

# VIEWPOINT

A publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association since 1979

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June 2023

## SCNA raises over \$44,000 on Big Day of Giving

By Shannon Motley

Curtis Park neighbors once again demonstrated their commitment to the Sierra 2 Center by giving generously during last month's Big Day of Giving (BDG). The money raised will help fund the Senior Center at Sierra 2, Sierra 2 building improvements and production of the *Viewpoint* newspaper.

SCNA's fundraising goal this year was set high at \$50,000. With the recent Home & Garden Tour contributing \$5,000 of its total earnings directly to Sierra 2, SCNA achieved its 2023 spring fundraising target.

The Sierra 2 Center plays a crucial role in the lives of community members by providing a space for learning, play and exploration through various events, activities and classes. The generous support enables the Curtis Park neighborhood to maintain and preserve this historic landmark, ensuring its availability for future generations.

All SCNA board members made monetary contributions again this year, allowing Sierra 2 to be entered into a drawing for an additional \$2,000. Of the 210 donations received, 69% were \$100 or higher, similar to last year. Ten donors gave \$1,000 or more. SCNA board members Mimi Budd and Bill Hoover together raised over \$9,000 from their nearby neighbors.

Many residents posted campaign lawn signs, which inspired their neighbors to donate. The campaign received additional visibility with active social media posts, a *Viewpoint* story and display ads. Several people who donated to this year's fundraising campaign cited love for SCNA-sponsored activities and for the Curtis Park neighborhood as their reasons for donating.

**Meet the 2023 Curtis Park grads**

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**Teatime Treats**

Taylor's Market chef launches new business

Page 11

## Norm the barber knows his cuts

By Anne Da Vigo

A customer settled into the old-fashioned swivel chair at Norm's Barber Shop. "I don't have much hair," the customer said. "Am I going to get a discount?"

Norm gave his scissors a couple of snaps. "No, I'm going to charge you more," he deadpanned. "Your hair is hard to find."

Good-natured patter is one of the hallmarks of Norm's shop, a fixture on Fourth Avenue near Franklin Boulevard for nearly 30 years. Owner and sole proprietor Norm King doesn't care to specify his age. "When you're my age, you say, 'old-fashioned barber.'"

His age, whatever it is, doesn't keep him from working hard. He's open Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Norm is well-known for the conscientious attention he gives each cut and shave. He snips carefully with long, sharp scissors and takes small, deft swipes with a straight razor. Elaborate



Norm King in his Fourth Avenue barbershop.

Photo by Rudy Calpo

logos shaved on the scalp aren't his thing. Norm sticks with the basics.

Curtis Park resident Jim Miller likes the vintage vibe. "He takes his time," Miller said. "It's not an assembly line."

Norm's is one of the only places, Miller said, a customer can get a hot shave, a luxury involving warm damp

towels to soften the beard, dampening the cheeks with water, liberal use of shaving cream and two passes with the straight razor over the cheeks and neck.

Tony Da Vigo, a long-time customer and this reporter's husband,

*See Norm the Barber, Page 5*

## City Sports to open in Curtis Park

By Kelsey Wehseles

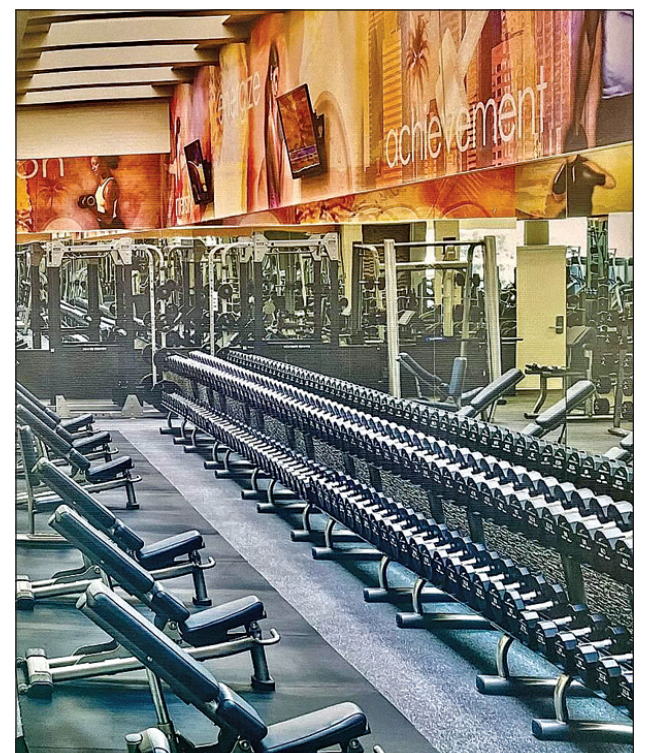
Memberships are on sale now for the new sports club under construction in Crocker Village. City Sports will open this summer with a full slate of classes and activities.

The 37,000-square-foot club will offer state-of-the-art equipment, free weights, a functional training area, group fitness classes, personal

training and a lounge area. Also included are a three-lane, 30-meter indoor heated lap pool, infrared sauna and cryotherapy.

General Manager Guido Benitez is excited about opening the club. "We really like the community so far and we've had a lot of people coming over and talking with us and getting excited about

*See City Sports, Page 4*



A City Sports free weight room.

Photo courtesy City Sports

**What do you think?**

Neighbors weigh in on dogs and parks

Page 10-11



## Sounds of summer coming soon

By Judy Green Scheible

Nothing says summer in Curtis Park more than the Concerts in the Park. These three, free evening events begin at 5 p.m. Sunday, June 25 at the north end of the park. The next two are Sunday, July 30 and Sunday, Aug. 27. This year, all of the bands have a Curtis Park connection.

Organized and managed by the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association and Sierra 2 Executive Director Terri Shettle, the concerts are sponsored by SMUD, Cook Realty and City Councilmember Rick Jennings.

Neighbors are encouraged to bring blankets and picnic dinners for these fun musical evenings.

Leading the season is Skyler's Pool with Curtis Park neighbors Kitty O'Neal and Kurt Spataro. O'Neal anchors the award-winning KFBK Afternoon News from 4-7 p.m. Spataro is executive chef-owner with the Para-

gary Restaurant Group. A lifelong musician, Spataro has played piano and guitar in various local bands. Their indie-rock band plays original music.

For the July 30 gig, neighbors will hear music from the '50s and '60s by the five members of the Green Grass Snakes. This year the band will feature songs from the Beatles' 1969 album "Abbey Road." Among the musicians is former SCNA board member Matt Lancara of Markham Way.

Third in the lineup is UnSupervised, Sacramento's most politically correct band playing R&B, soul and funk. Among its 18 musicians are Phil Serna, now in his fourth term as Sacramento County Supervisor for District 1 and a former Curtis Park neighbor, and current neighbors Jose Hermocillo and Bill Abbott.

Returning again for all three concerts is Mister Cooper, a familiar singer for the younger set. He is expected to play at the beginning



Skyler's Pool

Photo courtesy of Kitty O'Neal.

and during the intermission of each concert.

On Air, the popular brass band, is not among this year's performers. Shettle said she was asked to change things up this season and to find bands

with neighborhood connections.

Following another tradition started by former Councilmember Jay Schenier, our Councilmember Rick Jennings plans to scoop Gunther's freezes at this season's concerts.

## Oak Park Farmers Market returns

By Judy Green Scheible

It's back. After having difficulties operating on Sundays last season, the Oak Park Farmers Market is returning on Saturdays, opening at 9 a.m. June 10 in McClatchy Park.

Also back is market manager Joany Titherington. She told *Viewpoint* she has worked for months to secure enough funding to restart the market and is thrilled to be bringing it back.

"We're opening on a shoestring budget," Titherington said. "We had to make a few cuts, but we expect many of our regular vendors to return."

The market's opening day will coincide with a grand celebration of the neighborhood organized by the Oak Park Neighborhood Association and the Oak Park Business Association. Activities will include electric vehicle exhibits, hands-on STEM activities for children and a cooking demonstration by UC Davis Medical Center Executive Chef Santana Diaz. Titherington said she plans to feature cooking demonstrations once a month.

Titherington said the market will continue from 9



Oak Park Farmers Market will return June 10.

Photo by Joan Cusick

a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturdays through Nov. 11. During these months, Titherington said she and her board members will be working to gain nonprofit certification. Until then

she is working with the Food Literacy Center. Among the lead sponsors for the market and its nonprofit work are UC Davis Health and County Supervisor Phil Serna.



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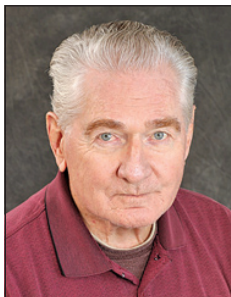
# Sierra 2 Center is going strong thanks to neighbors and tenants

Winter appears to have finally released its grip on us – only to be immediately replaced by summer. And anything that grows and blooms seems to be racing to make the most of it. All of this was welcome, of course, for last month's very successful Home & Garden Tour.

After a three-year, COVID-imposed hiatus, our tour returned with perfect weather and large crowds. Many thanks to the Curtis Park residents who opened their homes and gardens for the tour and to the Sierra 2 staff, board members and other folks who helped make the day a success.

The Home & Garden Tour was not the only major event in Curtis Park as the Big Day of Giving took center stage on May 4. The bar was set high (\$50K), especially considering economic conditions and previously high levels of giving. Despite these factors, SCNA raised over \$44,000, demonstrating strong support for Sierra 2 Center once again. A sincere thank you to all who donated.

## BILL HOOVER SCNA Board President



Sierra 2 Center for the Arts & Community is a nice name for our neighborhood center. But have you really thought about what goes on there? We have all benefited from the staff support for things like the Home & Garden Tour, Music in the Park, Gather at the Long Table and the Wine Tasting event, but that just scratches the surface.

The center is home to 12 tenants, many of whom have been with us for a long time. These folks represent diverse interests and activities such as the child development center, men's AA group, performing arts company, vegan bakery, family resource center, catering business, yoga center and more. The Society

for the Blind recently returned to Curtis Park as a tenant with its incorporation of the Braille Transcribers (one of our oldest tenants). The Learners and Senior Center also provide a variety of activities for all age groups.

Additionally, there are 10 rooms and studios available for rent. Most of these spaces are multipurpose and used for parties, classes, weddings and recep-

tions. And we have the 24th Street Theater, a fully equipped facility that seats 296 people. It is a venue primarily used for children and adult theater performances and also for films and music.

I encourage you to visit [sierra2.org](http://sierra2.org) and browse the website to learn more about our 100-year-old structure, our tenants and the center's many offerings.



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SIERRA CURTIS  
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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an SCNA  
member:*

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## SCNA Board Notes

### Development Committee

Shannon Motley reported that board members have collected or have pledges totaling \$9,500 for the Big Day of Giving. She reminded the board of the long list of services that Sierra 2 Center provides for the community and encouraged board members to continue advocating for donations to support these services. For the fall fundraising event this year, the committee will partner with an event planner to produce a fun-filled, 100-year celebration of Sierra 2 School's founding. A Gatsby theme is being considered to complement the 1920s founding era, with wine tasting similar to previous events along with activities reminding guests about the school's history.

### Treasurer's Report

John Bailey noted that the updated online booking system is now operational, enabling staff to book rooms and secure payments more efficiently.

February 2023 Summary Financial Statements showed that unrestricted cash increased by \$30,000 from

deposits for future bookings. The available fund balance improved by \$17,000. During February, room rental revenue was \$22,000 more than budgeted. There was a \$10,000 decline in the market value of the investment portfolio. Year to date, Bailey reported SCNA is \$68,000 ahead of budget primarily due to room rentals being \$45,000 better than budget and personnel expenses being \$34,000 under budget.

Adoption of the 2023-24 budget will be delayed until July. In the Sierra 2 Center budget proposal, Terri Shettle plans to include two positions that were eliminated due to the pandemic, an events coordinator and operations manager.

### Facilities Committee

Gerre Buehler reported that the committee awaits a response from the city on the Solar Options Project. In the meantime, the committee has discussed sorting the historical electrical, HVAC and other plans that may be useful in discussions with potential contractors. The committee discussed the items for the 2023-24 capital budget and created a preliminary budget.

### Neighborhood Concerns Committee

Erik Fay reported that representatives of the city Community Development Department Code Compliance Division provided an overview of how they serve the neighborhood and their role and responsibilities in the greater community. The top code violation in Curtis Park is abandoned or neglected vehicles. The representatives suggested calling 311 for all suspected code violations and recommended emailing [SacCo311@custhelp.com](mailto:SacCo311@custhelp.com) to ensure documentation and recording by the city.

Neighbor Anne Linton spoke representing neighbors living near Sierra 2 Park who have formed "Families for Sierra 2 Park." She shared their concerns about the dog park and asked the SCNA board to take a formal position reflecting these concerns and prioritizing children. She raised safety issues, the design of the park that places a dog park next to a children's playground, and the number of calls the city has received about the park in the last six months. She requested that SCNA host a meeting with all interested parties and the city and council staff to discuss all concerns

and thoughts. The Neighborhood Concerns Committee agreed to forward the proposal to the board.

### New Business

Mimi Budd presented a letter for board approval that she wrote in support of the city's "Draft Action Plan for Sierra 2/Curtis Park Dog Park Solutions (updated 3/27/2023)." She noted that the action plan provides a process that staff will follow, including developing multiple sites and alternative site plans for consideration and "open house meetings" in June and October or November, during which neighbors will have an opportunity to be heard. She said the action plan is in line with the letter sent to the city by President Bill Hoover in February that raised questions about what process the city intended to follow and stressed the importance of effective communication with neighbors.

Budd moved approval of the letter with a one-word clarifying amendment. John Mathews seconded the motion, and the motion passed with 14 aye votes, one nay vote, and three abstentions. The letter is printed in this issue of *Viewpoint*.

The next SCNA board meeting will be July 5 at 6:30 pm.



# SCNA committee hosts Community Police Review Commission chairs

By Kathy Les

Sacramento Police Review Commission leaders spoke with SCNA's Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee in May about the commission's work to review police policies and practices, especially around the purchase of military-style vehicles and weapons.

Commission chairs Graciela Cabrillo-Krings and Keyan Bliss outlined the commission's 2023 work plan, which was created to encourage more community participation in the review and development of recommendations to the Sacramento Police Department.

"There's been a lot of frustration due to a lack of an open process and tension between the city council, police department and review commission," said commission chair Cabrillo-Krings. Specifically, there was dissatisfaction over the city council's purchase of the military vehicle known as the Rook with little-to-no public participation in the decision process.

Cabrillo-Krings and Bliss said there are valid questions as to why the police department needs this type of equipment. Cabrillo-Krings said it appears

military equipment is used more frequently in Black and Brown communities but that records of when and where it is used are lacking. The commission wants the Sacramento Police Department to address these disparities.

Cabrillo-Krings said the city acted too quickly and did not adequately evaluate the need for the vehicle. "No one walked away thinking it was a good process," she said.

The police review commission's work plan aims to develop a comprehensive process to ensure increased community participation and greater reliance on data to justify the purchase of military-style jeeps, high-powered assault weapons, chemical weapons and rubber bullets. The commission work complies with AB 481, a 2021 California law that requires city councils and police departments to involve residents in decisions to purchase military-style equipment.

"I believe if we can improve community interactions with the police department it will help break down the us-versus-them attitude," said Cabrillo-Krings.

The 2023 work plan is laid out in two parts: the first to develop a use-of-force and military equipment policy and the second to review Sacramento Police Department accountability and organizational culture. The commission has no dedicated staff; volunteers conduct the research required to guide

policy-making efforts.

The commissioners said they are determined to make strides in police accountability and to increase city council attentiveness to their recommendations.

The Racial Justice Committee's meeting with the commissioners was recorded and is available on the SCNA website at <https://sierra2.org/racial-justice/>.

SCNA's Racial Justice Committee was formed after the killing of George Floyd in 2020. The committee has made review of use-of-force policies and police accountability a high priority.

To attend future Racial Justice Committee meetings, please contact Kathy. [les321@gmail.com](mailto:les321@gmail.com) to be added to the email list.

## City Sports

*Continued from page 1*

it," he said. "It's been fun being able to watch the building grow since it's been on hold for over a year because of the pandemic."

City Sports initially looked downtown for a location, but, with little room for development, they chose Curtis Park.

"We like this location because it's kind of in the most diverse area of Sacramento and it checks all the boxes we wanted," said Benitez. "This is just a really nice area, and I know we're going to be here for a long time."

The club is offering pre-sale enrollment memberships at a discounted rate until the club opens, scheduled for some time between June 15 and July 1. Memberships also are available on a non-contract basis.

Benitez said the club will sponsor "vendor days" and "member appreciation days," in which other companies will set up outside the gym to promote their businesses along with food trucks and activities.

"We like to do a lot of stuff with the community," he said.

While concepts for the new location are evolving, Benitez hinted at potentially developing pickleball or volleyball courts and establishing leagues if there is enough interest.

The club will be open weekdays from 5 a.m. to 11 p.m. and weekends from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m.

City Sports, owned by LA Fitness, currently has 19 locations, mostly in the Bay Area. The Crocker Village site will be the third in the Sacramento area. City Sports also has opened clubs in Carmichael and Elk Grove. For more information or to learn about membership, visit [citysportsfitness.com](http://citysportsfitness.com).

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# Traffic improvements, market and community celebrations on tap this summer

Summer is finally here! Our team has spent time out in our community, engaging with residents and listening to feedback, and we are excited to keep that up as the season changes. Here are some of the ways to engage this summer:

**Pedestrian Safety Updates:** We're thrilled to announce that one of our region's most dangerous intersections, Broadway and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, has now been restriped to improve pedestrian safety. Over the last two years, several vehicles traveling east-bound on Broadway have missed their turns and slammed into the St. HOPE senior living facility on the southeast corner.

Thanks to our city's traffic engineering team, we have implemented a short-term solution before the entire Envision Broadway project is completed – the reduction of Broadway into a single

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Council  
Member  
District 5**



through-lane at Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. Narrowing the roadway has been shown to reduce vehicle speed and we're hoping to see a significant decrease in dangerous incidents.

**Celebrate Oak Park & Farmers Market:** In partnership with the Oak Park Neighborhood Association, the Oak Park Business Association and numerous other community members, we're excited to announce that we'll be coming together for Celebrate Oak Park on June 10 at McClatchy Park

– and simultaneously relaunching the Oak Park Farmers Market! Join us for a celebration of our community and a fantastic array of local produce and food stands from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, June 10 at McClatchy Park in Oak Park.

**Al Fresco Grants:** The City of Sacramento is offering up to \$20,000 in reimbursable outdoor dining grants through its Al Fresco Dining Program. To be eligible for an Al Fresco grant, restaurants must be independently owned and operated in the City of Sacramento. Learn more at [sacd5.com/alfresco](http://sacd5.com/alfresco).

As always, please don't hesitate to reach out to our office if there's anything we can do for you, or if you have any questions, issues or ideas. Contact the team by calling 916-808-7005 or by emailing [district5@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:district5@cityofsacramento.org).



## Birds in Curtis Park



Oak Titmouse

Photo by Dan Murphy

## Oak Titmouse is plain but chatty

By Dan Murphy

In appearance, the Oak Titmouse may be the neighborhood's most unprepossessing bird. The only noticeable feature on this little, drab, gray bird is a slight crest atop the head. They are among the most common resident species of California's oak woodlands. Their range is largely limited to California, with a few birds living in Southern Oregon and Northern Baja.

The Oak Titmouse was split off from the visually indistinguishable Juniper Titmouse of the interior west in 1997. Both had previously carried the apt name Plain Titmouse.

Pairs form bonds during their first year and these bonds are usually lifelong. Natural or woodpecker-excavated cavities are used for nesting, and clutches typically contain six or seven unmarked eggs. Their diet is varied; about 60% consists of seeds and other vegetable matter, and the rest is bugs, including many pests. Oak Titmice do not migrate. They are sedentary and defend territories throughout the year. Unlike many related species, the Oak Titmouse generally does not form flocks during the non-breeding period.

These birds command attention with their chatter-like calls, which males and females make throughout the year. They make a surprising amount of noise for such a small bird and have been called the "voice and soul of the oaks."

Birders who begin learning the craft when they are young can identify many more birds than I can. But help is only an app away. A free app offered by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology called Merlin is excellent for identifying bird sounds with your smartphone. If you open the app and tap "Sound ID" and then tap the microphone icon it will begin recording. When it finds a bird sound it recognizes, it displays a picture and the name of the bird. If you keep the app on, it will identify other birds as they join in. I was surprised by how well it worked.

Try it, you'll like it!

## Jim Houpt promotes human-powered transport in Sacramento

*This month Councilmember Rick Jennings introduces Jim Houpt of the Active Transportation Commission.*

Jim Houpt is serving his fifth year on the Active Transportation Commission. Councilmember Rick Jennings appointed Houpt to the city's first commission to advise the city council and staff on issues relating to transport powered with human energy, primarily walking and bicycling but also battery-assisted bikes and scooters.

Jim is one of two Active Transportation Commission members whose appointments date to the commission's inception. Councilmember Jennings re-nominated Houpt to the commission in December 2022, with his final term ending in December 2027 under city-imposed term limits for citizen commissions and committees.

Houpt describes himself as

**JIM HOUP**  
Active  
Transportation  
Commissioner



retired from the business of law, having practiced in an international firm until 2018, although he still does pro bono work for nonprofit organizations and accepts appointments as a volunteer mediator in Sacramento's federal court.

Joined by the city's late former mayor, Anne Rudin, former Mayor Heather Fargo, and a group of devoted Sacramento citizens, Houpt has headed up efforts to complete the Sacramento River Parkway, including a multi-use trail on the levee from Old Sacramento to Freeport. The city council envi-

sioned and approved the trail plan almost 50 years ago and reaffirmed it multiple times since 1975.

Houpt has also urged improvements to the city's bicycling and pedestrian infrastructure, especially in areas where the city historically lagged in providing safe and adequate facilities for residents.

In addition to his involvement on the Active Transportation Commission, Houpt is chair of the California State Railroad Museum Foundation and board president of Friends of Front Street Shelter, which raises funds for the city's animal shelter and for animal welfare in the region.

Houpt was a founder of the former Pocket-Greenhaven Community Association before it was incorporated and a board member of the neighborhood group after its incorporation.

## Norm the barber

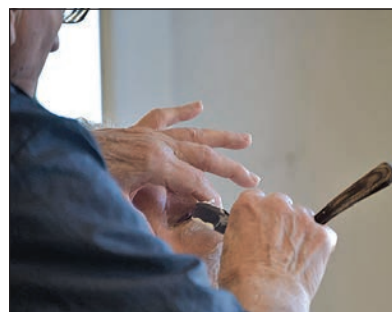
*Continued from page 1*

appreciates Norm's care in sterilizing his scissors and razors after each haircut or shave.

Another advantage of Norm's, said Curtis Park resident Rudy Calpo, is his reasonable rates. "The price was half what I was previously paying, and his shop is only four blocks away – what a deal!"

One of the downsides of Norm's, Calpo said, is that the shave and haircut are over too soon. "I can easily doze off, even just sitting there in that comfortable chair with the armrest."

Much of the shop's vintage equipment came with his purchase, Norm said, including two padded, swivel barber chairs with chrome



Norm's customer gets a straight razor shave.

Photo by Rudy Calpo

foot plates and an honest-to-gosh striped barber pole. Displayed on the wall are a collection of barber tools from the 19th century, including a leather strop used to sharpen straight razors.

Norm's also features classic 1950s music. "Shifting Whispering Sands," a 1955 hit by the Billy Vaughn Orchestra, was among the songs playing on the sound system on a recent day.

The crusty humor that is a staple of many barbershops is alive and well at Norm's. "For example, I like the Raiders," he said. If a 49ers supporter ribs him about the Oakland team, Norm will threaten to shave a Raiders logo on the back of the customer's head.

Norm grew up in Fresno, which was "a good place to be from," he said. He and his wife have eight children, five boys and three girls. He always cut the boys' hair when they were growing up, but after one try at cutting his oldest daughter's bangs, all the girls said no.

Being a barber has changed Norm a bit. "I'm kind of shy," he said. "When I began cutting hair, I got started talking to all kinds of people – lawyers, police officers, doctors. I got over being shy. I still pay attention to my work, though."

## At HOME in Curtis Park

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# Hitchings takes marathon world record – again

By Dorsey Griffith

If you're lucky enough, you might catch her running, gazelle-like, around Curtis Park. Look quickly or you'll miss the flash of her long legs whizzing past at a pace unmatched by any woman over 55 on the planet.

She is Jenny Hitchings of Tenth Avenue, who clinched the world record in marathon in the 55-59 age group.

The 59-year-old captured the honor at the 2023 London Marathon on April 23, regaining the world record (which she had won in 2019 but lost last year to an Australian) with a lightning-fast 2:45:27, and beating her own world-best time by five seconds.

The achievement is exceptional on its own but even more so because she did it after spending months recovering from a metatarsal fracture she incurred running on the beach late last August.

"Marathon is a grind," she said while talking about the race over a beer at Track 7 in early May. "It's a lot of miles, a lot of training, a lot of mental energy. When you're in the heart of it, it's tiring."

A runner since age 20, Hitchings also holds five 55-59 age group American records – in the 5K, 10K, 10-mile, half-marathon and marathon. London was Hitchings' international marathon debut.

"I assume these records won't last much longer, which

is why I keep trying to break my own record and make it harder for the next woman to break," she said.

Asked frequently about the secret to winning, Hitchings said it's simple: "I don't do anything other than run consistently. I spend a lot of time training and practicing my marathon pace so when I get there, I am ready and used to that pace. It's not like my whole life is about records. I have a lot of balance in my life."

Hitchings' husband, Andy, and other family friends watched the race unfold along the London route, catching glimpses of Hitchings at miles 8.5, 11, 18.5, 19 and 25.

"We were so loud, there was no way she couldn't see us," he said. "We got all the other people to chime in cheering. She was our lady in red speeding along the course."

Although Hitchings maintained her record-breaking pace of 6:18 miles, she had to give everything she had toward the end of the race.

"During the last three miles, my glutes and hamstrings were starting to lock up," she said. "But I knew I could finish. That's when your head and heart go to the grindstone and you power through."

The couple has lived in Curtis Park since 1997, where they raised their two daughters, Molly and Maggie. Hitchings co-chaired the Curtis Park Wine Tasting for eight years and still coaches the Cal Middle School cross-country team and Sutterville Elementary School Running Club.

With the world record back in her possession, Hitchings is planning her next big race – the Chicago Marathon in October – as a 60-year-old in the 60-64 age group. Her goal: meet or beat the 2:52 record for the course.

She's looking forward to the challenge. "If I stay in the same shape that I'm in now, I think I can break that record."



Jenny Hitchings running the London Marathon in April.

Photo courtesy Jenny Hitchings

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## Sierra 2 Center THEATER

### PIRATES PAST NOON KIDS

Thursday, June 8: 7-8 p.m.  
Friday, June 9: 7-8 p.m.  
Saturday, June 10: 10-11 a.m., 1-2 p.m., 4-5 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.  
General admission: \$10  
Tickets: <https://musical-mayhem-productions.ticketleap.com/>  
Musical Mayhem Productions presents Pirates Past Noon KIDS, an adaptation of Mary Pope Osborne's award-winning "Magic Tree House" series. This time, Jack and Annie's tree house takes them to an exotic island with pirates, where they discover the power of friendship and simple pleasures in everyday life. Performed by cast members ages 4-10.

### VELOCITY DANCE COMPANY SHOWCASE

"Hollywood"  
Friday, June 16  
4:30 p.m. Reception  
5:30-7:30 p.m. Show  
\$30 adult; \$20 kids ages 2-12; Under 2 Free (if sitting on lap)  
Tickets: <https://velocity.fancyfeetdance.net/>  
Dancing, silent auction, photo ops, light refreshments and delicious food! Proceeds will support dancers' expenses.

### K STREET ORCHESTRA

Saturday, June 17  
1 p.m.  
\$10 Students and seniors  
\$15 Adults  
\$20 At the door (doors open at 12:30 p.m.)  
Tickets and info: [krystyna@sacramentostring-works.com](mailto:krystyna@sacramentostring-works.com)  
The K Street Orchestra presents the 16th Annual Summer Concert and Fundraiser, "It's a String Thing," featuring a mix of classical and pop music performed by Sacramento's premier adult late-starters string orchestra.



# Congratulations

## to our CURTIS PARK GRADUATES

### HIGH SCHOOL



**Teaghan Brostrom**, daughter of Maryclaire Robinson and the late Peter Brostrom of Third Avenue, graduated from St. Francis High School. She will attend Syracuse University to study broadcast/journalism and international relations.



**Ian Grealish**, son of Tara Leung and David Grealish of Cutter Way, graduated from C.K. McClatchy High School and the HISP Program. He will attend Cal Poly San Luis Obispo to study anthropology.



**Charlotte Gregson-Synhorst**, daughter of Jennifer Gregson and Stephen Synhorst of Sixth Avenue, graduated from Christian Brothers High School. She will attend Fordham University in New York City.



**Nicholas Johl**, son of Colleen and Sukhjit Johl of Rochon Way, graduated from Rosemont High School. He will attend Cosumnes River College.



**Alicia Romani**, daughter of Marcus and Annette Romani of Marshall Way, graduated from Christian Brothers High School. She plans a gap year.

### COLLEGE



**Grady Pierroz**, son of Ruth and Bert Pierroz of Rochon Way, received a doctorate in plant biology from UC Berkeley. He is currently teaching at Diablo Valley College and will start teaching this summer at California State University, East Bay.



**Celia Ringstrom**, daughter of Leslie Willson of Marshall Way, received a master's in social anthropology from York University, Toronto, Ontario. She is continuing her studies and completed her first year toward a Ph.D. in anthropology at York.



**Robert Soohoo**, son of David Soohoo and Elaine Corn of 24th Street, graduated with a Master of Public Health from New York Institute of Technology. He will begin work at Lenox Hill Hospital in Manhattan as a Physician Assistant in acute ICU and Neurology.



**Jakob Uebelhoer**, son of Emily Uebelhoer and Kelly Niedbala of Curtis Way, graduated from Baylor University with a bachelor's in entrepreneurship and corporate innovation. He will pursue an MBA at Baylor and then attend law school.



**Arissa Vallejo**, daughter of Arturo and Marisa Vallejo of Fourth Avenue, graduated with a bachelor's in psychology from Saint Mary's College of California.



POINT OF VIEW

The temporary off-leash dog park is inadequate

By Tom Shragg

For much of the last decade, the field at the Sierra School served as an off-leash dog park. Through the height of the pandemic, the number of people taking advantage of the park increased. The park was used by hundreds weekly. People from throughout the city found the space for exercising their pets a much-needed and appreciated amenity.

Last summer, word filtered down that the parks department would no longer tolerate an off-leash park in its current configuration. Exactly how or why the bureaucrats decided to suddenly exercise their authority over the park remains in dispute. The “problem” they were trying to solve still is not clear. What is clear is that the parks department’s “action plan” recently rendered a nicely functioning, much-needed, low-maintenance, low-cost park into a cramped, inadequate “temporary” caged-in space.

As the months drag on, the department’s ultimate plan remains opaque and the specifics of the decision-making process remain obscure. “Citizens will have

the opportunity for input in the decision-making process,” we are told, as if that is a major concession. Reminder: That’s the way government at the city level is SUPPOSED to function.

Reportedly, the five-sixths of the park that is no longer available will be transformed into a soccer field. To many, this seemed like a convenient excuse to shut down the dog park. I agree that the city should have plenty of soccer fields (and other facilities) for kids, but how many days a week will weekend youth soccer be played there? What about in the “off-season” for youth soccer leagues? Does the field even meet the minimum size for all soccer age groups?

A few random points:

SCNA President Bill Hoover suggested in the *Viewpoint* a “do-over” survey. Nonsense. The results of the original survey and, more importantly, the number of people using the park are clear. There’s a big need for an off-leash dog park.

There’s a question of funding for a dog park. Fact: The park was functioning just fine without special funding before. But

See Dog park, Page 11

POINT OF VIEW

Neighborhood parks are for kids

By Anne Linton

I write to share my perspective as a homeowner whose residence directly overlooks the Sierra 2 Park. Those of us living on the park are among the most impacted by changes in its use, and we see what goes on here every day. Yet, when the city installed a “temporary” dog park at Sierra 2, none of us was asked to weigh in on it. Homeowners like me are angry that neither the city nor SCNA appears to be listening to our concerns.

Walk past the “temporary” dog park on Fourth Avenue. Where formerly stood green grass and a space for family picnics, you will find increasingly brown and dusty patches, damaged turf, a cargo crate and a series of ugly fences that have cut the park into sections. Children in the playground now must exit the park to access the basketball court. A dog park means dogs barking and fighting from sunup to sundown, seven days a week. Every day, these sounds exceed nuisance levels as measured from inside my home. I’m a college professor and barking and dogfights have interfered with my remote teaching, office hours and writing from home. Backyard dining is a thing of the past. My 18-month-old baby has been

awakened from naps, and bedtime is equally challenging for my preschooler, especially now as sunset grows later and later. If you have ever had young children, you will understand how incredibly frustrating this is.

The installation of a permanent dog park in a neighborhood park surrounded by scores of existing homes would be unprecedented in Sacramento, according to city dog park master plans, associated approval documents and real estate records. Even worse, not one of the city’s other 14 dog parks is bordered by multiple children’s uses as it is at Sierra 2 (basketball court; daycare; soccer/flag football/rugby field; playground). At present, the dog enclosure is chained to the playground, enabling kids to reach into it. There simply isn’t room at Sierra 2 to build a dog park big enough that people will use, while also adequately buffering existing homes and the children’s uses for which the park was designed. Public 311 call records cite 311 complaints about dogs (62 between April 9 and May 4; nearly 200 in recent months), revealing a pattern of off-leash dog use blocking park access from other users, and a chronic disregard

See Parks are for kids, Page 11

SCNA Board sends city officials letter on dog park issue

The Sierra-Curtis Neighborhood Association board has not taken a position on the possibility of an official dog park in the Curtis Park community. At its May 3 meeting, however, the board approved sending a letter to the city with the goal of ensuring that officials follow through on the tenets of the city’s recently released dog park action plan. The letter also aims to help improve communica-

May 8, 2023

City of Sacramento  
Hon. Rick Jennings, District 7 Council Representative  
Hon. Caity Maple, District 5 Council Representative  
Jackie Beecham, Director, Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment  
Shannon Brown, Assistant Director, Department of Youth, Parks and Community Enrichment

SCNA Response to City’s Action Plan

Dear CM Jennings, CM Maple, YPCE Director Beecham, and Assistant Director Brown:

The SCNA Board of Directors (the board) acknowledges receipt of the City’s action plan and has reviewed its recommendations.

The board notes that Sierra 2 Park is a former school playground that is designated by the City as a neighborhood park

usually oriented to the recreation needs of children, not a dog park, which is a specialty park. Further, in November 2022 City representatives concluded the park was being improperly used as a dog park.

The City has configured a temporary dog park in Sierra 2 Park for use while long-term solutions are sought. The action plan states that multiple park site plan solutions will be developed and that open house meetings in June and October/November will be held to elicit additional community input.

The board understands this to mean that sites alternative to Sierra 2 Park and William Curtis Park will also be considered by the City for siting the dog park. We support the development of alternative sites and note the City’s plan to choose a “best site plan” based on community feedback, design standards, budget, available space, and data gathered during the implementation of the temporary dog park (June 2023–September 2023). The City may or may not proceed with the project and funding for the project would need to be identified.

Assuming the board is correctly interpreting these provisions of the action plan, the board supports these next steps.

tion on dog park issues. The letter was drafted by SCNA board member Mimi Budd, who presented a draft to the board for consideration. The proposal to send the letter passed with 14 ayes, one no, and three abstentions. Two board members were absent. What follows is the text of the letter. – Jim Miller

A primary concern has always been that all neighbors have an opportunity to be heard. To this end, we recommend that prior to the June community meeting, the City and Councilmembers Jennings and Maple meet altogether with representatives of all interested groups, including the board, Sierra 2 Center, the Soccer League, Dog X, and Families for Sierra 2 Park to share the various concerns, goals and points of view of each group involved. We also ask that the City convey consistent information to all these groups about important developments in the action plan.

Councilmember Jennings has pledged in the *Viewpoint* to neighbors regarding the action plan that all options will be evaluated, that there will be transparency and public input and that all members of the public can participate. The board looks forward to working with the council members to ensure that these pledges are kept.

Thank you,  
Bill Hoover  
President  
SCNA Board of Directors



## Letter to the Editor

To the editor,

I live on the northwest corner of Coleman Way and West Curtis Drive. On May 8, a small SUV landed on top of the boulevard garden, crushing a sculpted boxwood, scraping the bark off a large London plane tree and taking out several smaller plants. The young driver wept for several minutes as her boyfriend endeavored to calm her. Eventually, they sat on the park benches across from our home and my husband and I went over to find out what had happened.

We learned that an unleashed dog had dashed into the street. She swerved to avoid hitting the dog. Her car then hit a tree and came to rest on the boulevard. Her boyfriend said she was a new driver and that the SUV belonged to her grandmother.

The vehicle's front right tire had a gaping gash and the front axle appeared to be broken. Grandma arrived about an hour later. She, too, was in tears. I assured Grandma that we would take care of replacing the plants in the boulevard (although it had taken me 10 years to grow the boxwood and shape it), but I was more concerned about how this family would address the matter of the car. Because the car was an older SUV, the damage could very well result in a total loss.

Thank goodness the driver, passenger and dog did not appear to be injured. The driver's attentive swerve might well have saved the dog's life, yet the dog owner neither expressed thanks nor concern for the driver, instead leaving the scene. The driver and grandmother were left to pay the price.

From my kitchen window, I see off-leash dogs in the park every day. Their owners are trailing them, some throwing balls to retrieve and closely monitoring their dog's activities, while others seem busy listening to something through their earbuds, focused on their cellphones or conversing with companions – distracted if not oblivious to their dog's activities. While walking our dog, my husband and I regularly pick up more dog poop left by inattentive dog owners than we do our own dog's poop. While toddlers and children are playing YMCA soccer games in the park, I often notice unleashed dogs running alarmingly close to the small children.

Despite many park signs stating that dogs must be leashed, it is apparent that many people believe they are entitled to off-leash activity. It seems perceived as a petty, victimless crime condoned by the city. But accidents can happen, causing injury to property, people and canines. Please consider the risks to the safety of your dog and other park users. Please keep your dogs on leash in Curtis Park.

—Janet Carlson



SUV lands on boulevard.

Photo by Janet Carlson

## Dog park

*Continued from page 10*

if additional funding is needed, fund it like you do McKinley Park, Curtis Park, Tahoe Park or Land Park.

Temporary fixes too often morph into permanent ones. The currently allotted temporary area is inadequate. People and dogs are packed in worse than cars on Hwy 80.

With a little imagination, there could be a multi-use park with times dedicated to soccer, golf, little league, lawn bowling or other favored uses, with times dedicated to off-leash dog activities. The city could promote cooperation and compromise of differing interests rather than pitting one group against another.

The city spokeswoman recently outlined the city's predictably bureaucratic posture: There will be, "...enforcement measures, including warning citations and administrative citations." Who's serving whom? Who is in charge of the so-called people's government? Whose park is it? Dictating how we can use the park is a case of the tail wagging the dog.

## Parks are for kids

*Continued from page 10*

for rules. In five months, there has not been a single day without unleashed dogs outside of the temporary enclosure. Even now, with the soccer field closed to repair the damage left by off-leash dog use, and all park entrances chained shut, unleashed dogs continue to access the green by entering and exiting through the children's playground.

Kids are and should be more important than dogs, and there is a reason why dog parks are never sited in neighborhood parks encircled by existing homes. Why not put a dog park at a walkable community or regional park, like William Land Park or McClatchy Park, far from homes and children's uses? Neighborhood parks are for kids.

## Sweet idea in a box

*By Judy Green Scheible*

Many Taylor's Market customers are familiar with the delicious options in the store's bakery case. These creations are made by the store's pastry chef Kristin Platzer and her team.

Recently, Platzer created a loaded take-away box with Blooming Tea for Two. These standard-size, square bakery boxes contain seven pairs of sweet and savory treats.

Platzer said she designed them for someone to treat a friend with tea or coffee.

Some customers will find that the generous amount of items in each box could easily stretch beyond one setting.

Platzer started the bakery boxes in April and now offers them two Saturdays a month, each with a theme. April was Alice in Wonderland and May was Mother's Day.

Platzer's June dates are June 3 and 17, which is Father's Day.


Each Blooming box costs \$40. It contains pairs of chicken salad on a croissant, cucumber finger sandwiches, bacon cheddar chive scones, raspberry thumbprint cookies, lemon petit fours, caramel macaroons and blooming tea flowers. Three additions can be ordered for an additional fee: four deviled egg halves (\$5); two chocolate-dipped coconut macaroons (\$5) and two almond croissants (\$7).

Platzer said she needs orders no later than the Friday before the Saturday pick-up day. Call 916-443-6881 and ask for Kristin in the bakery. Her hours are 7 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Platzer bakes in Taylor's Kitchen, but customers pick up boxes in the grocery store.



Taylor's pastry chef Kristin Platzer packs pairs of sweet and savory treats for Mother's Day.

Photo by Judy Green Scheible




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Mr. Rule's Sixth Grade class.

Photo by Lindsey Sin

## Graduating sixth-grade class advises kindergarteners

When Bret Harte Elementary breaks for summer vacation on June 15, sixth-grade students will prepare to attend junior high and middle schools in the fall. Mr. Rule's class shared what they're looking forward to and what they'll miss, and offered some advice for younger students.

Several students expressed a mixture of emotions about moving to a much larger school. Some were excited about the chance to make new friends but were aware of how much larger their new school would be. With around 200 students at Bret Harte, moving to a new school with five times that number seems overwhelming.

"Starting middle school in the fall has me feeling a bit anxious, as it involves a significant change with about 1,000 other students," said Sofia U. "I'm also looking forward to the opportunity to expand my social circle and connect with new people."

Most expressed excitement for the future. "I'm feeling excited about starting middle school in the fall," said another student. "And the other feeling that I have is happiness because I like to meet new people there and I like to make new friends."

Samya E. shared what she's hopeful for: "I'm really looking forward to meeting the staff and the students because I love the way Bret Harte treats me, and I'm hoping my middle school does the same."

This year, the sixth-grade class paired up with Mr. Peterson's kindergarten class to make the school's youngest students feel comfortable and welcome. Every week, students spent time in the kindergarten classroom doing art activities, reading with their "kinder buddies" or taking them out on the bigger playgrounds.

The sixth-grade students also gave some advice for the future and practical lessons for life. Zamiel



**LAUREN  
GOTHARD  
and  
LINDSEY  
SIN**

M. told the young students to "work hard, get your assigned work done on time." Another student suggested they "ask a classmate or teacher for help."

Some prepared the school's youngest students for what to expect in the future. "The tests are really hard. The diagnostics are harder than the tests. So I will just say keep trying and do your best," said one student.

Ryan D. stressed the importance of being comfortable with who you are. "You are who you are when no one is watching you...just be yourself."

All offered encouragement and urged the kindergarteners to never give up and try their very best. Kayli H. offered an insightful reminder for all. "When things get hard I promise you it will get better."

About half of this year's sixth graders have been at Bret Harte since kindergarten. Fifth-grade teacher Mr. Richardson previously taught them in kindergarten and then again in the fifth grade. He recalls "the class being well balanced and very supportive of one another."

In addition to mentoring the current kindergarten class, sixth graders have been taking on leadership roles at the school all year. They volunteered at the Fall Festival, the Winter Concert, the 100-year Anniversary Picnic and will run the activities for the annual Field Day celebration this month. "This class is very caring – thoughtful leaders for the school," said Rule.

"They definitely like to give back to school and have a sense of responsibility."

Many of the students also shared that they'll miss the teachers and staff at Bret Harte. Alina B. will miss fun activities, such as spirit days, along with the staff and teachers who treated her "like family," while Jah'Honey W. will miss "the community and the staff members as well as teachers, and everyone who was committed to helping everyone out to make this school a better place."

Kaysaida C. will "especially miss Ms. Sonia and Mrs. Letty because they treated me respectfully and are part of the family here at Bret Harte." While this group of graduating students will be absent from campus and dearly missed next year, their next adventures are just beginning.

Amelia T. summarized it best: "Overall, it's going to be another chapter and a new journey."

