VIEWPOINT

A publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association since 1979

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Music in the Park kicks off Sunday, June 29

Celebrate summer with live music, food and community at the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association's Music in the Park series, featuring a fresh line-up of bands sure to thrill music lovers. This free, family-friendly series takes place amid the shady canopy of trees in Curtis Park and is the perfect way to enjoy warm evenings with neighbors and friends.

Concert dates and featured bands include:

June 29: Dyana and the Cherry Kings

Kick off the series with high-energy rockabilly tunes that will get everyone dancing. Formed in 2015, Dyana and The Cherry Kings are a five-piece powerhouse that delivers an authentic experience appealing to music lovers of all ages. With a sound that pays homage to the golden era of 1950s rock 'n' roll injected with a fresh sense of vitality, the band has become a standout presence in the Sacramento swing dance and music scene for more than a decade, and lead singer Dyana O'Brien calls Curtis Park home. The group also includes Tom Proulx (guitar), Nathan Kingham (piano), Rob Meyer (upright bass) and Kevin Coughlin (drums).

July 27: A Little Project

Enjoy a soulful blend of smooth grooves and heartfelt melodies from A Little Project, a four-piece band that focuses on jazz fusion, funk and blues. The group formed in the summer of 2024 with experienced musicians from other well-known bands. Their tight grooves get audience members up and dancing, ensuring everyone has a good time. Members include Andrew Little (guitar, vocals), AJ Joyce (bass), Jim Wendt (keys) and John Mitchell III (drums).

August 31: According to Bazooka

Wrap up the summer with accordion-fueled Americana pop that's both catchy and unique from

See Music, Page 2

Dyana and the Cherry Kings Photo courtesy Dyana and the Cherry Kings

Planning Commission gives partial approval to housing plan for Crocker Village

By Mike Sicilia

The City of Sacramento Planning and Design Commission on May 22 approved 31 single-family homes at Crocker Drive and Tenth Avenue but denied developer Paul Petrovich's request to change the plan for the remaining parcel of his 73-acre commercial/residential infill development on the once-polluted Union Pacific Railyards site now known as Crocker Village.

The commission voted unanimously (11-0 with two absences and one abstention) to deny Petrovich's request to change the official designation from multi-family to single-family residences for a 2.37-acre site on Omaha Beach Avenue, just north of the 91-unit affordable senior housing apartments in the western portion of the development. That space is designated for multi-family use under a long-term agreement.

Commissioner Kendra Macias Reed, who lives in Crocker Village, abstained.

The decision came after several hours of testimony from the developer and three dozen residents of both Curtis Park and Crocker Village on both sides of the issue.

The commissioners approved 31 single-family homes on a 2.49-acre site on 10th Avenue, west of Crocker Avenue, adjacent to the commercial development in a so-called "flex zone." This area was previously earmarked for a potential shopping center or commercial use and was rezoned for residential use in 2022.

Citing a critical shortage of housing and legal barriers to barring the plan, city planners recommended approval for residential single-family cottages for the flex zone parcel identical in style to existing homes. The homes, ranging in size from 1,600 to 2,000 square feet, would be situated close together along pedestrian walkways with garages facing common alleys. City planners said the developer must now apply for a conditional-use permit to build homes on the Crocker Ave property.

The Omaha Beach parcel was designated as multifamily in the required Planned Unit Development Schematic Plan (PUD). Negotiated with input from Curtis Park residents, the City Council approved the PUD in 2010. Nearby residents, however, expressed concern that a large apartment building adjacent to walkways and common alleys would pose safety issues and be dwarfed by a large apartment complex.

"I'm very disappointed," said Ramey Mar, a Crocker Village resident who fears that multi-family dwellings will disrupt the feel of the neighborhood. "Who knows what it's going to be now? The culture definitely is going to change."

A last-second compromise fell apart as Petrovich offered to build attached, 500-square-foot Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) onto the homes planned for Omaha Beach. The plan would have

See Crocker, Page 5

Participate in Curtis Park survey until June 14

By Kathy Les

It's not too late to provide an earful to SCNA about various programs, events and issues relative to Sierra 2 and Curtis Park.

It's easy to participate. Simply visit sierra2.org and click the link at the top of the homepage to get started, or use the QR code. The survey takes about 5 to 7 minutes. Completed surveys are due by June 14.

This is your opportunity to learn more about SCNA and the Sierra 2 Center and for SCNA to learn more about you and your interest in our offerings. You do not need to be a member of SCNA to take the survey, but we encourage you to join. We are interested in hearing from people of all ages and all points of view. To participate, you must live within the boundaries of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association.

We look forward to your survey responses. For questions or more information, email info@sierra2.org.

Graduates

It's time to congratulate our grads

Page 8

Curtis Park Yard Sale

Did you find your treasure?

Page 11

Mayor's Listening Tour to stop in Curtis Park

Sacramento Mayor Kevin McCarty is visiting Sacramento neighborhoods on a listening tour to hear citizen ideas, concerns and feedback. The next stop is the Curtis Park neighborhood, where he'll appear from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. on June 4 at the Sierra 2 Center, 2791 24th St. The meeting will be in Curtis Hall.

This is a wonderful opportunity for Curtis Park residents to share ideas and concerns directly with our city's mayor, who also served as state assemblymember and city councilmember for more than a decade. Reservations are not required.

SCNA enjoys successful Big Day of Giving

By Kathy Les

SCNA extends a big thank you to all of those who donated during last month's Big Day of Giving (BDOG). With your help, SCNA raised nearly $36,000, which was just shy of our goal but still plenty to meet our targeted projects.

The money raised will be used to fix a broken sign on the 24th Street Theatre and provide supplemental funding for the Learnery and the Senior Center, as well as for other general improvements.

"Thanks to all who supported SCNA and Sierra 2 during the Big Day of Giving," said SCNA Board President John Bailey. "The last year has been a time of transition, and your confidence in your neighborhood association is greatly appreciated. You can trust that your gifts will be put to good use."

Again this year, SCNA board members were each asked to raise $1,000 by reaching out to neighborhood residents, asking them to host a lawn sign and make donations in any amount. Donations ranged from $25 to $2,000, totaling 174 donations. More than half were repeat donors from the previous year, and the other half were new to our donation roster.

SCNA continues to enjoy good support from our Curtis Park community. It's not too late to make a donation at sierra2.org.

Tell us about your home's 100th birthday

Is your Curtis Park home having a centennial birthday in 2025? How will you celebrate? *Viewpoint* wants to hear about and share your plans for your home's 100th year. Please send a note with details to *Viewpoint* Editor Dorsey Griffith at Dorsey.griffith@gmail.com.

SIERRA CURTIS NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
SIERRA 2 CENTER FOR THE ARTS & COMMUNITY

- **Curtis Fest** – June 1
- **Music in the Park** – Sundays, June 29, July 27 & August 24
- **Sip, Savor & Support** – October 5 Wine, appetizers and fun
- **Pie & Pajamas** – November 23
- **Giving Tuesday** – December 2
- **Membership Meeting** – December 10

Music

Continued from page 1

According to Bazooka. Blending folk-rock, rock 'n roll, jazz and country, the band's unique vintage instruments grab the attention of the audience both visually and sonically with songs that every listener can relate to while happily swaying along. Their music features catchy, singable songs with an "easy come, easy go" perspective on the absurdities of life that we all share. The band includes René Martucci (vocals, accordion), Richard Urbino (vocals, guitar), Jamie Knapp (vocals, upright bass), Don Johnston (drums, percussion) and Daphna Rahmil (violin).

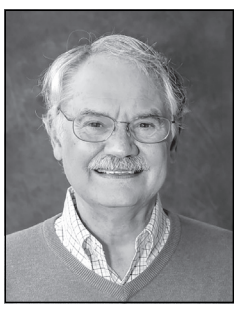
Kids Intermission Performer: Mr. Cooper

Delighting audiences young and old, Mr. Cooper (Ken Cooper) will open the evenings and give a special intermission performance for each of our bands. Known for engaging, educational songs that kids love, Mr. Cooper's shows are a highlight for families attending our Music in the Park concerts.

Bring your picnic blankets, lawn chairs and dancing shoes for three lively evenings of live entertainment, great food and summer fun.

SCNA's purpose and how we build your trust in our neighborhood association

John Bailey
SCNA Board President



It's been a busy time since my last column. Many thanks to the volunteers who made the Spring Egg Hunt and Home & Garden Tour successes. And to all who generously gave to SCNA during the Big Day of Giving, your support is very much appreciated. We hope to warrant your continued trust and faith in the organization. With that in mind, let's look at SCNA's core objectives.

SCNA was legally founded in 1980 with Articles of Incorporation that stated four purposes, as described below. Here are some highlights of how SCNA has followed through:

1) Promote the health, safety and welfare of the residents of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood

For decades, SCNA monitored the air pollution and underground water contamination emanating from the rail yards. With the excavation and removal of the worst elements, that health risk appears behind us. Air monitoring and advocacy for the urban forest continue. Traffic safety has always been a concern, with effective input to the city, including the design of streets throughout Crocker Village. SCNA monitors crime statistics, pending ordinances and programs considered at City Hall – and weighs in as deemed appropriate. SCNA joins with other neighborhood associations to advocate on issues of common interest.

2) Promote the educational, community and recreational uses of the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts and Community

The vast majority of SCNA's efforts go toward managing Sierra 2, which provides a home for organizations delivering a broad array of educational, community and recreational programs. Sierra 2 also serves as the venue for SCNA-sponsored programming such as those at the Senior Center and the Learnery classes. SCNA periodically presents candidate forums and other educational presentations. Sierra 2 serves as a polling place for the neighborhood.

3) Promote and foster good racial and community relations in the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood

SCNA has always strived to be racially and culturally inclusive, both in the Curtis Park neighborhood and in the events and rentals at Sierra 2. Following the death of George Floyd, we formed an Ad Hoc Racial Justice Committee to educate our community on red-lining, racial deed restrictions city police and homeless services affecting racial injustices and other historical racial injustices. We welcome new ideas so we can do even more.

4) Sponsor and encourage education, community and recreational programs through public and private funding in the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood of Sacramento

In addition to Sierra 2 programming, SCNA sponsors Curtis Fest, Music in the Park and the Home & Garden Tour events. It coordinates an annual yard sale. These and other events, including the soon-to-return wine tasting, bring the community together. We hope to provide additional events for children and families. *Viewpoint* informs, educates, and fosters community cohesion.

What else can SCNA do in service toward these purposes, or do better? We want to hear your good ideas. Please participate in the neighborhood survey outlined on Page 1 and share your ideas at sierra2.org.

Board Notes

Crocker Village Rezoning Request

The board voted unanimously to urge the City Planning Commission to deny developer **Paul Petrovich's** application to downzone two "flex-zone" parcels near the rail tracks from multi-family to single-family. The parcels sit in a transit-oriented district, the original Planned-Unit-Development agreement promised multi-family housing and additional single-family lots would preclude ADUs and reduce income diversity.

Resident-Tenant Rental Rates

On the Facilities Committee recommendation, the board approved a 2.4 % rent increase for resident tenants, plus utility surcharges of 4% (non-kitchen) and 5% (kitchen).

President's Report

President **John Bailey** announced the resignation of board member **Madelyn Gelpi** and thanked volunteers for a successful Egg Hunt, Home Tour and Big Day of Giving. To ease the executive director's workload, committee chairs will be asked to email agendas and material requests to **Danielle Whitmore** four days before meetings. The June board meeting is moved to June 11 to avoid overlap with the mayor's town hall at Sierra 2 on June 4.

Executive Director's Report

Whitmore provided a budget-development timeline: committee workbooks due May 20, draft budget to finance May 28 and full proposal to the board June 11. She reported hiring a new facility monitor, progress on the board SharePoint portal and website fixes for the Yard Sale registration.

Using the Board Portal

Whitmore demonstrated the SharePoint site for agendas, minutes, committee folders and a board-only calendar. Public agendas and minutes also will appear on the Sierra 2 website; financials remain internal.

Finance Committee

Form 990 and state filings are submitted. March produced a $3k profit; YTD loss stands at $70k, but April revenues (BDOG $35k, $25k HVAC gift, $12K Home Tour) should return SCNA to the black. The Reserve for Replacement fund will dip near zero during Heat-Pump Phase 2 but rebound with a $126k SMUD rebate.

Facilities Committee

Phase 1 HVAC is paid; Phase 2 is in progress. Solar financing options are under review. Painting is deferred to FY 2025-26.

Development Committee

Egg Hunt – 312 attendees, costs largely offset; cash-donation table planned for future events.

Home Tour – 21% ticket increase year-over-year; $12k profit.

Big Day of Giving – $36.6k raised (174 donors), just shy of the $37.5k goal. Yard sign collection is underway.

Neighborhood Yard Sale – May 18; registration $5 members/$10 non-members; interactive map is now live.

Neighborhood Concerns Committee

Draft letters on rezoning (approved), barking-dog resources were discussed and a fireworks ban are in progress. A crowd-sourced database of neighborhood associations is being built. The Curtis Park survey is live online and promoted in the May and current issue of *Viewpoint*.

Senior Center

April luncheon drew 35 participants with sponsorship from Eskaton. Bridge has expanded into Room 9; chair yoga and handwork groups are growing. Seniors will staff a sales booth at Curtis Fest, with proceeds benefiting the Senior Center. One AARP grant aide departed; hours for remaining staff have been expanded.

Viewpoint Committee

Tickets ($20) are on sale for "Democracy at a Crossroads" on May 29 (7-9 p.m., 24th Street Theatre). Moderator Anita Chabria (LA Times) will lead a five-member panel on federal policy impacts. Capital Public Radio is confirmed as media sponsor.

Governance Committee

Committee charters (Roles & Responsibilities) are due May 1 for inclusion in a consolidated package. Work continues on attendance standards, a revised Code of Ethics and an attrition plan to reach 15 directors by 2026.

The next board meeting is at 6:30 p.m. June 11, rescheduled due to the mayor's town hall on June 4.

– Submitted by Matthew Royal, Board Secretary

VIEWPOINT

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Call Kinsley Earl: 916-452-3005 x 205
kinsley@sierra2.org

Daniel Pskowski talks tree health with a tourgoer. Photos by Rudy Calpo

Curtis Park 35th Home & Garden Tour raises $16,000

By Janice Calpo

Drizzling skies did not dampen the spirit of the 2025 Curtis Park Home & Garden Tour; in fact, the landscape colors were richer and the homes even more warm and welcoming in the light April rain.

Overall attendance of approximately 750 exceeded that of the previous year, generating $16,000 to support SCNA programs and Sierra 2 Center operations.

A lit fireplace in a bungalow on tour brought the heart of the residence's cozy style home. A tour stop called The Urban Garden, graced with its themed dinner-table setting, captured the precious rainwater in its leaf-shaped bowls.

Festivities at the park included jazz by the Jane Thompson Trio, food trucks, and community organizations, with a picnic area under the trees.

The Sacramento Capitol A's Model A car club was on tour and present throughout the neighborhood. Kathy Les and Hal Thomas shared their expansive garden with great enthusiasm, and arborist Dan Pskowski and beekeeper Carole Garrett, along with her bees, shared their knowledge and love of their respective fields. Pianist Bob Olson shared the gift of music at one of the homes on tour.

Pianist Bob Olson brought music to the bungalow.

Porches were a nice place to gather in the rain.

All the homeowners gave generously of their time and effort in preparation for the big day. Each residence showcased a unique style, brimming with the character and love of those who had opened their homes. Curtis Park hospitality was on full display for neighbors and visitors alike. It was another memorable day.

The tour would not be possible without generous, community-minded homeowners and over 70 volunteers. Special thanks to tour sponsor, real estate agent Paloma Begin.

Trees in Curtis Park

An update on the Mediterranean oak borer infestation

By Daniel Pskowski

The 68-inch diameter valley oak (Quercus lobata) in the Sierra 2 Green playground was removed last August due to the Mediterranean oak borer (MOB). It was the first confirmed case of the infestation in the city of Sacramento by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CalFire).

MOB is an ambrosia beetle, just 1/8-inch long, native to the Mediterranean region. This invasive pest threatens the native valley and blue oak trees. It starts by attacking the upper portion of the canopy on one side, and then, as the population increases, moves to the lower trunk. Once infested, an oak will wilt and die within three to five years.

Working with city parks department arborist Jodi Carlson, we obtained monitoring traps from CalFire entomologist Curtis Ewing. The traps will determine the MOB population and the extent to which it has spread. I set up two traps close to the Sierra 2 Green oak that died. Peter and Carol Blackman of Fourth Avenue and Tim Schafer and Amy Lapin of 22nd Street were willing to allow the placement of a MOB trap in their backyards. Samples will be collected every two weeks and sent to the state entomologist for analysis until fall.

Carlson also set traps in William Land Park, Del Paso Regional Park, Marriott Park in the Pocket area and Tretheway Oak Preserve in Natomas.

Testing for the Mediterranean oak borer in Curtis Park.
Photo by Daniel Pskowski

Property owners with valley oaks want to know if preventative pesticide treatments can control this insect. Experts are studying the behavior of the new pest. In March, consulting arborist Blake Watkins arranged a trunk injection demonstration of emamectin benzoate on the 45-inch diameter valley oak east of the one removed at Sierra 2 Green. The demonstration was led by Wister Dorta, western regional technical manager for Arborjet | Ecologel®, the company that provided the pesticide and application equipment. Emamectin benzoate is an insecticide proven effective against the gold spotted borer, emerald ash borer and ambrosia beetles. Trials and testing, as well as regulatory approval, will be required before the insecticide is proven effective against MOB.

If your valley oak is showing symptoms of MOB, (four to six-inch-diameter dying limbs starting toward the top on just one side of the tree), contact me at danielpskowski@gmail.com, call the pest hotline: 1-800-491-1899 or visit cdfa.ca.gov/plant/reportapest.

Infected trees are removed, and the wood is chipped into pieces one to three inches in diameter. Some public agencies recommend covering the logs with clear plastic; however, this approach has been shown to be ineffective. Therefore, the logs should be buried in a landfill. Using a tub grinder is possible, but the chips would have to be reprocessed through a regular chipper to get the recommended size of one to three inches in diameter. This pest must be eradicated, or the Sacramento region risks losing its majestic valley and blue oak trees.

Dan Pskowski is a retired Sacramento City arborist and urban forester. He is an ISA-certied arborist. Questions? danielpskowski@gmail.com

Crocker

Continued from page 1

required a study, and commissioners questioned whether the attached ADUs would satisfy the multi-family definition.

City planners, commissioners and many long-time Curtis Park residents said changing the PUD would be inconsistent with Sacramento's 2040 General Plan, noting proximity to the City College light rail station, lack of alternative housing styles available in Crocker Village, fidelity to climate goals and the fact that it is the last available parcel in the residential zone of the urban-infill project that makes it more suitable for multi-family residences, like apartments or condominiums. They also noted that funding for the now-iconic pedestrian-bicycle bridge from Crocker Village to the City College light rail station was predicated on the promise of multi-family housing nearby. Curtis Park resident Nancy McKeever testified that "locating multi-family developments adjacent to light rail, shops and services" creates "synergy that is the magic sauce for high-quality, realistic ownership options – for downsizers, civil servants, first-time homebuyers, college students and service workers."

Multifamily use of the property also was preferred by organizations including the Environmental Council of Sacramento, Sacramento Housing Alliance and League of Women Voters, They opposed the developer's requested change, citing the need for affordable housing options in the community, where home prices range from $600,000 to $1.5 million, according to advertising signage.

However, Petrovich and some residents testified that the homes on the southern side of the residential development were actually more affordable and were eligible for Veterans Administration loans and Fannie Mae's lower down-payment requirements, which made those homes affordable for middle-income buyers.

The developer campaigned for support from Crocker Village residents before the vote, distributing flyers and holding a meeting exclusive to residents. Asked what he would do now that his change proposal was rejected, Petrovich said, "Nothing. The site will be a homeless camp."

Graduates to appear in July Viewpoint

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

For each graduate, please include name, parents' names, Curtis Park street name, graduate's school, post-high school or college plans and phone number.

Please send information and photos in high-resolution jpeg format to susan56ayr@sbcglobal.net.

The deadline is June 10.

SIERRA 2 CENTER
SIERRA CURTIS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Questions? Please contact groups directly.

MUSIC

Beginning Taiko Drumming
4-week class
No experience necessary.
Tuesdays, 6-7 p.m. Studio 1
kristyoshiro.com/home

Intermediate Taiko Drumming
4-week class
Previous taiko experience required.
Tuesdays, 7-8:30 p.m. Studio 1
kristyoshiro.com/home

MARTIAL ARTS

Yi family Tai Chi/Qi Gong, Shaolin Martial Arts
Tuesdays/Thursdays, 7-8 p.m. Studio 2
Saturdays, 10-11 a.m. Studio 2
lohan36@sbcglobal.net

Eagle Claw Kung Fu
Mondays, 6-7 p.m. Studio 2
Wednesdays, 6-7:15 p.m. Studio 2
Saturdays, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Studio 2
Sifu Mary Melliza: 916-802-3144

ADULT DANCE

Dancing with Heidi
Tuesdays, 4:30-5:30 p.m.
Children's Ballet I, ages 6-9 (no experience required)
Wednesdays, 3-4:30 p.m.
Adult/Teen Basic Ballet (some experience required)
Wednesdays, 6-8:30 p.m.
Adult/Teen Ballet from the Beginning (no experience required)
dancingwithheidi@gmail.com

Dance for Parkinson's
Free class. Sponsored by Pamela Trokanski Dance Theater
Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m., Studio 1
Rcarlson404@yahoo.com

Two Rivers Dance Center/ River City Taps
Mondays-Thursdays/Saturdays
Class schedules: tworiversdancecenter.com and rivercitytaps.com

ART

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

FITNESS

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

WW Studio Workshop
Thursdays/Fridays, 8:30 a.m. Room 10
Sat., 8:30 a.m. & 10 a.m. Room 10
800-374-9191, weightwatchers.com

SIERRA 2 CENTER FOR THE ARTS & COMMUNITY
Senior Center

EVERYONE IS WELCOME
Activities are free, except where noted. (Donations appreciated)
Room 12 • 916-455-6339. For more information: Sierra2.org.

LEISURE

Monthly Luncheon – Free
Friday, June 27, 11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 10
Join us for a fun, free social luncheon.

Movie Monday Matinee – Free
Monday, June 16, 1-3 p.m.
Room 12
June Movie – TBD, come join us for popcorn and a movie!

Book Club
Monday, June 9, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 11
June Book – "James" by Percival Everett

Nonfiction Book Club
Thursday, June 19, 11 a.m.-noon
Room 12
June Books – "On Tyranny" by Timothy Snyder and "Democracy in Retrograde" by Sami Sage

Women's Friendship Group
Meet new friends and discover new hobbies.
Wednesdays, June 11 and June 25
11 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 11

Open Art Studio
Bring in your art or craft project to work on – or use our supplies to try something new.
Fridays, noon-3 p.m.
Room 11

AUTOBIOGRAPHY GROUPS

My Story Project
Preserve your autobiography on video – a great keepsake for loved ones!
Monday, June 9, 1-3 p.m.
Room 12

Life History Writing
For anyone who wants to write and share weekly about their life stories.
Wednesdays, 1-3 p.m.
Room 12

CARDS & GAMES

Pinochle
Some Pinochle experience required.
Fridays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12

Mahjong
Beginners welcome!
Mondays, 10 a.m.-noon Room 12

Fun Bridge (contract)
Beginners welcome!
Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12
NEW - Fridays, 1-3 p.m. Room 9

SENIOR WELLNESS PROGRAM

Punch cards $80/10 classes; $45/5 classes or $10 drop-in (purchase in the Sierra 2 office)

NEW: CHAIR YOGA with Jen Brinsky
Thursdays 9 -10 a.m. Room 12
All levels welcome!

STRENGTH AND BALANCE
Tuesdays 10-11 a.m. Studio 2
All levels welcome!

LINE DANCE CLASS
Tuesdays, 1-2 p.m. Studio 2
All levels welcome!

TAI CHI CHUAN
Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. Studio 1
All levels welcome!

The LEARNERY AT SIERRA 2 CENTER
Cultivating Curious Minds

TO REGISTER FOR A CLASS
sierra2.org/thelearnery

Watercolor Art with Larry Ramos
Wednesday, June 4
5:30-7:30 p.m.
$35 per class
Express your feelings beyond words on paper using the OSM (Awesome) method with art instructor of over 20 years and award-winning artist Larry Ramos.
June 4: Rooster, Layering Technique

Vintage Cake Decorating Class
Thursday, June 5
6:30-8 p.m.
$95
This class has everything you'll need for a mini, 4-inch-round, three-layer cake. Students will use a variety of colors and sprinkles for their design. We will break down the decorating process for the cake design, including stacking, filling, crumb coating and finishing the cake with provided embellishments. Each student also will learn piping basics including the use of different tips to achieve different styles. Each cake serves up to four people and can be stored in the refrigerator for one week or up to one month in the freezer.

Woodworking Workshop: Carving a Cutting Board
Sunday, June 8
12-3 p.m.
$95
Explore woodworking in this hands-on workshop led by local woodworking expert Michael Bush. Students will choose from various locally sourced wood planks and carve their own cutting board. You will learn the elements of carving and shaping wood using a variety of vintage and user-friendly tools. No prior experience is needed; just bring a willingness to get dirty and have fun. Wood choices include: avocado, sycamore, ash from a local fallen tree and more.

Creative Tools Breakdown
Tuesday, June 10
6-8 p.m.
$35
Optional $25 painting kit
This class introduces a "toolbox" of creative techniques you can explore and apply, empowering you to add fresh elements and textures to your work with confidence. Not only will these tools help enrich your paintings, but they'll also make the creative process more fun and adventurous. Each class includes instruction, guidance, and time to experiment with different creative tools used in intuitive painting
June Tool: Stamps

Mixed Media Art with Larry Ramos
Wednesday, June 18
5:30-7:30 p.m.
$35 per class
Express your feelings beyond words on paper using the OSM (Awesome) method with an art instructor of over 20 years and award-winning artist Larry Ramos.
June 18: Invent Fantastical Creatures

Menopause Workshop
Thursday, June 19
6:30-8 p.m.
$35
Navigating perimenopause and menopause can be challenging, but it is also a time rich with wisdom and transformation. In this 90-minute workshop, participants will explore personal experiences through guided storytelling. Using the Amherst Writers & Artists method and techniques from Kara Haug's work, we'll create a safe and supportive space for reflection, connection and shared insight to create a new narrative.

ABSTRACT INTUITIVE PAINTING WORKSHOP
Saturday June 28
10 a.m.-12 p.m.
$35
Optional paint kit: $25
Explore the wonderful world of art, where the focus is not solely on the result but the joy and fulfillment of the creative process. This class welcomes individuals from all levels of painting expertise. Discover the power of self-expression and the therapeutic nature of painting. Under the guidance of instructor Cara Gregor, the class will cover composition, color theory and the use of light and shadow to create depth and dimension in your artwork. The supplies list is on the Sierra 2 website.

Pictured from left to right are Patty McCauley of 26th Street, Dorsey Griffith of Eighth Avenue and Nancee Murray of 11th Avenue.
Credit: Melinda Walker

Trek of a lifetime

Three Curtis Park neighbors recently completed a 7-day trek in a rarely visited area of the Peruvian Andes with three other companions and a local guide. Their Choquequirao camping adventure took them to elevations of up to 14,000 and 15,000 feet, with 4,000-foot drops over steep terrain that varied from deep mud and slippery rocks to thick jungle forest floors. The exhilarating – if not exhausting – trek, less popular and far more remote than those along the Inca Trail, was rewarded with a sunny day of exploration at Machu Picchu, then several days of wildlife spotting at an Amazonian eco-resort.

LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Here's your handy guide


Goldpine

THE SIDE DOOR
2900 Franklin Blvd.
thesidedoor.net • All shows 7 p.m.
Tickets: $25-$40. Advance tickets available.
Friday, June 6: Goldpine, raucous and folksy, these Americana marrieds from Nashville can confess dark and then sanctify lightly. Think Reba and Buddy or June and Johnny
Saturday, June 7: Vivian Lee with her carefully chosen standards repertoire – Ellington, Gershwin, Brubeck, Mercer, Jobin and Monk – will swing, caress and transport
Sunday, June 8: Antsy McClain Solo, the "Indelible Man" is the new album from this popular folk humorist
Friday, June 13: Chris Webster & Nina Gerber, deep soul from a folk music royalty duo
Saturday, June 14: Jazz Gitan, acoustic gypsy jazz quartet. 1930s Paris and modern originals
Wednesday, June 18: Albert Lee, Grammy-winning British/Nashville guitar legend who has dazzled Clapton, EmmyLou, Jackson Browne, Roseanne Cash and Joe Cocker with his playing; Everly Brothers reuniter and music director
Thursday, June 19: Clive Carroll, British steel-string master, discovered by another master, the great John Renbourn. His monumental 2023 album, "The Abbot," is a tribute to JR
Friday, June 20: Late for the Train + Hattie Craven, Sonoma County's literate, modern string band rooted in American folk and bluegrass music + young folk royalty
Saturday, June 21: David Houston Band, Sacramento songwriting/producing legend with evocative string section, String Theory. Moody, lush, literate
Friday, June 27: Crying Uncle, "Momentum" is the word for these exciting, young, award-winning, world-travelling brothers and their band. Dawg Music (David Grisman), jazz, bluegrass, modern originals–and they debuted at The Grand Ole Opry last year!
Saturday, June 28: Heffer Belles, Nevada City-based quartet of women led by the "platinum-gold voiced" songwriter Julie Gobert. Guitars, bass, violin and accordion heaven

OLD SOUL COFFEE
3434 Broadway Ave.
oldsoulco.com/cafes/40-acres-in-oak-park
Sundays, 4-6 p.m. FREE.
"Sunday Jazz @ Old Soul" 40 Acres curated by noted guitarist Ross Hammond. Different creative groups every week in a warm neighborhood setting.
June 1: Ambient Taco
June 8: Ice Age Jazztet
June 15: Father's Day (no show)
June 22: Ron Ochoa
June 29: Neighborhood Jazz

THE GUILD THEATER
2828 35th St.
sthope.org/guild-theater-home
Saturday, June 14: "2025 Juneteenth Block Party" @ 40 Acres 4-9 p.m. Celebrate, honor and connect with Black history and excellence in Oak Park. Live performances by Lucky Witherspoon, Sol Development and Digital Underground along with food trucks, local vendors and a Black-owned business marketplace. Includes car show, craft beer tasting and a kids' play space. Free and open to all.
2nd Wednesdays: "Amateur Night @ The Guild" hosted by Tristan Johnson, 7 p.m.
First Thursdays: "POHOP: Poetry and Hip-Hop Night" hosted by J. Nash & C West, 7 p.m.

TWO RIVERS CIDER CO.
4311 Attawa Ave.
tworiverscider.com/events
Now open daily for great beverages and good food, plus these free events:
Mondays: "Vinyl Night" hosted by Victor Malicious AKA Vincent! 6-9 p.m. NEW!
Fridays: "Local Sounds" acoustic showcase hosted by Four-Eyed Whale, 6-9 p.m.
Saturdays: "Group Line Dancing," 2-3 p.m. (2nd & 4th Saturdays)
Sundays: Open Acoustic Jam, 1-4 p.m. (1st & 3rd Sundays)
Ukulele class with Gurukulele (Jim Coats), 4-5 p.m. (every Sunday)

– Mindy Giles

Help the Sacramento Fire Department curb illegal fireworks

By Garrett Jensen

With warm weather comes summer BBQs, cookouts, time in the park, biking through tree-lined streets and a cold one on any number of Curtis Park patios. The summer also brings what many dread: fireworks.

We spoke to Sacramento Fire Department Captain and Public Information Officer Justin Sylvia about the consequences of illegal fireworks and what we can do to help stop it.

Last year, the *Sacramento Bee* reported that local "fire agencies responded to hundreds of grass and structure fires, medical emergencies and other emergency calls on Independence Day, one of the busiest days of the year for first responders."

Sylvia said concerns include:

Fire Hazards: In July 2024, Sacramento firefighters responded to more than 40 vegetation fires and multiple home fires.

Injury to Adults and Children: Burns, eye injuries, loss of hands/fingers and other accidents occur yearly.

Limited Emergency Services: In 2024, Sacramento Regional Fire and EMS Communications Center received 1,465 emergency calls, a 45% increase from July 4, 2023," according to the Bee. Including non-emergency calls, the communications center received over 2,500 calls during the holiday – 2.5 times the daily average.

Pets and Wildlife: Animals experiencing fear and anxiety, with pets and wildlife fleeing homes and habitats, put additional pressure on the Front Street Animal Shelter.

Veterans, Noise and Mental Health: The impacts on neighbors sensitive to loud noise and veterans with PTSD cannot be overstated.

Captain Sylvia emphasized that even legal fireworks can be dangerous. Fireworks should be lit in a clear area on concrete or asphalt, with an extinguishing agent such as a garden hose nearby, and in an area clear of children. Once used, fireworks should be placed in a bucket for at least 24 hours before disposing of them in a garbage can. The Sacramento Fire has responded to numerous fires caused by extinguished fireworks being thrown out prematurely, which can start fires that spread to homes or other structures.

Additionally, the loud, window-shaking explosions of illegal fireworks days before and after July Fourth negatively impact our neighborhood, especially pets and some veterans.

What can you do? The Sacramento Fire Department offers an app for reporting illegal fireworks and other dangerous activities.

The department also has fire-prevention teams out looking for illegal fireworks. These teams are notified of illegal fireworks, which may result in fines to the property owner. With Independence Day around the corner, SCNA encourages everyone to look out for one another, attend an organized legal fireworks show and enjoy a safe celebration.

Franklin Boulevard is on the road to safer streets, bike lanes and pedestrian crossings

By Patti Roberts

As you travel south on Franklin Boulevard ready to cross Sutterville Road, you begin to notice the orange "Road Work Ahead" signs, lane closures and lots of construction trucks and road workers.

Welcome to the start of the year-long "Franklin Boulevard Complete Street Project."

The project, which began in April, will include reduced lanes to calm traffic, protected bike lanes, new pedestrian crosswalk lighting for increased safety and expanded tree coverage, according to Kendra Macias Reed, director of operations for the Franklin Neighborhood Development Corporation, one of the program's partners.

"Our goal is to slow down traffic, reduce accidents and provide safety for bike riders and Ethel Phillips Elementary School students," Reed said.

Megan Johnson, senior engineer with the city of Sacramento's Department of Public Works, explains that the project "will transform Franklin Boulevard from a road that essentially functions as a freeway bypass for commuters traveling through the area, into a main street that serves the community around it.

"This is a unique project because it wasn't a case of the city engineers deciding what was best for the community," Johnson said. "This started from a grassroots effort, coming from individuals and groups that love this community and created a vision for a Franklin Boulevard that would serve the needs of the existing businesses and residents."

The project's first two phases begin at Franklin Boulevard and Sutterville Road and will progress south toward 32nd Avenue and eventually stretch to the county line just south of 38th Avenue. Work is expected to be completed in early 2026. In the meantime, Reed acknowledges there will be effects on commuters and neighborhoods.

Rendering of Franklin Boulevard with traffic-calming measures
Courtesy City of Sacramento Public Works Department

"The construction impacts access to Highway 99, businesses along the route and those using Franklin Boulevard for various reasons," she said. "We encourage people to support businesses along Franklin that are being impacted. There is full access to those businesses during construction.

"We also urge people to use extra caution when driving down the boulevard since there will be construction vehicles and workers along the route," Reed said. She suggests signing up for the city's Franklin Boulevard Complete Street Projects newsletter for timely notices, which can be found on the City of Sacramento Franklin Boulevard Complete Street Project page, cityofsacramento.gov/public-works/engineering/projects/franklin-boulevard-complete-street-project.

Funding came from the California Transportation Commission, the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) and Measure A funds administered by the Sacramento Transportation Authority.

The Franklin Boulevard District has a significant historical and cultural context for Sacramento. It was part of the original Monterey Trail that connected Sutter's Fort to Monterey, the capital of Alta California (from 1774 to 1849) before California became a state. In the mid- to late-20th century, the Franklin Boulevard area became home to a rich mosaic of ethnically, culturally and economically diverse communities.

Principal Celyna Melendez cuts the ribbon at Merryhill Schools' new preschool. She is joined by preschool parents and students and staff from Merryhill's K-8 school on V Street. Photo by Anne Da Vigo

Merryhill makes it official

By Anne Da Vigo

Although Merryhill Preschool on Franklin Boulevard at Tenth Avenue began operating at its new location in Curtis Park in January, it officially celebrated its opening with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and open house in May.

Principal Celyna Melendez and other staff members conducted tours of the new school, which offers childcare and services for children from infants through pre-kindergarten.

"We provide a vibrant and lively program that will feed into Merryhill's kindergarten through eighth-grade school on V Street," Melendez said of its other nearby facility.

Merryhill is a private school system with 13 facilities in the Sacramento area and 26 schools in four states.

Melendez emphasized that the new preschool is eager to connect with the Curtis Park neighborhood. "We have after-school staff meetings at Hop Gardens and patronize Gunther's for student parties. Yum Yum Donuts is just around the corner," she said.

In addition, the Sacramento Zoo has provided discounts for preschool events, and Fairytale Town is nearby for student field trips.

After 10 years working in the Merryhill Schools system in classroom and administrative positions, Melendez said she is prepared to be a principal.

The school faces some challenges. It has a capacity of 198 students, but current enrollment stands at 40, said Brett Wallace, administrator of the K-8 school on V Street. He explained that some parents of prospective students didn't want to switch schools during the current school year.

For the fall, the preschool is projected to have 89 children, Melendez said.

Merryhill parent Alex Hicks' three-year-old daughter, Evelyn, attends the Curtis Park preschool.

"I had worked in child care for a long time, so I knew what I wanted," Hicks said. "The facility is really well thought-out. It's clean and welcoming, with a warm, open feeling."

Even on days when her parents have a day off work, Evelyn wants to go to school, Hicks said.

To transform the building into an educational facility, Merryhill extensively remodeled the brick building on 11th Avenue, formerly the site of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to include an infant nursery, playrooms, learning centers, and a new outdoor playground with a shade structure.

WHAT'S NEW AT SIERRA 2?

Sacramento School of Harp brings timeless music to Curtis Park

By Sierra 2 Staff

The Sierra 2 Center is now home to the Sacramento School of Harp (SSH), a vibrant music school offering private lessons, group classes, workshops and concerts for harpists of all ages.

Founded in 2023 by lifelong harpist and educator Kerstin Allvin, SSH was born out of a desire to reconnect and rebuild following the pandemic. Since then, it has grown from a handful of students into a full-fledged school deeply rooted in the Curtis Park community. In 2024, fellow professional harpist Jacquelyn Venter joined the team, adding her own wealth of experience to this flourishing endeavor.

SSH is devoted not only to teaching the technical side of the harp but to sharing the emotional and cultural depth of this ancient instrument.

"The harp has brought joy and tears, helped heal the sick, moved giants, lightened hearts and transcended souls for millennia," said Allvin. "It's fun, engaging, colorful and satisfying for all ages."

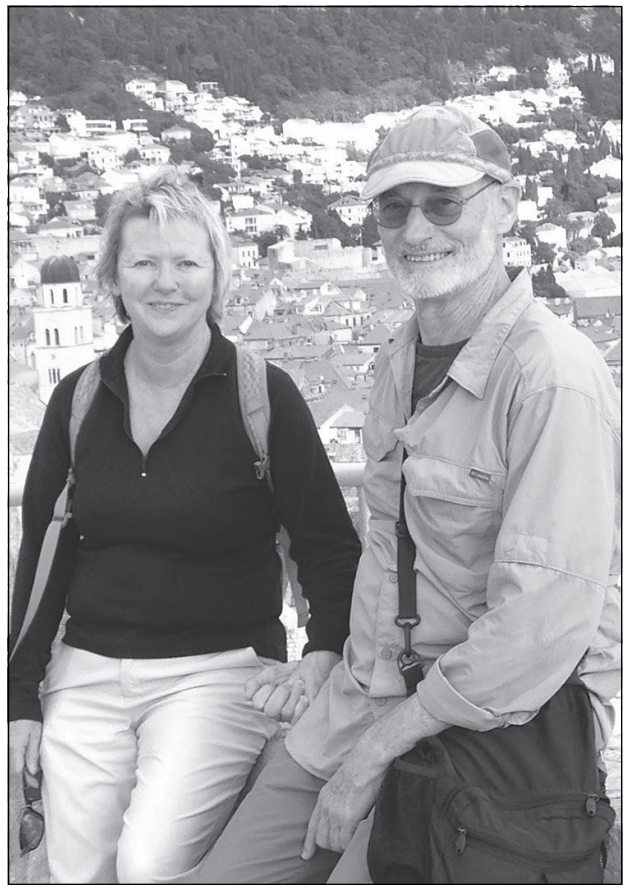
With this passion at the core of their teaching, Allvin and Venter are committed to making harp music accessible to everyone – from curious beginners to seasoned performers.

The team at SSH is thrilled to be part of the creative and welcoming atmosphere at Sierra 2.

Kersten Allvin, founded the Sacramento School of Harp, now located at Sierra 2 Center. Photo courtesy Kersten Allvin

"We love the energy here – the arts all around, the gatherings, the support for well-being, the gorgeous trees and the beautiful, historic architecture," Allvin said. "It's a joy to teach in a space where the arts are so valued and nurtured."

Whether you're picking up a harp for the first time or returning after years away, SSH welcomes new students, from children as young as six to adults well into their nineties. In addition to regular lessons, SSH also hosts performances. For more details or to sign up for lessons, classes or upcoming concerts, visit sacramentoschoolofharp.com. Come discover the magic of harp music, where ancient beauty meets modern joy.



Beth Hendrickson and John Briggs Photo courtesy Beth Hendrickson

Castro Way loses longtime neighbor, John Briggs

In March, neighbors on Castro Way lost their good friend John Briggs, 80, who had lived in Curtis Park for over 40 years. Before he retired, John provided website services to the State Department of Developmental Services. He was known for the beautiful garden that was his front yard.

John loved cars and could be seen driving his brilliant Mamba Green Porsche around the neighborhood with his partner of 22 years, Beth Hendrickson. They met at an event sponsored by the Bungalow Heritage Association and have spent their years together traveling extensively in Europe, Asia and the U.S.

In addition to Beth, John is survived by two nieces and two nephews and their respective families.

– Rosanna Herber

PARK ARTS

Buyers came out in force for the "Yard Sale for Democracy" on Marshall Way May 17. Park Arts coordinator Carlos Alcalá recruited six other artists to offer creative works as a political benefit. Shoppers are seen browsing cards by Debbie Keller and Carlos Alcalá. They and others purchased more than $1,000 of home-produced cards, stickers, buttons, paintings, decorative jars and photographs by Keller, Alcalá and Curtis Park talents Sandy Fong Whetstone, Tom Monahan and Jenny Gispen-Schultz. The proceeds will go to the American Civil Liberties Union and Sister District Sacramento. In addition, another generous Curtis Park resident cut a separate check for $500 to the ACLU. "I am so glad you were able to sell most of my jars," said Gispen-Schultz. "Yay for the ACLU!" It just goes to show that doing good can be a lot of fun.

– Carlos Alcalá

Shopping was more fun with friends and family.

Photos by Carlos Alcalá

Checking out handmade cards by sale host Carlos Alcalá.

Living on a busy corner in Curtis Park is a great way to attract yard sale shoppers.

Nicoletta Anselmo attends the ceremony dedicating a memorial bench in the northeast corner of Curtis Park in tribute to her husband, the late John Mathews, a longtime neighborhood activist and former board member. Funds for the bench were raised by neighbors and friends, as well as the SCNA. The plaque on the bench reads: "In honor of John Mathews and his dog Carina. Tireless Curtis Park activist."

Photo by Michael Oates

Mini farmers market

Fresh tomatoes, cauliflower and colorful flowers were among the offerings by four vendors at the first pop-up farmers market on the patio of Qisa, the new coffee shop at Castro Way and 24th Street. The vendor from Salinas said the next one will be from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on June 22.

Viewpoint seeks volunteer writers and photographers

Viewpoint is looking for a few writers and photographers to boost our coverage of neighborhood events and news. Experience in journalism and/or communications is a big plus. Contributions are welcome on a monthly or occasional basis. Contact the editor at Dorsey.griffith@gmail.com.

Hundreds of people find bargains at May Curtis Park community yard sale

Seventh Avenue homeowners Kristen and Dusty had a varied selection for potential buyers.

This buyer was thrilled with the deal she got on a Crate & Barrel hassock.

Katie Thomas of Portola Way chatted with passersby and neighbors, including Georgia, pictured above. Her husband, Richie Lawrence, found new owners for an accordion, guitar and other musical instruments.

Photos by Judith Harper

Sixth-grade class says goodbye to Bret Harte Elementary

Lauren Gothard *and* **Lindsey Sin**

2025 6th grade graduates at Bret Harte Elementary Photo by Lindsey Sin

As the school year draws to a close, Michael Rule's sixth-grade class at Bret Harte Elementary is preparing for the transition from elementary to middle school. With just a few weeks left, students reflect on their elementary school experience and look ahead to new challenges and opportunities.

When asked about their favorite memories from elementary school, the overwhelming response was the class trip to Sly Park. Nestled in the Sierra foothills, the outdoor education camp offered students a chance to explore nature and experience learning beyond the classroom.

"It was my first time going to a place like that, and every day I had so much fun there," said Valeri C. Another student, Quintin S., enjoyed the teamwork of building outdoor shelters. Other favorite Bret Harte memories included field trips to the pumpkin patch, B Street Theatre and the SMUD Museum of Science and Curiosity.

Beyond field trips and fun events, students also reflected on how much they've changed over the years. They learned how to work in teams, solve problems, express themselves and support one another through challenges. Many credited their teachers and school staff for helping them gain the confidence and skills needed for middle school. The sixth graders also took time to reflect on the teachers and staff who made a lasting impact. "One teacher that influenced me the most was probably Mr. Rule because he would give me a lot of advice in life, and it helped," said Yared O.

Robert C. agreed, adding "I feel Mr. Rule has influenced me the most because he always tries to guide me and my classmates in the right direction and he's pretty funny." Students also expressed appreciation for office manager Sonia Carrillo. "She taught me to not stress too much and showed me love and care throughout my time here," said Annabel G. "Ms. Sonia has helped me through everything. She made me feel happy and safe," said Olivia U. Zoey S. reflected on her favorite teacher, Mr. Yenovkian, and his great taste in music, while Jack R. had difficulty choosing just one favorite.

With middle school on the horizon, students are feeling a mix of anticipation and nerves. Many students, such as Sarina J. and Laura M., are excited about switching classes and meeting new people, while Eshal S. looks forward to physical education. The sixth graders had thoughtful advice for the fifth graders who will soon step into their shoes as the new leaders of the school.

Josiah M. encouraged incoming sixth graders to lead with character: "Good luck, try your hardest and be a good influence on others." Annerrell M. emphasized resilience. "Think positively of situations. Never let anything bring you down. If it does, always get back up, because even when you think nobody cares, there's always one person who does." Anthony A. had a reassuring reminder. "Don't worry about middle school yet, new 6th graders. You still have a year left in Bret Harte." Audrina V. gave realistic advice. "The work gets harder, and you have to really work hard for what you want. It's not as easy as you think, but trust me, you will have fun."

As the final weeks of elementary school wind down, students are enjoying their last days at Bret Harte. While they feel sad to leave the familiar behind, they also look ahead with hope, excitement and confidence. Thanks to the solid foundation they received at Bret Harte, they are prepared to take their next big step into middle school.