gifts.



Photo/Joan Cusick

In 2019 Dale Rodenborn of Third Avenue helps sons Case, 8, and Evan, 6, select gift tags from the Angel Tree at the Sierra 2 Center. Both boys chose tags for boys who asked for trucks, games and sports balls from the Salvation Army program.

## Trees in Curtis Park

## Fall is the optimal time to plant trees

By Dan Pskowski

"Fall is for planting" is a term espoused by landscapers, arborists and the plant nursery industry. It's the optimal time for trees because it allows time for root growth, which is critical for a healthy tree. It also helps the young tree survive summer's scorching days. Even though deciduous trees drop their foliage and appear in a dormant state, root growth is continual all winter long since the soil does not freeze here.

Sacramento is fortunate to have a climate that offers a palette of trees to fit every landscape situation. Planning and tree selection will take more time than to dig the hole and plant the tree. Tree selection and placement are crucial considerations. You do not want to plant a tree only to have an arborist recommend removal 15 years later because of poor health or lack of adequate space for root and crown development.

The first question to ask is what function will this tree serve? Is it for shade, privacy for screening, fall color or beautiful flowers. Not sure what type of tree to plant? Walk around the neighborhood to discover

which tree species appeal to you and how a particular tree will fit into your landscape. You will also have a better idea of which tree types are adaptable to the soils in our neighborhood.

Next, how much above ground and below ground space is available? Look up: if you have high-voltage wires, marked by a sign just below the wires, select a tree that will mature at 35 feet or less. You need to call 811, the local one-call center, to help locate an underground utility. This free service locates the underground gas, water, sewer and telecommunications lines and is recommended before doing any digging in your yard. A tree should be planted at least six feet away from underground utilities and drainpipes.

Answering these questions will help you choose the "right tree for the right place." In choosing the right tree, consider drought-tolerant trees, such as our native valley oak or interior live oak. Other drought-tolerant species include Chinese pistache, cork oak, Canary Island pine, western redbud, Marina strawberry tree and crape myrtle. Yet be aware that these species and lush turf do not go together, which

is why some of the cork oaks along Crocker Drive are not doing well. If you already have a large canopy tree in your yard, consider planting an understory tree like the Japanese maple, dogwood or saucer magnolia. The flowers, fall color and screening effect add a nice accent to the landscape.

For more information about trees that do well in Sacramento, check out the City of Sacramento's street tree list. Also, the Sacramento Tree Foundation's 80 shade tree list. Plus, there is excellent information on how to plant and care for young trees. SMUD customers qualify for free shade trees.

If you have a city park strip in front of your home that needs a tree, contact the City of Sacramento call center. Let's get planting.

### Resources:

Sacramento Tree Foundation: [sactree.org](http://sactree.org)

City of Sacramento:

[www.cityofsacramento.org/street-tree-list](http://www.cityofsacramento.org/street-tree-list)

City of Sacramento call center:

call 311 or email: [311@cityofsacramento](mailto:311@cityofsacramento)

Link for underground utility locate:

<https://call811.com/>

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# ADULT BALLET

## SATURDAY MORNINGS

### BALLET/BASIC ■ BALLET 1

for information, please contact:  
[Richard@TwoRiversDanceCenter.com](mailto:Richard@TwoRiversDanceCenter.com)  
location: Sierra 2 Center

**two rivers dance center**  
HOME OF RIVER CITY TAPS

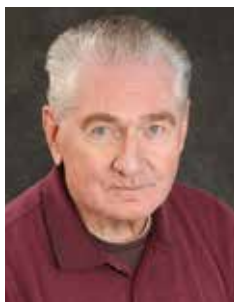
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Apple trees and plenty of room for the kids to play and adults to enjoy the beauty and peace of the mountain.

## BILL HOOVER

SCNA Board  
President



SCNA's Annual Membership Meeting is just around the corner on Dec. 7 and, with it, board elections for two-year terms beginning Jan. 1, 2023 to Dec. 31, 2023.

The way to keep a vibrant board is with a few new faces each year, so if you would like to help keep our neighborhood strong and relevant, join us for a term or two. There is no retirement plan, but tenure was never the idea from the start. Think of it as giving back to the place you have chosen for your home. Give Executive

## President's message

# Board election set for Dec. 7; confusion over unleashed dogs at Sierra Green continues

Director Terri Shettle a call at Sierra 2 at 916 452-3005. She can provide basic information and put you in contact with a current board member, if you wish. You will not regret it.

Looping back to my October column, "Sierra 2 Green and Dogs," reader feedback suggests that some misinformation continues over the park's status and its authorized use. If you have not read the column, I encourage you to do so. It was the result of an inquiry by the Neighborhood Concerns Committee into ongoing problems regarding unleashed dogs in the park. The inquiry focused on

the history and status of the park, its purported permitted use as a "dog training area" and the agency responsible for its maintenance and operation, including permit issuance. The results of the inquiry have been enlightening.

Despite what some folks might think, the fact is that the park is not now, nor has it ever been, designated as a dog park. Additionally, the city has no record of any permit being issued to or renewed annually by Dogxillary for a dog training area or for any other unleashed activity in the park. The park's future use is currently

under study by the city.

However, unpermitted use of the park by unleashed dogs continues, raising serious liability issues for the city and dog owners. Until this issue is resolved, the city should make clear what is acceptable use of the park. Until this matter is resolved, a prudent approach would be for the city to remove any signs that conflict with existing leash laws and post highly visible signs that state the correct law. Onsite counseling and education by rangers could also be effective.

Safety should be the operative word, followed closely by civility.

## Notes from Oct. 5 SCNA board meeting

# Emphasis ahead is to negotiate a new lease with city

President **Bill Hoover** reported that the election of board members will be held at the annual membership meeting on Dec. 7. There are a total of eight vacancies: five for two-year terms; three for one-year terms from the current two-year terms. Neighbors interested in serving are asked to contact a board member.

**Miles Thorne**, who is interested in joining the board, was introduced at the meeting. Thorne works at the medical center and has a mechanical engineering background. He and his family participate in many Sierra 2 programs.

Hoover announced that **Dennis Cusick**, the executive editor, and **Carol Blackman**, the managing editor of *Viewpoint*, will resign at the end of the year. He asked board members to contact Executive Committee members with names of persons who might be interested in the positions.

Executive Director **Terri Shettle** reported that paperwork is being finalized for the transfer of the lease from Sacramento Braille Transcribers (SBT) to Society for the Blind. Society for the Blind will build on the work of SBT with expanded staff and resources. She also noted that the Senior Center is expanding programming since reopening.

**John Bailey**, treasurer, reported activity for the year-end financial statement including: total revenue \$825,897; total expenses \$744,580;

net earnings \$23,350. (net earnings, excluding depreciation expense, investment income (loss) and loan forgiveness \$38,792). Income from Sierra 2 was \$560,000, which is triple the amount from one year ago.

The summary balance sheet for June 30, 2022, reported assets of \$773,606; a fund balance of \$223,136; donor restricted of \$2,486; board designated of \$362,480 (mainly Reserve for Replacements and the Senior Center) and an available fund balance of \$38,480. Bailey noted that this is the first time in years we have been in positive territory.

A concern going forward is our obligation to care for major building components (now \$345,000 Reserve for Replacements) compared to five years anticipated replacement costs of \$556,000 with only 62% funded. Ideally, we would be at 100%. John noted that this discrepancy emphasizes the importance of negotiating a new lease in which the city will assume greater responsibility for replacement costs.

**Gerre Buehler**, chair of Facilities Committee, noted that new booking software is scheduled for installation in mid-November. It will include 3-5 years of booking information, and archived files can be accessed, though not immediately. The new system will afford us much better and faster tools and resources for operational planning and reporting.

**Shannon Motley**, chair of the Gather at the Long Table fundraiser, reported that close to 100 tickets have been sold to date. She encouraged board members to donate bottles of wine for the wine pull event. She also asked for volunteers.

**Erik Fay**, chair of Neighborhood Concerns Committee, and **John Mathews** met with Kevin Khasigian, a principle in HK3 Development that is constructing a mixed-use building at the corner of 24th Street and Castro Way, planning a project scheduled for 26th Street and Second Avenue sometime in 2023, and opening a Naked Coffee at the old Bud & Sons Appliances near Fourth Avenue and Franklin Boulevard.

Fay and Mathews also met with Brian Fathy, a partner in Sutter Capitol Group, which has recently purchased the LDS Church Property and another 27th Street property that they may develop or sell.

Other neighborhood development projects include a 1920s single-story home at 2625 27th St. (between Broadway and Second Avenue) that was purchased by a developer from Nevada who plans to tear the home down and build four units and an ADU. Also, the Crocker Village developer has asked the city to change the "flex zone" area near Crocker Drive from retail to residential.

The city has pushed back revisions to the general plan until January 2023. Accordingly, the second town hall

meeting on this subject that SCNA is participating in has been rescheduled for Feb. 15, 2023.

Mathews and Fay continue to report on the ongoing challenges and concerns raised to NCC and the city regarding unleashed dogs on the Sierra 2 Green. Fay provided an extensive history of the Green's use since 1980.

Fay, Mathews, Shettle and Shannon Brown from the city's parks office, and three members of the dog owners' group met in August at the Sierra 2 Green. The city's position is that the Sierra 2 Green has never been a city dog park and cannot qualify as one due to its size, proximity to the children's playground, and lack of safety due to the open fencing around the playgrounds.

SCNA has no control over the Green that belongs to the city. NCC will act as a neutral facilitator to assist the parties to resolve the matter, i.e., the dog owners' group, the Sacramento Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment, and Councilmember Rick Jennings' staff.

**Mimi Budd**, co-chair of the Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice, reported that Graciela Cabrillo-Krings, chair of the Sacramento Community Police Review Commission, will join the committee at its meeting at 10 a.m. on Nov. 9. She will update the committee on the status of the commission's work.

The next board meeting will be at 6:30 p.m. on Nov. 2 on Zoom.

— Mimi Budd, board secretary



# Something's lost, but something's gained

*Constant inevitable change shows neighborhood strength in the North Oak Park community*

By Anne Da Vigo

North Oak Park is a neighborhood on the move. New businesses are thriving along Broadway. Vintage homes are being renovated. The \$1.1 billion Aggie Square development project adjacent to its eastern boundary broke ground in February.

But whether the changes are positive for this historic Sacramento enclave depends on one's perspective.

North Oak Park is bordered by Highways 50 and 99, Fifth Avenue and Stockton Boulevard. The North Oak Park population is 4,230, compared with 5,908 for Curtis Park, according to the website niche.com.

Two prestigious universities are part of North Oak Park's landscape: University of the Pacific's Sacramento campus, which includes McGeorge School of Law and parts of the School of Health Sciences and education and business programs, along Fifth Avenue in the southwest corner of the neighborhood; and UC Davis' Sacramento campus, straddling Stockton Boulevard at the eastern edge of the neighborhood.

## Old working-class suburb

Oak Park was subdivided in the 1880s, but it wasn't until the early 1900s that farmlands gradually gave way and the area evolved into a working-class neighborhood.

Blacks lived in Oak Park as early as 1917. Several factors decades later led to the area's emergence as the city's foremost Black neighborhood.

One catalyst was Sacramento's 1950s-era urban renewal, which forced Black residents out of the West End. Many resettled in Oak Park, where property deeds were free of racial covenants. Another factor was Black migration from the South; and a third, the influx of Black military personnel, who swelled the city's minority population.

But the neighborhood quickly fell on hard times. Homes at the western edge of the neighborhood were torn down for construction of the South Sacramento Freeway (Highway 99), which opened in late 1961. The freeway, and subsequent construction of U.S. Highway 50 to the north, isolated Oak Park from more affluent parts of the city. Joblessness, drug use and crime flourished.

## Turnaround takes decades

While local churches and service organizations such as Sacramento Food Bank and Family Services had been working for years to help people in need, NBA basketball star and future mayor Kevin Johnson was one of the catalysts of North Oak Park's turnaround.

In 1989, while playing for the Phoenix Suns, Johnson founded St. Hope Academy, a nonprofit educational organization "committed to revitalizing



Barbara Range, owner of Brickhouse Gallery & Art Complex at 36th Street and Broadway has concerns for the need of affordable housing in North Oak Park.

Photo/Judy Green Scheible

Oak Park through high-quality public education and economic development," according to its website. Over the years, the organization acquired, individually or in partnership, the Guild Theater, Underground Books, Old Soul coffee shop, Fixins Soul Kitchen and World Class Faders barbershop in the 40 Acres cluster of ornate brick buildings at 35th Street and Broadway.

In 2003, when Sacramento Unified School District announced it was closing Sacramento High School, the city's oldest public high school and a North Oak Park fixture since 1924, St. Hope stepped in, reopening the school as Sacramento Charter High School. St. Hope also operates an elementary school and a middle school.

The transformation of North Oak Park hasn't been quick or easy.

"When I came here in 2010, we still had the elements of drugs and prostitution in the community," said Barbara Range, owner of Brickhouse Gallery & Art Complex at 36th Street and Broadway. "People told me, 'It isn't half as bad as it used to be.'"

Changes did happen, however slowly. Range opened her gallery in a former machine shop with red brick walls, high windows, garden courtyard and space for artists' studios.

The gallery features exhibitions by Black artists and is a hub for meetings and for art organizations from throughout the city.

## New business on Broadway

The most visible change in North Oak Park to date is the explosion of new businesses along Broadway.

The Broadway Triangle, architect Ron Vrillakas' multi-use retail and residential development between 34th and 35th streets, sits across the street from 40 Acres. Years in development, the first set of homes and store locations at the Triangle was completed in 2014. The three Triangle parcels include residences, retail and lofts.

They are part of a colorful, eclectic mix of locally owned restaurants, art galleries, boutiques,

entertainment venues, bakery, nursery, fitness salon, and brewery, among others in the immediate area.

To get an idea where people spend time and dollars, we asked Range, City Councilmember Jay Schenirer, and Oak Park Neighborhood Association board member Adrian Rehn for their favorites.

Range recommended 1Up Retro Clothing and Her World boutique. She's also a fan of "We Are Sacramento," Oak Park Brewing Co.'s pilsner beer.

Schenirer is partial to Broadway Coffee and Old Soul. For dine-in, he likes La Venadita's Mexican cuisine.

Rehn also likes Oak Park Brewing Co., pointing out that brewer Rodg Little is a long-time resident of Oak Park.

## Promises of Aggie Square

Aggie Square, a partnership of UC Davis with the City of Sacramento and Wexford Science & Technology, promises benefits worth many millions of dollars that could assist North Oak Park.

A city press release said the project will create "a state-of-the-art hub for research, innovation and education," and employ up to 5,000 people in "higher wage jobs."

"I've worked on this project for years," said Schenirer, the councilmember who represents Oak Park and the sliver of Curtis Park east of Franklin Boulevard. "It's complicated bringing people together."

If all goes according to plan, Aggie Square could produce \$50 million in an affordable housing fund for the Stockton Boulevard corridor; training and prioritizing local residents for jobs (20% commitment for local hire); and \$10 million toward preventing displacement of residents impacted by gentrification.

However, Range is skeptical. "Aggie Square isn't necessarily going to be a representation of the total community," she said. "We'll see how much of the housing they're talking about will be affordable. How many Black and brown people will have those jobs?"

Please see Oak Park, Page 5



## To Viewpoint readers

### SCNA seeks two Viewpoint editors

After 43 years, *Viewpoint* Managing and Production Editor Carol Blackman is stepping down. While hers are hard shoes to fill, the SCNA Board is optimistic that someone in our community is willing to help carry on the fine tradition of *Viewpoint*. Along with Blackman, we are also losing primary Editor Dennis Cusick, who has served the last five years. Blackman's position is paid, while Cusick is a volunteer.

*Viewpoint* managing/ production editor oversees the monthly production of *Viewpoint*, including: work with volunteer writers to make story assignments; creating a story board for editorial layout and ad placement; page design and copy fitting; copy editing; interface with advertisers; overseeing final proofing; and pre-press and upload to printer. Professional graphics and computer design experience are essential (fluency in Adobe InDesign, Photoshop, Illustrator and Acrobat), preferably with journalistic emphasis. Hours and compensation to be determined.

*Viewpoint's* primary editor is historically a current or retired professional journalist who serves on a volunteer basis. The editor also works with the volunteer writers to generate story ideas, edit all content and oversees monthly layout of the newspaper. He or she proofs all stories for the month to determine accuracy, tone and objective writing content to conform with AP and *Viewpoint* style and principles.

In both cases, preference will be given to Curtis Park residents who will be expected to have a knowledge of neighborhood issues and, in some cases, citywide issues as they relate to Curtis Park. Both editors work closely with a staff of volunteer writers and SCNA Board members participating on the planning of each issue.

*Viewpoint* is a hard copy publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association with a long tradition of balanced journalism and enthusiasm for Curtis Park events, people and issues. The neighborhood newspaper is produced 10 months of the year (January and August excluded) and delivered by an extensive volunteer team to the doorsteps of 2,500 households each month. It is also uploaded electronically on the Sierra2.org website.

If interested in learning more, contact SCNA Executive Director Terri Shettle at [terri@sierra2.org](mailto:terri@sierra2.org) or SCNA President Bill Hoover at [bhooverjr@gmail.com](mailto:bhooverjr@gmail.com).

## Oak Park: Growth of business brings energy to Broadway

*Continued from Page 4*

### Gentrification concerns

Gentrification, the influx of affluent residents into a poorer area, is a daily reality for residents of North Oak Park.

During the tsunami of foreclosures resulting from the Great Recession starting in 2008, homes in Oak Park sold for a median price of \$69,000. One local real estate professional estimated 66% of sales in that period were "distressed sales," in which the owners were in serious financial difficulties.

In the recent hot real estate market, rents have risen and purchase prices have zoomed. A mid-October online listing by Trulia showed 17 homes for sale in North Oak Park, the majority in the \$400,000 to \$500,000 range. Rental prices on apartments.com ranged from \$1,200 to \$1,900.

Skyrocketing housing prices may be one reason the Black population of Oak Park has dropped significantly. A Capital Public Radio review of the most recent census data showed that since 2010, the number of Black residents in Oak Park has dropped 24%.

"People are getting priced out," said Rehn, the OPNA board member. "They're moving to Meadowview, North Highlands and Stockton."

### Food bank departing

Even with the surge of activity in recent years, North Oak Park continues to face challenges. The Sacramento Food Bank announced in July it will close its Oak Park facility at the end of the year and consolidate services in North Sacramento.

The organization had relied on volunteer community partners such as the Shiloh Baptist Church for food distribution, while providing clothing, adult education, parenting classes and immigrant services at the Third Avenue location.

The food bank's departure is a loss for low-income Oak Park residents, said Kevin Carter, who has relied on the food bank when times have been hard. "Folks that live in Oak Park are going to be left out of what could be possible for them to have in Oak Park, not just the food, but the other resources," Carter said in an interview with KXTV-10.

Schenirer, a former general manager of the Sacramento Food Bank, said food distribution is not going to change in Oak Park. Immigrant services are online, so these services will continue also.

One thing is for certain about North Oak Park – it remains a neighborhood of change. While one website gives North Oak Park a C- for violence and property crime, another touts the Broadway Triangle as "an epicenter of trendy cafes and boutiques."

Georgia West, the manager of Underground Books known as "Mother Rose," said in an interview



Photo/Judy Green Scheible

A favorite place to spend time with friends and their families is Oak Park Brewing Co. Rodg Little, co-owner/brewer and a long-time resident of Oak Park, visits with a regular patron, Adrian Rehn, board member of the Oak Park Neighborhood Association.

**Schenirer, a former general manager of the Sacramento Food Bank, said food distribution is not going to change in Oak Park. Immigrant services are online, so these services will continue also.**

with public TV station KVIE that she thinks change is good for the community. The mother of Kevin Johnson, she grew up in Oak Park and graduated from Sacramento High School, as did her son.


"But," she cautioned, "we do need to make sure our community is something African Americans can call their own, have a voice in, and be proud of."



Photo/Judy Green Scheible

Georgia West, known as Mother Rose, owner of Underground Books, a bookstore/arts and culture center, believes that change is good in Oak Park.





**SIERRA 2 CENTER  
SIERRA CURTIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION**

## NOVEMBER ACTIVITIES

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

### ADULT DANCE

Two Rivers Dance Center/  
River City Taps  
Mondays–Thursdays/Saturdays  
For times, 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  
Wednesday 6-7:30 p.m. Adult/Teen  
Ballet From the Beginning, 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

### ART

Glass Acts Mosaics Collective  
All skill levels welcome.  
Tuesdays, noon-3 p.m. Room 11  
glassactmosaics.org

### 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

### MARTIAL ARTS

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

### Eagle Claw Kung Fu

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

### OTHER

Puppy kindergarten and social class  
Puppies ages 8-12 weeks  
Mondays, 5:15-6 p.m., Room 10  
www.midtownmutts.com  
916 600-3259

### FITNESS

Zumba with Pakko  
Sundays, 10-11 a.m., Studio 3  
pakko.zumba@yahoo.com

### Gentle, Breath-Centered Yoga

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#### NONFICTION BOOK CLUB

3rd Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon  
Room 12  
**Nov. 17** – “Caste: The Origins of Our  
Discontents,” by Isabel Wilkerson

#### LIFE HISTORY WRITING

Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.  
Room 12

#### OPEN ART STUDIO

Fridays, noon-3 p.m. Room 11

#### CARDS & GAMES

PINOCHLE  
Fridays, noon-3 p.m. Room 12

#### MAHJONG

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

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#### EDUCATION

##### MY STORY PROJECT

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##### GENTLE YOGA

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**Thursdays...**Weekly Acoustic Open Mic Night- 7 p.m.

**Nov. 12...**Sol Peligro-Acoustic! Grand release of the Sol Peligro/Two Rivers Cider Collaboration. 3-9 p.m.

— Mindy Giles

## Sierra 2 Center THEATER

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Nov. 4, 7-8 p.m.

Nov. 5, 2-3 p.m. & 7-8 p.m.

\$10 General admission

Musical-mayhem-productions.

[ticketleap.com](http://ticketleap.com)

Featuring Musical Mayhem by Productions Elementary Homeschool Series performers, this jungle is jumpin' with a jazzy beat! Based on the novel by Rudyard Kipling, this Disney KIDS version is adapted from the animated film and features colorful characters and favorite songs from the movie.

### INTO THE WOODS JR.

Nov. 11, 7-8:30 p.m.

Nov. 12, 2-3 p.m. & 7-8:30 p.m.

\$12 General admission

Musical-mayhem-productions.

[ticketleap.com](http://ticketleap.com)

Presented by Productions Teen Homeschool Performers, Grades 7-12. Be careful what you wish for, as this cockeyed fairytale comes to life in this adaptation of the groundbreaking, Tony Award-winning musical. Into the Woods JR. features Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, Jack (and his beanstalk) and the Witch in this lyrically rich retelling of classic Brothers Grimm fables.

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Friday, Nov. 11

6:30-8:30 p.m. • Room 7

\$35 per person (includes materials)

Learn to

carve your own stamp and print it on greeting cards, paper, or fabric. Choose from holiday designs or bring your own design (4x5 inches). With Heather Hogan's guidance, students will learn to prepare art to transfer to the block, cut basic shapes, ink a plate, stamp test prints and make final prints on paper. You will take home the stamps you made to be used again and again. You can try out and select from soft-cut or linoleum blocks. All skill levels appreciated. Good for kids as young as 10 with good fine motor skills.

Bring your favorite drink (wine and beer are fine, no cocktails please), a glass for sipping, a snack. You will create your own one-of-a-kind holiday greeting cards.



### ABSTRACT INTUITIVE PAINTING CLASS

Saturday, Nov. 12

10 a.m.-noon • Room 7

Fee: \$25 for the class

with \$25 optional art kit (paint & brushes)

With Cara Gregor's guidance, you will

experience self-expression as you explore, play and put feelings on paper, creating art with layers

of paint and colors. No drawing or prior painting experience is required.

You'll be painting in an abstract style, adding patterns, textures and drips and dabs... whatever feels right to you. An 8"x10" canvas will be supplied. Buy one of our paint kits or bring your own acrylic or oil paints and brushes.



### HARVEST HIGH TEA

Sunday, Nov. 20

12:30-2:30 p.m. • Garden Room

\$45 per person • \$49 limited to-go kits

Fall weather and tea go hand and hand. This afternoon Harvest High Tea is the perfect treat for yourself, family and friends to enjoy together.

Join The Novel Tea and The Learnery for a traditional three-tier afternoon tea as we celebrate the flavors of the harvest season. Enjoy a first course of delicious savory tea sandwiches, a second course of scones and breads served with clotted cream and jam and, finally, a third course of scrumptious assorted desserts. Two kinds of limited-edition teas will accompany the meal.



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## POINT OF VIEW

## We all have 'power of the fork'

By Bronwyn Schweigerdt

If you're anything like me, you may feel overwhelmed and in despair when you learn about the climate crisis. It's easy to feel hopeless and impotent in the wake of this dire emergency.

While we hear a lot about renewable energy and fuel efficiency, very little is said about the power of the fork – the power each one of us has to combat climate change three times a day.

A recent study published in the online journal *Nature Food* found that up to 61% of greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced when populations of meat-centric countries like the United States switch to more plant-based diets. Such a pivot would also preserve an estimated 76% of farmland, including rain forests, according to researchers at Oxford University.

As a nutritionist, when I speak of the myriad benefits of a mostly plant-based diet, the first question I'm asked is "Where do you get your protein?" The answer is legumes, such as beans, lentils, nuts and seeds.

Legumes are not only high in protein but the greatest source of fiber, a macronutrient sorely lacking in the Standard American Diet. High-fiber foods are essential for cultivating a healthy microbiome, or gut, which prevents leaky gut syndrome and inflammation. Inflammation is the culprit behind heart disease and stroke, Type II diabetes, cancer, gastrointestinal disorders and auto-immune disease.

By consuming a high-fiber diet (30 grams or more of fiber per day), we are literally feeding the beneficial microbes in our gut that are necessary to prevent inflammation, as well as regulate our

metabolism and appetite, causing weight loss.

Plant-based protein is much more beneficial than animal-based protein, such as meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products. Animal-derived protein is correlated with increased risk for cancers of all types. Animal protein feeds the detrimental microbes in our gut, which then produce a metabolite notorious for producing inflammation. Protein from plant-based foods, such as nuts and beans, is associated with a lower risk of all cancers.

Legumes also contain antioxidants and phytonutrients, including folate and vitamin C, that fight cancer and chronic disease. Protein foods from animal sources have zero fiber, nearly no antioxidants, no phytonutrients, no folate and no vitamin C, but contain high levels of several known carcinogens.

Animal-protein also contains high levels of environmental toxins such as pesticide and antibiotic residues, PCBs,

mercury, dioxin and lead.

Currently, 80% of antibiotic use in the United States is to make livestock grow bigger and faster. Antibiotic residue stores in animal flesh and milk. We consume it in our food routinely, which wipes out the beneficial microbes in our gut, causing dysbiosis, further contributing to inflammation and obesity.

It's easy to incorporate more beans and lentils into our diet. We can add them to soups, stews, salads, chili, pasta dishes and casseroles. I love to make hummus and falafel from garbanzo beans, or pressure-cook a pot of black beans for burritos or nachos.

A number of local restaurants offer plant-based menus exclusively or partially.

*Bronwyn Schweigerdt is a nutritionist who has written two books on healthy eating and weight loss. She leads seminars on nutrition for state agencies and counsels a diverse group of clients. She lives in Curtis Park.*

## In memory of Louis 'Lou' Kraft: He created an artistic masterpiece of his home inspired by Antoni Gaudi

By Lily M. Harris

In late September, my next-door neighbor Louis "Lou" Kraft's house went on the market. A few days later, I noticed a news truck outside my window and contacted another neighbor, Janet, the listing agent, to let her know. She told me that Lou's house had attracted national attention, with reporters from the *Sacramento Bee*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, local television stations and even the *New York Post* reaching out to learn more about the home. As I write this article, the Redfin posting has been viewed over 321,000 times.

Lou's house is an artistic masterpiece, in some ways inspired by the Spanish artist and architect Antoni Gaudi and crafted by Lou himself for decades. More importantly than any artistic influences, though, Lou's house is the emanation of a man of great intelligence, creativity and empathy whom we lost too soon to an

unexpected death from natural causes in April.

Lou was born in Oil City, Pa. in 1963. He graduated with honors from Davis High School in 1981, then with honors from UC Davis in 1986, double majoring in biochemistry and German. He then earned his M.D. from Ohio State University and completed his residency in psychiatry at UC Davis Medical School in 1995 where he spent a year as chief resident. A board-certified psychiatrist, Lou applied his intelligence and compassion to help those in crisis – and, undoubtedly, a challenging and emotionally-taxing job. Lou's home was his sanctuary, where he could be the true Renaissance man he was. He was a pianist who composed music; an artist and sculptor; a poet and cartoonist; and an avid collector of a variety of things. He was a loving son and uncle, not to mention a great neighbor.

When my family and I moved to

Curtis Park with our 1-year-old Roxana in 2019, Lou was the first person who welcomed us. He was the ambassador of Coleman Way and the Curtis Park neighborhood. We would see him daily, sweeping leaves from his sidewalk or repainting his windows, always in the same unassuming uniform – a plain white T-shirt, khaki cargo shorts, crew socks and a particular pair of 1980s-style white Reeboks that his mom would send him every year. Lou would regale us with stories about neighbors who had come long before us. He would keep us abreast of community activities, filling us in on the history of the Crocker Village expansion and the activities at Sierra 2. It was Lou who took me to my first SCNA community meeting in December of 2019, which inspired me to run for a board seat the following year.

When I was pregnant with my second child, I would often find small bags of Cheryl's cookies at the front

door in the morning, which Lou knew were my favorite. Lou would also leave beautifully packaged gifts and goodies at our doorstep for Roxana. He would put up Christmas decorations that faced our house instead of the street so Roxana could enjoy them. Every year, he would make and deliver his special eggnog to the entire block.

On Oct. 1, there was an open house at Lou's home, which brought so much attention that parking on our street and those surrounding was almost impossible. Traffic was gnarled. Hundreds of people came to see Lou's home: colorful tile and plaster work throughout the interior, rooms painted floor to ceiling as seascapes and skies. What struck me most, though, when I toured Lou's house with Roxana that day, was a wall filled with Lou's handwritten notes of names and important dates dating back years. It was there that Lou had written "Roxana 4/22," my daughter's birthday.



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## POINTS OF VIEW

### City will decide future use of Sierra 2 Green

By Dave Knox

Is it a dog park? Is it a soccer field? Is it a multi-use facility that permits dog training and exercise? Is it a space for dog owners and others to meet their neighbors and socialize when there was little opportunity to meet in person with other humans during a pandemic? Who is responsible for the Sierra 2 Green? Who uses it and who wants to use it? What is the Dogxillary?

These questions from Curtis Park residents have surfaced along with complaints. For clarification, because the park is owned by the city, it comes under the jurisdiction of Sacramento City Youth, Parks, and Community Enrichment Department. Currently, it is designated for multi-use, dog training and exercise being one of the approved uses, with posted guidelines and hours to be observed. Confusion came from the idea that SCNA or the Sierra 2 Center had the authority for its care and maintenance.

There is interest in the field being used for soccer again, as it was before COVID when dog use and soccer co-existed. Lately, especially since the COVID pandemic, dozens of dog owners and their pups have been visiting the field regularly. Many go daily and the hours before dark will often see 40 or more dog/owner pairs. The owners are largely from Curtis Park, but also from Oak Park, Midtown, Land Park, Hollywood Park and other parts of the city.

The Dogxillary is a Curtis Park group formed in 2001 that signed an agreement with the city in 2001. Later, in 2013 Dogxillary registered with the city as a club for use of the Sierra 2 Green for dog training and exercise. The Dogxillary now has over 300 registered dog owners. Representatives from the Dogxillary and the city met Sept. 13 and are working to arrange another meeting to address



Photo/Christian Muller

Dog owners take their dogs to Sierra 2 Green for dog training and exercise during posted hours.

complaints regarding compliance with the posted guidelines and any other concerns. A recent request for information to the city parks department drew this reply: "In response to recent inquiries from some members of the community, the city plans to further discuss the various park use interests and find an equitable solution for the neighborhood."

A recent post on NextDoor claimed, "FINALLY" the city was going to shut down the space to dogs. This post drew a flood of responses, most of which expressed support for the dogs or questioned the accuracy of the post. In fact, the post was inaccurate. There has been no indication that the city is going to ban dogs from the Sierra 2 Green.

The consensus among dog owners is that it would be a shame to lose the Sierra 2 Green as a space for dogs to be off leash. In interviews with several people at the Sierra 2 Green, dog owners uniformly stressed the sense of community they feel and the importance of being able to bring their dogs there.

Many dog owners have said they meet people and make new friends while their dogs do the same. Colleen of Land Park comes twice a day with mini-Australian shepherd, Jo, to exercise and build community. "We love it here," she says.

Cory of Curtis Park and his labradoodle, Arno, have made good friends whom they now have over for barbecues.

Amanda and her golden Lab, Shadow, of Land Park have met neighbors she didn't know before she came to the Sierra 2 Green.

Among the many seniors who bring their dogs to the field are Rhonda and Trisha, who both live in Curtis Park. Trisha's dog Bubby is the fifth in line that she's brought to the park. She stresses the companionship and security with her dog – and the need filled by the Sierra 2 Green since bad knees make her unable to go on walks.

Rhonda calls the park a "haven for people as well as dogs" and a "mood lifter" that is essential for mental well-being, especially for disabled people who come to relax while their dogs are exercised. Rhonda's, Roscoe and Valentino, are Pomeranian/poodle and Chihuahua/Shih Tzu mixes respectively. Rhonda also believes that the dog owners do a good job of monitoring their dogs' behavior and cleaning up after them. And, they welcome newcomers. She also notes that some people bring their children to the park to be introduced to dogs.

Steve and Linda of the Dogxillary board say that their group wants the Sierra 2 Green to continue to be a multi-use facility that could include soccer and other activities as well as a dog training and exercise site. The Dogxillary board will work with the city for this result.

### Affordable housing in the 'Flex Zone' will improve Curtis Park

By Kathleen Ave

Recently my 18-year-old daughter, preparing for her first election, waved her voter handbook at me and asked, "Where are solutions to housing and climate?" I thought about her question when I learned that the new proposal for remaining open space in Crocker Village includes no affordable housing.

When approved in 2010, the project included a "flex zone" to be defined based on future conditions. Since then, awareness of climate change has grown with every catastrophic fire, record heat wave and devastating flood event experienced here or elsewhere. Economic inequality

has deepened, with repeated failures of past mental health and housing policies on full display on our streets. In 2020, SCNA's Racial Justice Committee highlighted the impact of redlining and restrictive covenants on Curtis Park, which remains one of the least racially diverse neighborhoods in the city. The future has arrived, and its urgent call could not be clearer. We can address injustice, provide more climate-adapted and equitable access, and improve our community's overall resilience by using the remaining 2.5 acres of the flex zone for affordable housing.

This will benefit current residents by saving the people who provide us with food and support from soul-draining, dangerous and costly commutes. By sustaining service

workers who will be the lifeblood of a carbon-free economy. By expanding valuable connections with Sac City College. By enforcing rules of fairness and reducing racist decision-making in tenancy. And because economically diverse communities better endure and more quickly rebound after catastrophic events, expected more frequently in our future.

I talk with my daughter about the climate crisis and mass homelessness, which are only inevitable if we repeatedly concede to "business as usual." Imagination and responsive leadership can deliver the solutions she and her peers are requesting. To express your support for new affordable housing in the Crocker Village flex zone, please write to the mayor and City Council and join me at the hearing Nov. 15.



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## City seeks artists to enhance Del Rio Trail public art project

Happy November! I'd like to use my space this month to discuss the Del Rio Trail project. As the chair of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments, it is my pleasure to contribute to a great number of public projects, but I am especially proud of our effort to adopt a regional trails network plan. (<http://www.readysettrails.com/>)

We are blessed in our city and neighborhoods to have existing and upcoming trails that help us enjoy all that our neighborhoods have to offer. In our City Council district there are two trails moving forward to completion,

the Sacramento River Parkway and the Del Rio Trail. In this column, I'll discuss the Del Rio Trail project.

The Del Rio Trail is a 4.8-mile multi-use path that runs through the Land Park, South Land Park, Freeport Manor, Z'Berg, Pocket, and Meadowview neighborhoods. It allows people to access William Land Park, the Sacramento Zoo, schools, stores, restaurants, retail centers, jobs and other community parks without using a car. It also connects to the Sacramento River Parkway at Bill Conlin Youth Sports Complex. We believe that this project will bring

**RICK JENNINGS**

**City Council Member District 7**



the community together to enjoy this useful and beautiful neighborhood amenity.

Thanks to a state grant, the city can devote \$2.5 million to add public art to the Del Rio Trail. The city is now seeking interested artists to enhance the Del Rio Trail. There are two phases to this project: First, the city will hire several artists as soon as possible to work on several smaller projects. Second, the

focus will be larger, permanent structures for the trail. Phase 1 is open only to Sacramento County residents, while Phase 2 is open to artists nationally.

Any artists interested in one or both phases of the project may get more information and apply by Nov. 21 at [sacmetroarts.submittable.com/submit](http://sacmetroarts.submittable.com/submit). Please share this announcement with anyone who may be interested.

If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the Del Rio Trail, the public art project, or need any support or service from me or my staff, 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. Have a great rest of your month!

## Memories of 12 years as city councilmember for District 5

This column is my 120th *Viewpoint* column and, sadly, my last as your city councilmember. There are many things I could write about my 12 years representing Curtis Park and District 5 on the City Council. Much appreciation goes to Dennis and Carol and all those who have edited my words and made sure I turned everything in

on time. Also, thanks to the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association and Terri Shettle for all that they do.

I have many memories from the last 12 years: the 600 gallons of Gunther's Ice Cream (approximately 12,000 cones) scooped at 30 or so Music in the Park events; the many movie nights, home tours and wine

**JAY SCHENIRER**

**City Council Member District 5**



tastings that I sponsored; 17 Heritage trees saved; a single tree replacement on Portola Way and the bike lane on Fifth Avenue that took some work, but we made happen.

Making sure the senior affordable housing was funded and built in Crocker Village was a heavy lift, but I am proud that it is successful. And, of course, dealing with development issues in the neighborhood took a great deal of time and effort.

There are many other times where my office or I personally assisted, both

in the neighborhood, the district and the city, most of which ended on a positive note. I am particularly proud of the work I have done supporting young people in our city.

All of that being said, this column is really about saying thank you. Whether you voted for me or not, or agreed with me all the time, I want to thank you for the opportunity you gave me to represent you on the City Council. It has truly been an honor. We have the good fortune to live in a wonderful and caring neighborhood in a city that, despite some significant challenges, is a leader in so many ways. While I don't yet know what form it will take, my desire is to continue to work to make Sacramento a great place to live.

And I couldn't have accomplished what I have done without you as neighbors to support me.

Thank you. Jay

### *Viewpoint* wants your story ideas

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

Please send your ideas to [denniscusick52@gmail.com](mailto:denniscusick52@gmail.com) with *Viewpoint* in the subject field.

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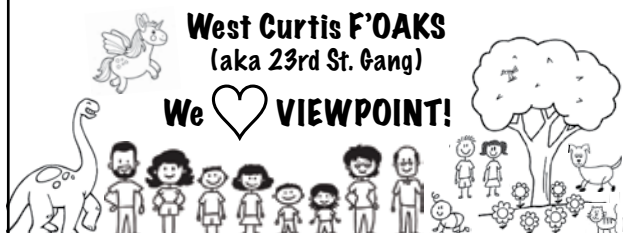
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## Pumpkin volleyball

Jayne and John Mangels of 22nd Street spent months planning this ghosts and witches Halloween tableau in front of their home.

Photo/Anne Da Vigo



Luka is followed by his mom, Christine Picinich, for a stroll to Sierra 2 Green.

Photo/Carol Blackman

## Good cheer on a Sunday morning

Walking along Fourth Avenue to the park at Sierra 2 Green, Christine Picinich and her son, Luka, almost 2, ran into a long-time Curtis Park resident in his garden. They've become friends, trading homegrown tomatoes for fresh baked cake. Christine said, "We're livin' the Curtis Park dream." The neighbor asked, "So, you enjoy living here?" Christine quickly replied, "We're lifers!"



The Oct. 7 bike parade brought cheers and whistles.

Photo/Lynne Taylor

## BikeParty group delights neighbors with monthly parade

By Lynne Taylor

On Friday Oct. 7, the Curtis Park neighborhood was treated to the spectacle of a lighted bicycle parade. The ride was organized courtesy of BikeParty Sacramento. BikeParty rides are held monthly on the first Friday evening. Meet-up time is usually 7 p.m. Location and routes change from month to month. Every month has a new theme. Riders dress up in costumes appropriate to the monthly theme and

bikes are decorated in bright lights. The event is open to the public and encourages the community to participate in the ride. The ride features a meet-up with dance music and a couple of party/rest stops along the way. For more information or to join BikeParty Sacramento: Facebook: BikeParty Sacramento Community, BikeParty Sacramento, Instagram: Sacramentobikeparty and website: <https://bikepartysacramento.com/>

## Don't leave home without it

By Kristin Faust

Sojourner Hunt proudly swears her Curtis Park shirt at O'Hare Airport in Chicago on her way to St. Andrews University in Scotland, where she is earning her master's degree in museums and cultural heritage. Sojourner was born on Coleman Way but moved away when she was 3 years old. She is the granddaughter of Barbara Cook (deceased) and Frank Cook. She plans to wear her Curtis Park (and her Gunther's T-shirt!) proudly at St. Andrews.



Sojourner Hunt is off to college in Scotland.

Photo/Kristin Faust

## COVID cases down from summer peak but remain worrisome

By Mike Scheible

Countywide COVID cases have dropped by more than 80% since their early June peak, and recorded COVID infections in the 95818 ZIP code area are down by about 70%

from their highs in June. The 58 local cases in 95818 for the 30 days prior to Oct. 4 were a significant improvement over the 104 reported on Aug. 5, and well below the 194 cases during the summer peak. Note that actual case numbers are

much higher than those reported, and the reported data are only useful as a trend indicator. Unfortunately, the infection levels are still high enough so that a new spike could occur in late fall as more activities move indoors. Countywide deaths from COVID

have changed little over the last six months and average about 60 per month. The vaccination rate in 95818 changed ever so slightly. It increased by 0.4% over the last two months to 81.4% of the 95818 population.

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## Neighbor volunteers are needed to reopen the school library



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Bret Harte Elementary School is refreshing its book collection and library with the goal of opening the space to students during lunchtime recess. Located at the front of the campus in between the office and the first and second grade classroom pod, the library will

provide a place for students to relax and read during lunch, or borrow new books.

Bret Harte Principal Roxanne Wolfe hopes to raise money for new, updated books for use by students both in the library and in classrooms. Two student book fairs, along with support from the Sacramento Literacy Foundation and monetary donations, will support the purchase of new books. Older books slated for replacement will be available for students to take home and keep. "We're trying to increase literacy by building the love of reading," said Wolfe. She is hopeful that the community will consider getting involved, either through monetary donations or volunteering.

At present, Bret Harte does not have funding to

hire a librarian. The general funding from the school district pays for staff based on the number of children enrolled at the school. Once student enrollment goes up, which is one of Wolfe's goals for Bret Harte, a librarian can be hired. Until then, Bret Harte needs volunteers to open the library during the school's lunch periods, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. She plans to open the library to students at least two days a week. Volunteers may lead circle time and read to students.

The library space fits several desk configurations comfortably, with bookshelves lining the outer walls. Last year, the space was used primarily for lunchtime art activities, after-school care and acted as a supplemental tutoring area when necessary. Wolfe envisions the updated space to include bookshelves arranged by reading level and grade level, with descriptions of the books on display so that students can easily select something that interests them.

To become a volunteer, the school district requires an application and screening process: school site approval and completion of the volunteer application, fingerprinting, a TB test, a criminal background check, and eight hours of volunteer training. There is a fee for these services, which covers the costs of the fingerprinting and background check. Application packets are in the school's front office. The Bret Harte Parent Teacher Association (PTA) is working to streamline the process for any parent, family or community member who would like to volunteer.

If you enjoy libraries, reading and working with children, then please consider volunteering or donating to the school library. For more information, contact the Bret Harte PTA at [brethartepa@gmail.com](mailto:brethartepa@gmail.com).

## Calling all artists to paint murals Nov. 19

Wide Open Walls is coming to Bret Harte Elementary School. Event organizers are looking for artists in the community who are interested in painting murals at the Bret Harte campus.

The painting and a community festival of muralists will take place on Saturday Nov. 19. It is expected that 15-20 murals will be created on the open spaces on campus.

This community festival will showcase

artists at work on their murals, the Sacramento City Unified School Districts' Central Kitchen food truck, bounce houses, live music and a Thanksgiving food giveaway for families in need.

These festivals have inspired state institutions and private building owners to donate walls for enduring works of public art.

If you are interested in applying to be a featured artist, contact Heather Haight at [heatherrhaight@gmail.com](mailto:heatherrhaight@gmail.com)

## Wanting a climate-friendly approach

On at least two occasions since mid-summer, local residents have found themselves in the path of city parks maintenance staff using high-powered equipment pulled alongside a City of Sacramento truck blowing the perimeter of William Curtis Park.

The extreme noise and exceptionally high level of dust caused walkers and

joggers to scatter and flee.

Our neighborhood has since been assured by the city that this equipment will no longer be used in Curtis Park. City officials further stated that they plan to convert to electric zero emission lawn equipment as older gas machines wear out. This change should be noticeable in the next year or two.



City truck with gas blower in August

Photo/Erik Fay

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