VIEWPOINT

A publication of the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association since 1979

Vol. 46 No. 6 | 2791 24th Street Sacramento, CA 95818 • 916-452-3005 • sierra2.org/viewpoint-community-newspaper | May 2025

Democracy at a Crossroads: Panel discussion and community conversation May 29

24th Street Theatre event to benefit Curtis Park's Viewpoint newspaper

By Dorsey Griffith

Join SCNA for "Democracy at a Crossroads," featuring a panel of experts who will present the emerging challenges and threats facing the media, immigrants, higher education, LGBTQ individuals and democratic institutions as a result of drastic new federal government policies and actions.

The event will be from 7 to 9 p.m. on Thursday, May 29 at the 24th Street Theatre, 2791 24th St., part of the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts & Community.

"Democracy at a Crossroads" aims to enlighten and further engage the community in some of the areas affected by threatened and actual funding cuts, sweeping executive orders, job cuts and policies to dismantle or upend democratic institutions and values. The panel and discussion will give participants a closer look at how actions at the national level are affecting people in the Sacramento region.

"Democracy at a Crossroads" will be moderated by *Los Angeles Times* columnist Anita Chabria, a Land Park resident who also worked as an investigative reporter for the *Sacramento Bee*. After brief presentations from each panelist, Chabria will open the floor to questions and comments from the audience for a lively community conversation.

The event will benefit *Viewpoint*, the Curtis Park newspaper written, edited and delivered to households and businesses by community volunteers for nearly 50 years. Tickets are $20 per person, available online at sierra2.org and at the door on the evening of the event.

"Democracy at a Crossroads" panelists include:

Susan Talamantes Eggman, a former 5th District senator and assemblymember who currently works with the Office of the President at California State University, Sacramento (CSU). Eggman has been a champion of healthcare access and educational opportunity. Prior to her tenure in the State Legislature, Eggman was a professor of social work at CSU. She also served four years as a medic in the U.S. Army. Eggman will talk about the Trump administration's anti-DEI policies, funding cuts and threats as they affect higher education and education generally.

See Democracy, Page 10

In the April *Viewpoint* article, "A Century of Traditions," the homeowners' last name was incorrectly spelled. The owners are John and Jayne Mangels. *Viewpoint* regrets the error.

Home & Garden Tour wows

Page 9

Instructor connects art students with creativity

Page 4

Help SCNA learn more about your interest in SCNA and Sierra 2 offerings

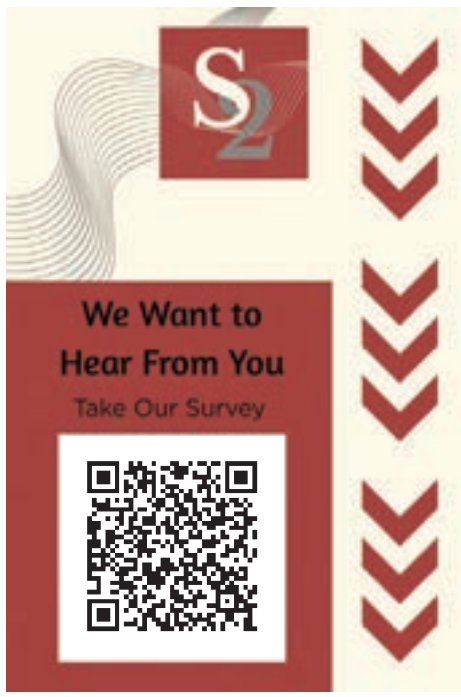
By Kathy Les

After many years, SCNA once again is offering a neighborhood survey to gather input on various programs, events and issues relative to Sierra 2 and Curtis Park.

It's easy to participate. Just go to sierra2.org and hit the link to begin or go to the QR code in the survey box in this issue of *Viewpoint*. 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. Questions cover your preferences for events like Music in the Park and Curtis Fest, programs offered through the Learnery and the Sierra 2 Senior Center and for neighborhood issues tackled by SCNA. Nearly every aspect of what SCNA does in a typical year is addressed in the survey.

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. Neighborhood boundaries are defined at the beginning of the survey.



Feel free to tell your neighbors about the SCNA Neighborhood Survey. Once all responses have been tabulated, an overview will be presented in *Viewpoint*.

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

Curtis Park Yard Sale Returns May 17

The annual Curtis Park Yard Sale is Saturday, May 17. Join us to hunt for treasures and incredible bargains in the neighborhood. Sales typically begin between 8 and 9 a.m. and end between noon and 1 p.m.

A mobile-friendly map and descriptions of the currently registered sales can be found on Sierra 2's website at sierra2.org/scna-events/ or by using the QR code. The map will be updated again after registration closes on May 12 and promoted on the Sierra 2 website and social media.

There's still time to register your sale to be included on the map. Register online at secure.qgiv.com/for/scnaevents/event/yardsale/. Sellers can download and print four wayfinding signs to promote their yard sales.

SCNA and the Sierra 2 Center welcome donations of earnings (although it's not required). People often leave items not purchased out for free through the afternoon. We also recommend donating leftover items to a local free clothing closet such as Weave, weaveinc.org/weave-thrift, or find another local clothing closet at findhelp.org/goods/clothing--sacramento-ca.

– Noah Soliday Bench

Staying focused on what matters most

Rick Jennings
City Council Member District 7

Every year, budget season gives us a chance to reflect on our values as a city. This year, with a $66 million deficit before us, that reflection feels more important than ever. While the road ahead won't be easy, I believe we can face it together – through honesty, transparency and a shared commitment to protecting the things that matter most.

Difficult decisions will have to be made. But even in times of financial strain, I believe we must stay focused on our core responsibilities: the essential city services that keep our neighborhoods safe, our communities connected and our future strong. These services are unique to the city and are not provided by other government entities – they are the municipal services that are vital to our daily lives.

Public safety remains a top priority. That means supporting our police officers and firefighters, who are the first to respond when emergencies happen and play a critical role in keeping our neighborhoods secure. Thanks to their dedication, we're able to enjoy the best parts of living in Sacramento – whether it's walking through DOCO before a Kings game or riding a bike along the Del Rio Trail at sunset. Safety is more than just emergency response; it's about peace of mind in everyday life.

We must continue to address the challenge of homelessness – not just as a policy issue, but as a deeply human one. The effects are felt throughout our city, from individuals living on the streets to families and small businesses trying to navigate its impact. We need solutions that are both compassionate and effective, prioritizing the well-being of everyone in our community. Homelessness should never diminish the quality of life for our neighborhoods.

Beyond public safety and homelessness, other essential services deserve our attention. They may not always make headlines, but they are vital to our city's daily functioning.

Maintaining our parks is one example. Parks aren't just open spaces – they're gathering places where families come together for Easter egg hunts, kids play weekend soccer games and neighbors connect. In challenging times, they offer comfort, connection and a sense of normalcy that's hard to measure but deeply valued.

We also rely on the hardworking men and women of our Recycling and Solid Waste Department. They help keep our neighborhoods clean and safe, consistently showing up to do the work that keeps our city running. Their service is essential, and they deserve our continued support.

And of course, we can't lose sight of our critical infrastructure. Our roads, water systems and public facilities are the foundation of everything else we do. If we delay repairs or neglect long-term planning, we risk facing even greater challenges in the future.

These are the priorities I bring to every budget discussion. They reflect not only my values but also the values I hear from so many of you. When resources are limited and choices are tough, it's more important than ever to stay focused and consistent.

That's why I wanted to share this message with you directly. You deserve to know what I'm fighting for at City Hall, and I believe accountability starts with clear and honest communication. Every decision I make at the dais is rooted in these principles.

As always, my office is here for you. If you have ideas, concerns or simply want to share what's important to you, I welcome the conversation. Your voice matters and helps shape the decisions we make together.

We may be facing a challenging budget year, but I believe in this city and in what we can all accomplish as a TEAM – because Together Everyone Achieves More. If we stay connected and focused and keep our priorities clear, I'm confident we'll come through this stronger, together.

It's not too late to donate to SCNA through Big Day of Giving

While May 1 was the official Big Day of Giving (BDOG), late donations still qualify toward our total raised. A slight grace period remains, allowing donations to be made directly at sierra2.org.

All contributions are welcome; no amount is too small or too large. Your contribution helps SCNA achieve its goals of buying new signage for the 24th Street Theatre and accruing supplemental funds for The Learnery and Senior Center programs.

SCNA is grateful for all donations to date. Watch for an update on money raised in the June issue of *Viewpoint*.

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

Big Day of Giving – May 1
Neighborhood Yard Sale – May 17
Democracy at a Crossroads – May 29
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

Still learning from an inspirational arts organization leader

Danielle Whitemore

Sierra 2 Executive Director

Early in my career as an arts non-profit director, I had the opportunity to meet Michael Kaiser and hear him speak. His presentation and savvy advice have stayed with me throughout my career.

Michael Kaiser served as president of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington, D.C. from 2010 to 2014 and became a consultant. He earned national and international accolades for his arts-management expertise, which inspired his unique title, "The Turnaround King." Kaiser wrote about his turnaround experiences in an engaging and entertaining book, "The Art of the Turnaround: Creating and Maintaining Healthy Arts Organizations."

Many of the stories he shared were about near-closed organizations in the red. While SCNA and Sierra 2 Center aren't experiencing a total turnaround, like all organizations, I believe we will benefit from remaining forward-thinking and nimble, honoring the past and developing diverse, long-term strategies in programming, fundraising and fiscal oversight to stay healthy.

One of the most practical takeaways from Kaiser's book is his ten rules of a successful turnaround. I have kept these by my desk as a reminder of best practices for any nonprofit I have led. His rules serve as the framework to help bring arts organizations back to life and keep them strong.

SCNA/Sierra 2 Center is uniquely poised to maintain its service to the community and the region. We are fortunate to have a strong and willing board of directors (thank you all!), a great staff and the ability to plan for the future. Despite the goings-on in the world, we will persevere.

When I met and chatted with Michael that day, I stood among my peers, leaders of much larger, more regional arts organizations. I recall discussing with him how best to make an impact by leading a smaller organization with little programming to speak of. He noted that I was on the right path, and that creating community through art begins at home.

Board Notes

Emergency Declaration on Traffic Safety

The board unanimously endorsed a letter drafted by the Neighborhood Concerns Committee that 1) commends the city for launching a 48-hour, rapid-response traffic safety program and 2) encourages the city to formally declare a neighborhood traffic safety emergency in light of death and serious injury crash rates well above state averages. Quick build "tactical urbanism" measures – cones, delineators and curb bulb outs – were cited as low-cost tools already funded in the current budget.

Opposition to RV Parking Moratorium

Jensen also presented a letter opposing a proposed pause on enforcing front yard RV parking rules. The board approved the letter after minor amendments to update the phrasing.

President's Report

John Bailey thanked volunteers for a sold out Mad Hatter Tea Party and reminded committees that April is the deadline for submitting budget recommendations for FY 2025-26, which is traditionally the busiest booking season at Sierra 2.

Donations

Late gifts pushed the John Mathews bench fund $1,000 over goal.

Grounds & repairs

The sprinkler-line trench is filled for the front planters; volunteers will help replant. The dance wing HVAC is nearly complete; leaky fountains on the second floor are shut off pending plumbing work.

Marketing & web

Cleanup of outdated online listings is ongoing; a website refresh is being led by **Noah Soliday Bench**.

YTD Operations in the Red

Year-to-date operations are $49K in the red (July 2024–Jan 2025) due to higher personnel costs and the vacant Castro Cottage. Revenues are up $25K year over year, but rental income lags projections. Equity investments were liquidated to cover upcoming HVAC invoices, leaving $125K in a money market fund and $127K in bonds. The FY 2024 Form 990 is finalized for committee review.

Facilities

Studio HVAC work is finishing; Rooms 8 and 9 are underway. Capital budget spending is behind schedule, and some projects may roll into 2025 26. Hal Thomas is scouting solar financing options that would mirror the design-build model used for the heat pump project.

Development Committee

- **Mad Hatter Tea Party** – 44 attendees; positive feedback; event can scale next year.
- **Egg Hunt** (March 29) – Created shorter parade route and volunteer plan.
- **Home Tour** (April 26) – 117 tickets sold ($4K); volunteer needs nearly met.
- **Big Day of Giving** (May 1) – Goal $37K, theme "$101 for 101 Years." Board members asked to raise $1K each and post yard signs. Staff will supply flyers and graphics.

Neighborhood Concerns Committee

A draft neighborhood-pulse survey is circulating for feedback. Clean & Quiet Yard Care volunteers cleared planters on 25th Street; photos to appear in *Viewpoint*. Sierra 2 is on hold to host the Mayor's Listening Tour with a date to be determined.

Senior Center

New programs include Smart Seniors tech help, health clinics and expanded bridge play. Efforts continue to secure luncheon sponsors. Staffing shifts are underway as coordinator **Kinsley Earl** transitions to a new role.

Viewpoint Committee

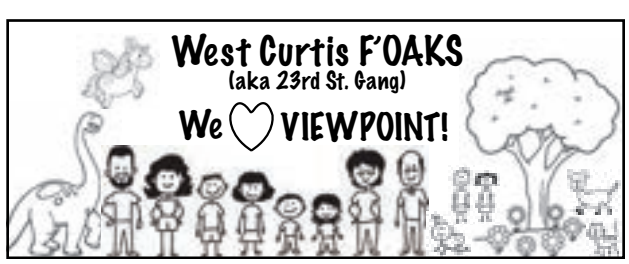
"Democracy at a Crossroads," a spring community conversation fundraiser, is scheduled for May 29 in the 24th Street Theatre (tickets $20). Volunteers are lined up and speakers are confirmed. Advertising revenue remains below goal, and outreach to new neighborhood businesses is ongoing.

Governance Committee

- **Board attrition plan** – Board will shrink naturally from 23 to 15 seats.
- **Attendance policy** – Committee is researching best practice thresholds for partial meeting presence.
- **Roles & Responsibilities** – Updated committee charters are due May 1; language will be standardized before board approval.

The next board meeting is at 6:30 p.m. on May 7.

— Submitted by Matthew Royal, Board Secretary



VIEWPOINT

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Advertise in *Viewpoint*
Call Kinsley Earl: 916-452-3005 x 202
kinsley@sierra2.org

WHAT'S NEW AT SIERRA 2?

Can I have a Refill

Photos courtesy of Cara Gregor

Crazy Flowers

Local artist Cara Gregor inspires through intuitive art and community connection

By Sierra 2 Staff

Chester and the Poppies

At the heart of Curtis Park's creative community is intuitive painter and teacher Cara Gregor, a passionate artist whose work and mission are centered on inspiring others to connect with their creativity. Cara's love for painting began in high school and has since blossomed into more than a decade of teaching art workshops. Cara has quickly become a familiar face at the Sierra 2 Center and throughout the Sacramento art scene.

Gregor describes herself as an "intuitive painter and creator," meaning her work is led by instinct and spontaneity rather than rigid plans. She works primarily in acrylics and mixed media, creating expressive two-dimensional pieces that reflect her belief that "creativity is for everyone." For Gregor, art is not just about the final product. It's about the joy or the process and encouraging others, especially those who feel they aren't "artistic enough" to dive into that experience.

Her commitment to community and creativity shines through her teaching.

"My hope is to gently encourage others to embrace their own beautiful, one-of-a-kind creative selves," Gregor said. She emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive, pressure-free environment where people feel safe to explore and express themselves. Her classes, which are open to anyone interested in painting regardless of skill level, are grounded in the values of acceptance, individuality and connection.

Gregor's impact is felt not only in the classroom but throughout the neighborhood. A proud resident of Curtis Park, she appreciates the strong community bonds fostered by local hubs like the Sierra 2 Center. "I love that my neighborhood has an awesome community center that brings people together," she said.

Always active and looking ahead, Gregor has a busy summer planned, teaching classes at Sierra 2 Center's Art Lab Learnery, exhibiting her work at various Sacramento galleries and participating in Curtis Fest, a beloved local art fair. She invites the public to stay updated on her upcoming projects through her website (caramilia.com) and Instagram (@Caramiliaart), where she shares details about new classes, events and exhibitions.

For Gregor, the work is never just about painting. It's about building community and empowering others to rediscover their creative voice. To see her work or learn more about upcoming opportunities to join her classes, visit her online or stop by the Sierra 2 Center, where art, community and inspiration come together.

Big turnout for annual Easter Egg Hunt and Pajama Parade

Photos by Kathy Les and Sierra 2 Staff

Photos by Kathy Les

The Easter Bunny hoppity-hopped into a perfect spring Saturday in Curtis Park for the annual SCNA Egg Hunt last month. Nearly 300 children and their parents and some grandparents enjoyed the Pajama Parade around the Sierra 2 Center and a rollicking egg hunt on the Sierra 2 Green lawn. Children were divided into three age groups, each on the hunt for a golden egg worth a giant Easter basket full of goodies. Hundreds of stuffed colored eggs also found their way into baskets for children to take home. Children also made colorful holiday crafts and took pictures with the Easter Bunny, while parents enjoyed coffee and donuts. Special thanks to SCNA staff and volunteers, including board member Noah Soliday Bench, who headed up this year's event.

SIERRA 2 CENTER
SIERRA CURTIS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Questions? Please contact groups directly.

Cozy Craft Night: Stitch & Watch
May Movie: Julie and Julia
Saturday, May 10, 6-8 p.m.
Join us for a relaxing evening of crocheting, knitting, embroidery and all things needlework. (Painters and illustrators are welcome, too.) Bring your current project, sit back and enjoy a movie while you stitch away in a welcoming and cozy atmosphere full of other craft enthusiasts.

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
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 rivercity-taps.com

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

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
Saturdays, 8:30 & 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, May 30, 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 10
Join us for a fun, free social luncheon sponsored by Eskaton

Movie Monday Matinee - Free
Monday, May 19, 1-3 p.m.
Room 12
May Movie – TBD - Come join us for popcorn and a movie!

Book Club
Monday, May 12, 11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 11
May Book – "The Playbook: A Story of Theater, Democracy, and the Making of a Culture War," by James Shapiro

Nonfiction Book Club
Thursday, May 15, 11 a.m.-noon
Room 12
May Book – "The Food Explorer," by Daniel Stone

Women's Friendship Group
Meet new friends and discover new hobbies.
Wednesdays, May 14 and May 28
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
My Story Project
Preserve your autobiography on video – a great keepsake for loved ones!
Monday, May 12, 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

STRENGTH AND BALANCE
Tuesdays 10-11 a.m. Studio 2 (new location)

LINE DANCE CLASS
Tuesdays, 1-2 p.m. Studio 2 (correction)

TAI CHI CHUAN
Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. Studio 3 (new location)

The LEARNERY AT SIERRA 2 CENTER
Cultivating Curious Minds

TO REGISTER FOR A CLASS
sierra2.org/thelearnery

Mixed Media Art with Larry Ramos
Wednesdays, May 7, 21
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.
May 7: Narrative/Use negative space in mixed media to create a multilayer story.
May 21: Symbolism/Use negative space in mixed media to create a multi-faceted image.

Watercolor Art with Larry Ramos
Wednesdays, May 14, 28
5:30-6:30 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.
May 14: Leopard/ Layering
May 28: Crow/ Japanese influenced brush technique

Watercolor Art with Larry Ramos
Saturdays, May 3, 10
2-4 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.
May 3: Grouse/Dry brush technique
May 10: Meditation/Wet-on-wet technique

Mommy and Me Macaron Flower Tree Class
Saturday, May 10
2-3:30 p.m.
$65
This class has everything you'll need for a macaron flower tree. Students will use a variety of fresh and dried flowers for their design provided by the instructor. We will break down the decorating process for the design, including preparing flowers and macarons and arrangement. Each tree has a dozen macarons and can be stored in the refrigerator. All children must have an adult present.

Creative Tools Breakdown
Tuesday, May 13
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.
May Tool: Fingers and Hands

ABSTRACT INTUITIVE PAINTING WORKSHOP
Saturday, May 17
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.

Submit your creations for Park Arts

Viewpoint wants to feature your creative work on its occasional Park Arts page. Submit short written pieces or reproducible photos of your creative work to Dorsey.griffith@gmail.com. Works should be accompanied by the creator's name, email address, phone number and short bio. Submissions will be curated and run as space permits.

PARK ARTS

New Fish - Trio of fishy condiment jars go from refrigerator to table.
Courtesy of Jenny Gispen-Schultz

Upcycling Glass Jars into Usable Art

When Jenny Gispen-Schultz moved from Grass Valley to Crocker Village following a career in corporate communications, her garden shrank from six acres to a patio. With more time on her hands, she pursued her first love: art.

Green Eyes – This "evil eye" jar features a tactile design.

"I explored fiber arts, jewelry making, book arts and more, but surface design appealed to my interest in upcycling," she said. "When I noticed that my sister was using an unadorned marmalade jar to store her buttons, I offered to transform it. Soon, I was decorating every jar I could lay my hands on."

Jenny designs multicolored polymer clay sheets to wrap the jars. Toppers are sculpted, and jars and lids are oven-cured and finished with resin. All are hand-washable.

Pinky – A bold red line prevents pastel clays from becoming too sweet.

"Despite glass recycling programs, tons of glass containers still end up in the landfill. I'm not saving the planet, but using a discarded jar as the canvas for my surface design feels good."

Jenny, who lives on Jay King Walk in Crocker Village, is a member of the Sacramento Collective for the Textile Arts. She can be reached at jennygispen-schultz@yahoo.com.

LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

Here's your handy guide

James House

THE SIDE DOOR

2900 Franklin Blvd.
thesidedoor.net • All shows 7 p.m.
Tickets: $25-$30. Advance tickets available.

Friday, May 2: Darol Anger & Mr. Sun, a dazzling, all-star, American String Band quartet. Violinist Anger is a member of the original "nuclear" generation of pickers who extended bluegrass, jazz and classical music to find their common ground; Mr. Sun is the latest iteration in that legacy
Saturday, May 3: Fog Holler, best described as "a new shade of grass" with four, grown young adults in matching monochrome, energy unbound with original songwriting, traditional in style but topical in substance
Friday, May 9: Mike Beck, a working cowboy storyteller/guitarist (think Stephen Stills) counts legends like Ramblin' Jack, Ian Tyson, Dave Alvin and Tom Russell among his major fans
Saturday, May 10: WWE, Webster, Walton, Edwards, fan favorites. The rich, twined vocals/guitars of Mumbo Gumbo (smokey Chris Webster and effervescent Tracy Walton) with longtime songwriting partner and Way Out West founder/guitarist Bill Edwards
Friday, May 16: James House, a Sacramento-born singer/recording artist turned Nashville major-hit songwriter (Rod Stewart, Tina Turner, Martina McBride, Dwight Yoakum, Kylie Minogue, The Mavericks, Diamond Rio, Olivia Newton-John. "Lost in Laurel Canyon" captures his 50-year journey
Friday, May 23: Richard Smith, an award-winning British fingerpicking/thumb picking guitarist who formed The Hot Club of Nashville to add gypsy jazz, swing and classical to his already vast repertoire
Friday, May 30: Kora Feder & Justin Farren, music with "emotional weight that can stop you in your tracks," says NPR; Kora returns to the West Coast to celebrate a new album, produced by brilliant duo partner Justin Farren, and to visit her musical heavyweight parents, Rita Hosking and Sean Feder

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– Mindy Giles

Support live music!
#SaveOurStages!

Volunteers tending to the 26th Street planters. Photo by Michael Oates

Neighbors cultivate community in restoring 26th Street planters

By Michael Oates

At the leafy intersection of 26th Street and Donner Way, Curtis Park volunteers have begun revitalizing the neighborhood's median planters. On the morning of March 29, seven volunteers organized through the SCNA Clean and Quiet Yard Care Committee spent several hours weeding, pruning and removing invasive, non-native species.

The morning was bright and cheerful, with many neighbors walking by to offer smiles, thanks and words of encouragement.

"My wife and I are newer residents to California from Ohio. We love living in Curtis Park," said Peter Greiner, a volunteer from Ninth Avenue. "The street planters looked scruffy and tired. When I saw the article in the *Viewpoint*, I signed up. We spent a couple of rewarding hours gardening for the good of the neighborhood. Now, when I drive by, I smile. I helped make something beautiful and welcoming again – and I got to meet some of my neighbors, too."

The next phase of the project involves planting drought-tolerant native species, guided by Curtis Park resident Paul Barth, a volunteer with the California Native Plant Society.

"Native plants offer so much – natural beauty, habitat for native bees, birds and butterflies, and resilience in our local climate," said Barth. "There are natives for every condition, from full sun to full shade, and they come in an amazing variety of colors, shapes and heights."

Residents also can look forward to another collaborative, local gardening effort: the native plant garden at the main entrance of the Sierra 2 Center, initially planted in 2021. That garden was a true community effort, with more than 50 neighbors volunteering their time and energy and with funding provided through a city grant.

"I loved going by the native plant garden the last several years and knowing putting it in was such a huge community effort," said volunteer Nancee Murray. "I was confused to see it gone in early March of this year. I look forward to finding out how to help make the native plant garden even better than it was the last time around."

Danielle Whitmore, executive director of the Sierra 2 Center, said the gardens suffered from a series of setbacks.

"Unfortunately, we lost irrigation to the walkway area when a tree was removed, and the plants didn't survive," she said. "With leadership and staff transitions, it took some time to restore irrigation. Now that we have it back, we're excited to reimagine the space and honor the original vision."

Neighbors who helped with the original Sierra 2 garden or those interested in volunteering for its next chapter are encouraged to contact Michael Oates, chair of the Clean and Quiet Yard Care Committee, at michael.a.oates@gmail.com.

Vintage homes, cars, gardens grace April 26 Home & Garden Tour

Steps lead to treasure upon treasure of historic rooms, fun spaces and beautiful gardens at this landmark home and freestanding formal hall.

Family gardening tools from past generations overlook a beautiful table in this urban garden.

The Model A Club always enjoys sharing their pristine cars with home tour participants.

This 1911 bungalow fireplace is graced by a lovely model in period dress.

The Les-Thomas garden was in full bloom, with pathways leading to creative and abundant beauty in all directions.

A bounty of beautiful backyards was enjoyed by visitors this year, with colors made even richer in the drizzling rain.

This 1914 Asilomar-style hall was an unexpected find in the neighborhood, its Arts & Crafts-style, natural trusses something visitors won't soon forget.

Photos by Rudy Calpo

POINT OF VIEW

Cave to fear or build for an equitable future?

By Kathleen Ave

In April, *Viewpoint* reported on the Crocker Village developer's application to build single-family homes, rather than previously negotiated and approved multi-family housing, on the remaining open "multi" and "flex" parcels. More than a decade later, the need for diverse and affordable housing options for all ages is more urgent than ever.

These parcels represent an opportunity for the developer to honor his agreement and develop the remaining space in a way that addresses housing affordability, air pollution, traffic congestion and climate change. Logic and city policy support density adjacent to light rail, where it can reduce reliance on cars. The approved plan supports an equitable vision of the future with options for people with lower incomes to live and work near the central city and transit.

Crocker Village residents recently received an unsigned letter insisting that the approved plan be abandoned. The letter's author, referring to the developer in the third person, disparaged city staff as "zealots" bent on "social engineering," raised the specter of reduced property values and decried the arrival of "renters," seemingly unaware that about 20% of Crocker Village homes are renter occupied.

The railyard, originally owned by Union Pacific, was full of toxic soil that neighbors fought to have removed rather than buried under condominiums. After purchasing the land for $1, the current developer reported that the toxic clean-up would be more costly than expected. His first proposal was to bury the waste under the park and "gift" it to the city. SCNA opposed this to ensure that the park could be safe and welcoming and could include deeply rooted shade trees. The compromise was to remove the worst of the toxins and bury the rest under the roads. The resulting park is functional but, unfortunately, trees were not planted.

Next the developer attempted to dodge the onsite affordable housing requirement by donating to the Sacramento Children's Home. SCNA circulated a petition to maintain the affordable housing on site, resulting in the senior complex, which benefits many local families.

Then the developer proposed a large increase in the size of the commercial area to offset his costs. As that discussion intensified, he claimed that he could substitute an industrial use, such as a cement batch plant, under existing zoning, an assertion that city Planning Manager David Kwong refuted. Much later, when attempting to add a large gas station to the promised "transit-oriented development," the developer insisted that Safeway would withdraw without it. That turned out to be an empty threat.

The pedestrian bridge, maligned in the letter as a "seldom used" waste of taxpayer dollars, is a critical connection between the neighborhood, Sacramento City College, Land Park and Hollywood Park. SCNA, the city and the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) helped secure public funds for the bridge based on the promise of density that supports transit-oriented development. New multi-family housing will help fulfill that promise with increased awareness of the bridge, increased use and much-needed mixed-income housing options.

The developer's application to build single-family homes will be heard at the city's Planning & Design Commission on May 22. Please email or file comments online requesting that commissioners and councilmembers maintain the approved plan for multi-family housing. As we experience a national political assault on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion policies, we can act locally and affirm our support for important community values, including affordable housing.

Kathleen Ave lives on Donner Way and co-chaired the SCNA board's Neighborhood Concerns Committee from 2004-2010.

Democracy

Continued from page 1

Molly Dugan is a former reporter, longtime journalism professor at California State University, Sacramento and Fulbright Scholar, who has also taught in Budapest, Poland and India. She is president of the board for OpenCalifornia/*Capitol Weekly*, a nonprofit and its publication. Her research involves reporting on conflict, press freedom and journalism ethics. She co-authored a paper accepted into the *Journal of Consumer Health* on emotional responses to social media disinformation about COVID-19. Dugan will talk about recent pressure and threats levied against the media and the chilling effect they have on the ability of the press to provide thorough, accurate, unbiased news coverage and the consequences for the public.

Harue Seki is a dedicated activist, organizer and small business owner based in Sacramento. Her journey in activism began in 2017 as a founding member of Indivisible Sacramento, where she remains deeply engaged as a member of the steering committee. Through her work with Indivisible Sacramento, Harue has been committed to fostering civic engagement, grassroots organizing and community empowerment.

Jeremy Rud earned a PhD in Linguistics from UC Davis in 2024 and has been a volunteer with NorCal Resist since 2020, focusing on the pro se asylum clinics and community accompaniment programs. While working with NorCal Resist, Jeremy has been at the forefront of immigrant and refugee rights issues in the Sacramento community. As a researcher, he focuses on language in contexts of migration and examines how the smallest facets of communication affect the actualization of migrants' human rights as they seek asylum in the United States. Rud will talk about the impacts of federal government actions targeting immigrants and their impact in the Sacramento region.

David Heitsuman is chief executive officer of the Sacramento LGBT Community Center. He holds a master's degree in public policy and administration from California State University, Sacramento and a bachelor's degree in public relations and business from Gonzaga University. He has been recognized for his leadership and work by the *Sacramento Business Journal*, *Sacramento Magazine* and the Rainbow Chamber of Commerce and received the Stonewall Freedom from Fear Award in 2016. He has worked in roles supporting state legislators, as well as for the campaigns of Hillary Clinton, Kerry-Edwards, Howard Dean and the Democratic National Committee. Heitsuman will talk about the current government and private industry assault on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and the impact of anti-trans policies on the Sacramento community.

Curtis Park man leads "Sacramento" location management for movie crew

By Diana Sunseri

Curtis Park resident Tyler Semons was thrilled when Gunther's Ice Cream, one of the neighborhood's most iconic businesses, made it into the final cut of the recently released film "Sacramento," starring Michael Cera and Kristen Stewart.

"I was super glad to see it get included since I'm a Curtis Park guy," said Semons, the movie's Sacramento location manager. The original plan for the scene was a grocery store and, when that didn't pan out, Semons suggested Gunther's.

Released April 11, the road comedy by director-actor Michael Angarano and writer Chris Smith is about a free-spirited young man who convinces his long-time friend to put his domestic life on hold and embark on an impromptu road trip from Los Angeles to Sacramento. Rotten Tomatoes described the movie as rising above the usual buddy-film genre, saying it's "amusingly perceptive" and "glows with charm."

The crew also filmed at the Tower Bridge, near Joe's Crab Shack in Old Sacramento, at 35th and Folsom, downtown, on R Street and at Sly Park, which is in the opening scene, a flashback.

Semons said he appreciated that the director, writer and most of the crew had never been to Sacramento prior to the film's conception and had one impression coming in and another going out. "They really enjoyed being here. I think they were kind of surprised."

Location scouting occurred two years ago, right about the time Semons and his girlfriend started remodeling their then-recently purchased home on Coleman Way. While on the market, the 1940 Tudor had its own moment of fame in news articles and on websites such as Zillow Gone Wild because of the interior's bizarre, artsy, Gaudi-esque-like rooms. Walls, ceilings, mantels, counters and doorways dripped with color and form that the previous owner embedded in shapes created with tile, wood, caulking compound and vibrantly painted polystyrene foam.

That is all gone now, Semons confirmed. The entire house was remodeled.

Semons also was a location assistant on the Greta Gerwig, Sacramento-inspired film "Lady Bird."

"I was really happy with how the entire film came out," Semons said of "Sacramento." "People were kind of worried it would somehow poke fun at Sacramento, but it's not like that."

From left to right are "Sacramento" co-writer Chris Smith, Sacramento location manager Tyler Semons and director/writer/actor Michael Angarano at the cast and crew screening in Los Angeles.

Courtesy Tyler Semons

Taylors' green chili sausage takes the prize in Paris

By Bruce Pierini

The butchers at Taylor's Market on Freeport Boulevard won two out of three top prizes at the recent World Butcher's Challenge in Paris, France. The neighborhood market that borders Curtis Park and Land Park has been making its green-chili fresh sausages for over 20 years, but on March 30 and 31, the sausages earned them first place in the 14-year-old, blind, world competition of sausage making. They beat 14 other countries, including Canada, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand and several major European countries in the Senior Competition.

This feat is shades of 50 years ago when the "seemingly impossible happened." Though French wines ruled the world at the time, two upstart California producers won over Bordeaux and Burgundy wines in a blind tasting by France's foremost wine experts.

Taylors' butchers also won "Best Beef Sausage" with their Korean Bulgogi.

Danny Johnson, Taylor's owner and president of the American Butcher's Association, said that Taylor's Market almost snagged a third category: "We lost 'Best Pork' in a tiebreaker. Otherwise, the Taylor's team would have swept the contest of butchers from throughout the world."

Johnson was a judge and had to keep a discreet distance from the Taylor's team during the event. The team was headed by former Taylor's head butcher Paul Carrass, assisted by former Taylor's General Manager David Hunter.

An estimated 5,000 people enthusiastically attended, many fans cheering on their national butchery team. The Belgians, for example, blasted an old crank police siren as their fans chanted encouragement.

"It was obnoxiously loud. The U.S. had about 50-60 people there who were drowned out by the French who dressed and acted like they were at a soccer match," Johnson said. "But it was fun.

"The Germans brought all this fancy equipment," he added, "but I told them, 'Yours looks good, but ours tastes good!' Our green chili sausage has a little heat, and the judges liked that."

Johnson said there has been a bit of a stigma associated with U.S. butchers and their products. Europeans have a long love affair with their sausages and saw the U.S. team as an upstart.

"When the emcee opened the envelope and read the winner of the gourmet (sausage) category as the United States, there was a kind of big shock in the entire place," Johnson said.

Success has not gone to his head: "At the end of the day, we're a neighborhood grocery store for Curtis Park and Land Park."

Taylor's former head butcher Paul Carrass with Taylor's owner Danny Johnson.

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.

Bret Harte students recognized by district as "Stellar Students"

Six Bret Harte Elementary students were recognized at the Sacramento City Unified School District Board of Education meeting on April 10.

Area 1 board member Tara Jeane presented the "Stellar Student Award" to Robert Casillas (6th grade), Eshal Sajid (6th grade), Rose Casillas (5th grade), Maxwell Sin (5th grade), May Akiyama (2nd grade) and Dhruv Gupta (1st grade).

"I think I could have easily nominated four more from my class this year," said Michael Rule, who teaches the fifth- and sixth-grade split class. "I feel like all of the students I nominated represent Bret Harte in their own way. Robert and Rose are incredible students. Max has such a strong desire to learn. Eshal's been in the country for less than nine months, but knows no quit," he said.

The students were recognized for completing schoolwork on time, supporting classmates, being self-motivated, having a positive attitude and being role models to their peers.

Family members, teachers and staff joined in the recognition at the board meeting.

"I am very grateful to the Bret Harte staff for all they do for our kids," said proud mom Jestine Hernandez. "Especially Robert and Rose's teacher, Mr. Rule, for recognizing their hard work and dedication in class. I am so proud of them both for receiving this award and excelling in school."

Anne Seiler, parent of first-grade recipient Dhruv Gupta, attended the awards ceremony. "We are so grateful that Ms. Lim recognized the goodness, kindness and curiosity that make Dhruv so special," she said. "Watching him find out he got the award and seeing how excited he was to see his teacher in attendance was so amazing, and we were so proud of him!"

Bret Harte students and SCUSD board members. Stellar Students from left to right are Dhruv Gupta, Maxwell Sin, Eshal Sajid, Rose Casillas, Robert Casillas and May Akiyama.
Courtesy SCUSD

Lauren Gothard *and* **Lindsey Sin**

Second-grade teacher Heather Bunney shared that she submitted May Akiyama for an award because "she is kind, positive, supportive, encouraging, motivating and always has a smile on her face."

"I am happy that my teacher said nice things about me," said Akiyama. The Stellar Student Awards are organized by the district's office of Youth Development Support Services and presented periodically at school board meetings to recognize students who "excel academically, demonstrate strong character, and contribute positively to their school community."

The evening served as a heartfelt reminder of the impact students can make when their hard work, character and community spirit are celebrated and supported. The Bret Harte community is so proud of its "Stellar Students."