

VIEWPOINT

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March 2026

SCNA engages strategic planning consultant Margo Fowkes



Margo Fowkes

Photo courtesy Margo Fowkes

By Michael Oates

As the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association approaches its 50th anniversary in just a few years, the organization is taking a thoughtful look at its future. SCNA has engaged Sacramento-based strategic planning consultant Margo Fowkes of OnTarget Consulting to guide the development of a refreshed strategic plan.

Fowkes has worked as a strategy consultant for more than 25 years, partnering primarily with arts and culture

nonprofits, as well as corporations and government entities. Her clients have included the Crocker Art Museum, Sacramento Ballet, CLARA, the Episcopal Diocese and the Girl Scouts. In one case, she helped the Girl Scouts rethink their approach and achieve 7% growth in membership, up from 1-2% annual gains.

At the heart of her work is this philosophy: The plan belongs to the organization, not the consultant. She describes her role as a “facilitator and midwife,” helping ideas emerge rather

than prescribing solutions. “I’m not there to bring a solution,” she said. “I’m there to help find it.”

Fowkes emphasizes that strategic planning is not simply about solving immediate problems. “You can’t problem-solve your way into a good strategic plan,” she said. Instead, the process centers on clarifying long-term aspirations and building alignment around shared priorities.

For SCNA, that work will include taking a fresh look at the association’s mis-

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Sierra 2 Center has thrived for 45 years

Its story, and vision, endure

By Kathy Les

How many drive by the stately Sierra 2 building without a thought to how the community center came to be?

If not for a group of enthusiastic Curtis Park residents in the late 1970s, it might never have become the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts and Community.

For 45 years, the center has hummed with local arts and community groups making music, staging theatrical productions, showcasing dance and offering wide-ranging arts classes, from landscape painting to ceramics.

An elementary school for more than 50 years, Sierra School, built in 1923, shuttered in 1976 when California legislators passed an act enforcing earlier laws that schools built of unreinforced masonry be retrofitted or abandoned because they were unsafe in earthquakes. Like many others, the building was quickly abandoned, and students were routed to other local

schools. Rumors spread that the school would be demolished for a DMV parking lot or apartment buildings.

“A beautiful old building like that shouldn’t be torn down,” Carol Blackman of Fourth Avenue told the *Sacramento Bee* in 1981. “And we need — and really use — the open space the grounds provide.”

An influx of younger residents in the mid-1970s, coupled with a renaissance in the arts locally and around the region, led to the center’s creation.

As many early neighborhood residents grew elderly and moved away, younger families drawn to the historic 1920s-era houses bought and spruced up older homes while arts groups were flourishing with a need for office, workshop and performance space.

The late Dennis Renault, a *Sacramento Bee* cartoonist, moved to Curtis Park with his wife, Marty, in 1972. Renault was one

See Sierra 2, Page 5



Rob Archie at Pangaea

Photo courtesy Rob Archie

Beloved neighborhood restaurant and taproom to close

By Patti Roberts

Curtis Park neighbors were surprised and saddened to hear of the pending closure of Pangaea Bier Café on Franklin Boulevard in late February. Established by long-time Curtis Park resident Rob Archie, Pangaea has been an 18-year fixture, a walkable gathering place and a nod to specialty beer and good food.

Most found out about the closure on the restaurant’s Facebook and Instagram pages:

“We’ve shared truly incredible experiences in this building — helping shape craft-beer culture, contributing to the

growth of Sacramento’s food scene and, most importantly, connecting an amazing community of people who made this place feel like home. Unfortunately, despite our best efforts, conversations did not result in a path forward that allows us to continue operating here long term.”

Archie’s landlord is his father, Lee Archie, and his partner, Hanju Morrow. Without offering details, Archie said, “It’s due to a lack of agreement regarding the lease terms. Those who know me know how difficult this moment has been.”

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Get your tickets now for SCNA’s annual egg hunt

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Home and garden tour coming April 24

Page 2



Home & Garden Tour set for April 25

By Lori Harder

Spring is around the corner and with it the 36th Curtis Park Home & Garden Tour on Saturday, April 25. The tour features a diversity of interior designs and architectural styles, including Craftsman bungalow, Tudor Revival, Cottage and Foursquare. Gardens range from drought-tolerant to whimsical, and intimate designs with lush foliage to inviting entertainment areas.

The Capitol A's Model A Ford Club will showcase pristine vintage cars throughout the neighborhood. The Sacramento Art Deco Society will be on hand in period clothing, and the Plant Foundry will have a display in one of the gardens.

The north end of Curtis Park will feature food trucks and picnic tables, live music, information displays and more. Take a break with lunch in the park.

The event is an important fundraiser for the Sierra 2 Center and the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association programs, with a goal of raising \$15,000.



This Tudor Revival, with a large master bedroom suite and an intimate backyard, is featured on the Curtis Park Home & Garden Tour. Photo by Steve Martarano

The event is from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and the tour route encompasses 2.5 miles. Bicycling is encouraged, and bike racks will be provided. Ticket prices are \$25 in advance (\$20 for SCNA members) and \$30 on tour day (\$25 for SCNA members). Discounted tickets are a great reason to join SCNA. Docents and event vol-

unteers can purchase tickets for just \$10. Purchase tickets online at sierra2.org or visit the Sierra 2 Center office.

For updates and more information, visit sierra2.org, or call the Sierra 2 office at 916-452-3005. Updates will be posted on SCNA's Facebook page, Instagram and through email blasts.

Volunteers, sponsors needed for 2026 Home & Garden Tour

SCNA is looking for more than 60 volunteers to give an hour or two of their time on April 25. Help is needed to monitor home interiors for two-hour shifts, or to set up or take down tables and chairs at the north end of Curtis Park. Please lend a hand and ask your neighbors to join you. Volunteers may buy their Home & Garden Tour tickets for just \$10 each. To sign up, text or call Lori Harder at 916-801-7189, or email lorikoi@sbcglobal.net.

Consider supporting SCNA and this event by placing an advertisement in the tour program, starting at \$250. Contact SCNA Executive Director Danielle Whitmore at 916-452-3005 ext. 204, or email danielle@sierra2.org.



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

Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association EVENT Calendar

Spring Fling Eggstravaganza – March 21

Curtis Park Home Tour – April 25

Big Day of Giving 2026 – May 7

Curtis Fest Artisan Fair – May 17

Curtis Park Yard Sale – June 6

Sunday Music in the Park –
June 28, July 26 & August 30

Sip, Savor & Support – October 4

Pie & Pjs Breakfast – November 15

Angel Tree – November 23

Giving Tuesday – December 1

SCNA Membership Meeting – December 9

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Building community with the Sierra 2 Center

SCNA is a unique neighborhood association; as a member and a resident, you have the benefit of a wonderful, historic and community asset, the Sierra 2 Center for the Arts & Community, managed by SCNA. We owe a debt of gratitude to the residents who, in the 1970s, united to save Sierra School from demolition and managed it throughout the years. Thank you.

The Sierra 2 Center is for everyone, but because it was saved by your neighbors, it's a special place for the neighborhood, and we invite you to stop by and explore. The doors are open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Sunday. More than just a stop for a bathroom break, the center is a historic building that houses a diverse array of activities for you to enjoy. Stop by and wander down the hall to review the historical

**DANIELLE
WHITMORE**

**Sierra 2 Executive
Director**



mural, drop in at the Senior Center to visit with our seniors or pick out a book to read from the book exchange. If you're lucky enough, you may experience one of our friendly spirits (yes we have ghosts!).

For a nominal fee, you can choose to join one of the many dance classes from hula to line danc-

ing, find a harp teacher or learn to paint or draw in The Learnery. I hear the cake decorating class is sweet and fun. A new Art Club has formed, offering you the opportunity to meet and collaborate with your favorite creatives.

As you know, SCNA hosts several community events annually at the center and in the neighborhood. As we move through the strategic-planning process, we hope to find new ways for the neighborhood to use the center. We are excited about the art, music and community you can experience at Sierra 2 Center.

As the neighborhood evolves and new friends and family move into the community, we want to be sure we extended a warm welcome — hoping to inspire you to stop by and visit. We'll be sure to leave the light on.

Sacramento joint neighborhood associations group sharpens focus

By Garrett Jensen

The momentum connecting and unifying the Sacramento Neighborhood Associations (NAs) continues. After a successful inaugural meeting last fall, Sacramento NAs returned to the table on Jan. 13 at Urban Roots. This time, 25 community leaders representing 16 neighborhoods gathered to build upon and identify an actionable advocacy agenda.

While the first meeting was about building bridges, the second was about deciding where the bridges should lead. Using a democratic "sticker dot" voting process, participants distilled dozens of community ideas into a prioritized list of 12 key proposals, specific policy goals that the NAs believe will make the city

and county of Sacramento more livable, equitable and safe.

The energy in the room was palpable as the group identified ideas that garnered the most consensus. Some of the top proposals include:

Transit-oriented growth: Topping the list is a commitment to housing density near transit hubs, ensuring Sacramento grows sustainably.

Bold street safety: Reducing default speed limits from 25 mph to 20 mph, expanding Quick Build programs, and empowering neighborhoods to take action through community-led painting of curbs, crosswalks and bulb-outs.

Expanding connectivity: Support remains high for SacRT light-rail expansion to the airport and a dedicated bonding effort to fund long-overdue

road and transit repair.

Public space and environment: Advocating for walking malls on stretches of areas such as Land Park, R Street, K Street and Capitol Avenue, continued protection of the American River Parkway and streamlining al fresco dining to help our local small businesses thrive.

Compassionate solutions: Establishing lawful camping sites in every district, ensuring that homelessness is addressed with a coordinated, city-countywide strategy rather than being pushed from one neighborhood to the next.

While the rankings provide structure, we have not forgotten other important policies proposed by our community, such as expanding the urban tree canopy and sidewalk repair options. The

beauty of this coalition is its flexibility.

What's next? Our focus is shifting toward formal advocacy. We will craft support letters that individual NA boards can review and adopt. By speaking with one affirmative voice — representing thousands of residents across 16-plus neighborhoods — we ensure that our elected officials hear us clearly as partners.

Our third convening is slated for this spring in Midtown. We are growing, organized and just getting started. Want to join or learn more? If you are a leader in a Sacramento Neighborhood Association, please reach out to gjjensen423@gmail.com.

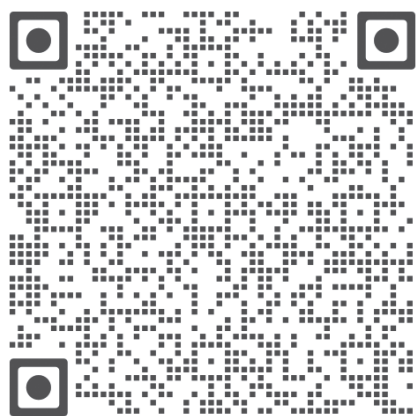
Garret Jensen, an SCNA board member, is spearheading the joint neighborhood association group.

Egg hunt and pajama parade return to Sierra 2 on March 21

Hop into a day of fun at the Spring Fling Egg-stravaganza presented by SCNA. Last year, nearly 300 neighbors joined in the fun as we celebrated spring together — a delightful day of neighborhood children and families enjoying a fun-filled rite of spring.

The Spring Fling Egg-stravaganza is set for Saturday, March 21. The event begins with the celebrated Pajama Parade at 9:30 a.m. Participants will line up in the parking lot on Castro Way.

After everyone marches, hops and dances around



the Sierra 2 Green led by the parade grand marshal, the great egg hunt will begin at 10 a.m., also on the Sierra 2 Green. The hunt will be divided into three age groups: 0-2, 3-5 and 6 and older.

The rest of the morning will be filled with fun activities for all, including pictures with the bunny, coloring, dancing and coffee and donuts.

Tickets are \$20 per family. Get yours today.

As always, help with crafts and activities is welcome. To volunteer,

please contact Piper Rea at piper@sierra2.org or 916-465-8589.

— Sierra 2 Staff



Hop along with the big bunny on March 21.

Photo by S2 staff

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WHAT'S NEW AT SIERRA 2?

By Sierra 2 staff

Art Club Sacramento for women, founded by local artist and art instructor Cara Gregor alongside creative collaborator Angelina Sorkin, has quickly become a vibrant cornerstone of the city's artistic community.

What began as a small gathering of women who shared a love for creativity has grown into a thriving, supportive network where art and connection go hand in hand. This year marks a special milestone for the club as it celebrates two successful years at Sierra 2 Center. The instructors also proudly step into a new role as regular block partners, a testament to the impact and consistency they have brought to the local arts scene.

Women artists across the Sacramento region can count on Art Club as a standing monthly tradition.

The club meets the last Thursday of the month from 6-8 p.m. in the Garden Room at Sierra 2, offering a welcoming and inspiring space where participants of all artistic backgrounds and levels can come together. The emphasis is not on perfection or competition but rather expression and shared growth.

Art Club Sacramento offers a variety of engaging activities that go beyond a traditional monthly meet-up. Members not only enjoy independent art time but also regularly go on field trips to local museums, galleries and art studios. The club also hosts fun fashion shows and creative showcases that allow members to display their wearable and hand-made pieces. Art Club Sacramento exists to uplift women through creativity and community, offering a welcoming space for artists to grow, gather and celebrate art.

Find them on Instagram @ArtClubSacramento.

Sacramento's budget choices must protect the services residents rely on

Every Sacramento resident sees the results of the city budget, whether it is a paved street, a clean park, a faster emergency response or safer traffic near their child's school. The budget is not an abstract document. It determines the kind of city we live in and the kind we can afford to sustain.

This year, we are entering budget season facing a projected \$66 million general fund shortfall. That is serious, but it is manageable if we approach it with discipline and clear priorities. Sacramento is not on the brink of insolvency. We are, however, at a moment that requires careful decisions about how we spend public dollars and how we protect the services residents count on every day.

Last fall, the city council aligned around three top priorities: economic development, public safety and addressing homelessness. I support that direction. Strong neighborhoods depend on safe streets, a growing local economy and a humane and effective response to homelessness. After those priorities, we must remain focused on the basics that shape daily life across Sacramento. Maintaining parks, fixing potholes, improving traffic safety and keeping neighborhoods clean are not extras. They are core responsibilities of local government.

The financial pressure we face is driven in large part by how much cities like Sacramento now contribute to homelessness services. Over the past several years, as state and federal support has fluctuated, local governments have stepped in to prevent more people from living without shelter. That work is necessary and the right thing to do. It also comes with a real cost to the city's general funds, which were not designed to carry this responsibility alone.

Just a few years ago, much of the funding for homelessness services came from outside sources. Today, the city is preparing for the possibility that nearly all of that spending will come from local dollars. That shift forces difficult decisions because those same general fund dollars support police, fire, parks, libraries, youth programs and maintenance of our neighborhoods.

RICK JENNINGS

City Council Member
District 7



This is not a choice between compassion and fiscal responsibility. Sacramento must continue helping people move off the streets and into stable housing. At the same time, we must be honest about what the city can sustainably fund on its own. Homelessness is a regional challenge that requires strong and consistent partnership with Sacramento County and the state, especially in the areas of behavioral health, addiction treatment and supportive housing. Cities cannot and should not shoulder this responsibility alone.

As we move through this year's budget process, my focus will be on protecting core services while maintaining our commitment to public safety and effective homelessness response. Public safety includes more than police and fire. It includes traffic calming, safe routes for kids walking and biking to school, and investments that make neighborhoods safer and healthier. Programs like our Quick Build traffic safety improvements deliver real results for residents and should remain part of our strategy.

We will need to make adjustments in how we allocate resources. That is the reality of responsible governance. What we will not do is lose sight of the people we serve. Sacramento residents deserve a city that is financially stable, compassionate and focused on the fundamentals that keep neighborhoods strong.

Budget discussions begin this month, and community input matters. I welcome your perspective as we work through the choices ahead and continue building a Sacramento that is safe, livable, and financially sound for the long term.

At HOME in Curtis Park

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Sierra 2

Continued from page 1

of the first to see the old school's possibilities and, with the late realtor Frank Cook, enlisted other neighbors to lobby the Sacramento City Unified School District and City Council to share their arts center vision.

"Curtis Park was a hotbed of lawyers who knew their way around, and they eventually convinced both entities that the abandoned Sierra School should have a new life for arts groups under one roof," Marty Renault said from her home in Monterey.

Marty, a painter, was involved with Matrix, a nonprofit alliance of women artists seeking a larger home and gallery space. She persuaded Matrix to be one of the first two tenants; Holly McKay pledged to open a children's day care center as the second.

A surge of neighborhood enthusiasm convinced decision-makers in April 1980 to allow the renovation under the leadership of the Sierra School Neighborhood Association, which later became the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association. The new name encompassed a wider geographic area under the nonprofit's umbrella.

Into the picture stepped Judy Schroeter, who, with her then-husband John and two-year-old son, bought a Curtis Park home in 1975. Beseeched by Dennis Renault to "just have a look" at the school building, Schroeter came away inspired.

"When I walked into the building, I was stunned by the possibilities," she said recently from her home in Portland, Oregon. A big fan of the artists' collaborative at Fort Mason in San Francisco, she saw similar potential for the old school.

The school had been vacant for nearly four years, and it wasn't easy to fall in love with. Vandals had broken windows and sprayed graffiti, and the whole building needed painting. Inside was a mishmash of abandoned and broken furniture, fallen ceilings, outdated bathrooms and linoleum covering old wood floors.

Schroeter put graduate school plans on hold to become SCNA's first coordinator in 1980, first as a volunteer and later with a small stipend. She brought her typewriter and Rolodex to the school's former attendance office (now the Sierra 2 office) and got to work to plan the renovation and find tenants.

Her husband John, a structural engineer, donated his time to oversee the renovation plan, and he enlisted other contributors: Miles Treaster for interior design, The Rakela Company for signage and logo and Burnett Miller for theater lumber. These and other prominent businesses donated \$80,000 in services and goods.

With the city's \$200,000 pledge toward renovations and the school district's \$50,000 contribution to replace the leaking roof, SCNA had the seed money to move forward. The Young Adult Conservation Corps water-blasted and painted the exterior walls, Singer Job Corps installed carpeting, and the Sacramento Tile Setters Apprentice Program installed tile.

Residents lent their talents, including carpenter and contractor John Brush, who helped oversee a variety of upgrades.

"You keep seeing the same people, and you strike up friendships with people you wouldn't meet otherwise," Brush said in the 1981 *Sacramento Bee* article.

"Dozens of neighbors came every Saturday to help with interior painting," Blackman recalled. While their children played nearby, volunteers put in \$25,000 worth



A clipping from a 1980 issue of *Viewpoint* with a group of volunteers working on the Sierra 2 dance wing. Credit: *Viewpoint* article, 1980

of painting.

On Sept. 25, 1981, 500 people attended the Sierra 2 Center grand opening reception and theater event. Most of the renovation was complete, and a cadre of tenants were established in the building, including Matrix, First Step Children's Center, Capitol City Ballet, Harmony Grits Dance Company, the Art Directors and Artists Club, Sacramento Braille Transcribers, Poet Tree, Sacramento Youth Theatre, Sacramento Song Writers Showcase, Sacramento Center for Textile Arts and the *Suttertown News*. Larger rooms and the theater were reserved for general use.

SCNA is one of the few, if not the only, nonprofit organizations to successfully restore and convert an old school in Sacramento. After a property swap between the City of Sacramento and Sacramento City Unified School District in 1997, the school district turned the property over to the city.

Many credit the strong and ongoing neighborhood support for the achievement. That, plus an enduring vision of what the center would become:

"An innovative center for the arts and the community by providing low-cost space for diverse 'resident' and 'non-resident' arts, service, and community groups."

Sierra 2 still embodies that vision with tenants such as the Empire Arts Collective, Sacramento Performing Arts, Macondo Music and Eben Burgoon (cartoonist), in addition to weekly and monthly users like Glass Art Mosaics, Light Opera of Sacramento, Grand Kyiv Ballet and Sacramento Pop Choir.

"I'm so proud that Sierra 2 is still active," Schroeter said. All of us who drive or walk by should be, as well.

Planning

Continued from page 1

sion, vision and core values to ensure they are dynamic, inspirational and aligned with the neighborhood's future. The process will also examine how SCNA and the Sierra 2 Center mutually benefit each other, identify strengths and opportunities, and define what the organization wants to become by its 50th anniversary.

Fowkes' approach relies on deep engagement and first-hand research. A "big believer in pulling in a lot of voices," Fowkes has conducted multiple listening sessions with neighbors, current and former board members and artists at Sierra 2. Fowkes also hosted a community forum on Feb. 23 for Curtis Park residents to weigh in.

"There's wisdom in the room," Fowkes said. "My role is to tap into the wisdom in the room and enable that wisdom to come forward."

As SCNA looks toward its milestone anniversary, the goal is clear: honor what has been built, strengthen community bonds and create a focused, actionable roadmap for the next chapter of neighborhood leadership.

If you did not have the opportunity to attend the community forum, Fowkes welcomes your input. She can be reached at margo@ontargetconsulting.net.

Michael Oates is a member of the SCNA board.

Pancake Breakfast Fundraiser!

Bret Harte Elementary

Funds raised will support the school garden, library, and student academics.

Saturday Apr 25th
8:30am - 11:00am

Buy Tickets: bit.ly/bhpancake

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NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

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ART

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

Art Club
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Last Thursday, 6-8 p.m. Garden Room
Artclubsacramento@gmail.com

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

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tworiversdancecenter.com and rivercity-taps.com

Dance for Parkinson's
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Wednesdays, 1-2 p.m. Studio 1
Rcarlson404@yahoo.com

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. and 10 a.m. Room 10
800-374-9191, weightwatchers.com

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

Women's Friendship Group
Meet new friends and discover new hobbies.
Monday, March 11 (2nd Mondays)
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

BOOK CLUBS

Fiction Book Club
Monday, March 9 (2nd Mondays)
11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
Room 11
Book: "Playground" by Richard Powers

Nonfiction Book Club
Thursday, March 19 (3rd Thursdays)
11 a.m.-noon
Room 11
Book: "The Shattering: America in the 1960s" by Kevin Boyle

AUTOBIOGRAPHY GROUP

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

CARDS & GAMES

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

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

Intermediate Bridge
Thursdays, 12:30-1 p.m.
Room 12
Beginners welcome

Fun Bridge (Contract)
Thursdays, 1-3 p.m. Room 12
Fridays, 1-3 p.m. Room 9
Some Bridge experience required

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\$80/10 classes

Strength and Balance
Tuesdays, 10-11 a.m. Studio 2
All levels welcome

Tai Chi Chuan
Wednesdays, 10-11 a.m. Studio 2
All levels welcome

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Friday, March 6, 5-7 p.m.
Sunday, March 8, 4-5:30 p.m.
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Join a woodworking expert for Cutting Boards 101. You will learn the fundamentals of woodworking and create your very own cutting board in this two-part series.
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Grand Kyiv Ballet
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Swan Lake

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Tickets: grandkyivballet.com.ua/en/portfolio/swan-lake/

Women's Day Cake Workshop
Saturday, March 7
5-6:30 p.m.
\$95
Learn the beautiful art of cake decorating. In this class with the local baker and owner of One Cupcake Bakery, you'll discover how to create an elegant, timeless and feminine "Women's Day" design using classic piping techniques and colors that never go out of style. Whether you are a beginner or an experienced baker, you'll gain the skills to decorate your own "Women's Day" mini cake and cupcakes. All materials are included.

Charcoal Drawing for Beginners
Sunday, March 8
10 a.m.-12 p.m.
\$45
Join award-winning artist Emma Brown in learning the expressive possibilities of charcoal in this welcoming, beginner-friendly drawing class. Students will be introduced to essential materials such as vine and compressed charcoals and learn foundational techniques such as shading, blending and mark-making. Through guided exercises focused on light and shadow, value, texture and simple composition, participants will build confidence, strengthen observational skills and create dynamic drawings in a supportive environment. No prior drawing experience is required.

Beginner Photography
Saturday, March 14
1-4 p.m.
\$80
Do you want to have a better relationship with your camera? Join photographer Laurie Gallant for a Beginning Photography Class to learn about photography and shooting on manual mode so you can make your own creative image. Bring your camera, manual, tripod and a list of any questions you may have. This is a fun and informative class that will start with a discussion and lead to hands-on practice next door on the Sierra 2 Green.

Layers of Experience: Palimpsest Workshop
Saturday, March 21
1-3 p.m.
\$35
Inspired by the ancient practice of reusing materials, this workshop introduces the art technique of Palimpsest — a layered approach that reveals traces of what came before. Through intuitive exploration and shifting perspectives, participants will be guided through a reflective, hands-on process to uncover and express inner narratives. Students will

learn to blend diverse elements like paint, paper, fabric and found objects to create a unique mixed-media visual artifact representing their inner experience, intuition and personal narratives.

You're the Cherry on Top Cake Workshop
Saturday, March 21
6-7:30 p.m.
\$95
Learn the beautiful art of cake decorating. In this class with the local baker and owner of One Cupcake Bakery, you'll discover how to create an elegant classic cherry design using classic piping techniques and colors that never go out of style. Whether a beginner or an experienced baker, you'll gain the skills to decorate your own cherry-on-top cake. All materials are included for a 4-inch mini cake that serves 4 to 6 people and can be kept in the fridge for up to a week.

Intuitive Painting at Sierra 2 Center
Sunday, March 29
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
\$40, optional \$25 art kit
Whether you're brand new to painting or curious about intuitive art, this Sunday morning studio is a welcoming place to begin. Intuitive Painting at Sierra 2 Center is a supportive creative session designed for beginners and those wanting to try intuitive painting. Show up with no pressure and no expectations, just curiosity and a willingness to play. Each class begins with a gentle group check-in, introduction to intuitive painting and a simple demonstration of materials and tools. We'll work primarily with acrylic paint and a variety of mixed-media supplies from Cara Gregor's home studio. From there, you'll be guided into painting at your own pace and letting your work evolve naturally.

Creative Vibes: Art Camp
Monday, March 30-Friday, April 3
9:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
\$300 (scholarship opportunities available)
Join us for an unforgettable 5-day adventure for young artists to dive into a world of color, creativity and hands-on artistic exploration. At Creative Vibes, we blend painting, sculpture, storytelling and mixed-media art to create a dynamic, immersive experience that inspires imagination and self-expression. Each day, campers will explore exciting themes like art in nature, famous artists, printmaking and more. From crafting their own story to designing fantasy creatures and experimenting with sculpting, every activity is designed to spark curiosity and develop artistic skills in a fun, supportive environment. Whether your child is a budding Picasso or just loves to create, Creative Vibes: Arts Camp is the perfect place to explore, experiment and express.

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Thursday, March 5: Tim & Myles Thompson, blazing father/son duo on guitar, mandolin, fiddle and harmony vocals. Dad is a two-time international fingerpicking champion.

Friday, March 6: Rachel Sumner & Traveling Light, Kerrville award-winning, Boston-based string trio boast a timely "Femericana" genre.

Saturday, March 7: Sourdough Slim & Robert Armstrong, from Carnegie Hall to Lincoln Center to the Side Door with a repertoire of western classics, country blues, vintage jazz and string band favorites from the 1920s and 30s.

Saturday, March 14: Jim Bruno Trio, a musical partner of Shawn Colvin, brings his excellent trio (electric stand-up bass and lead guitar) to lift up strong songwriting.

Friday, March 20: The Cross-Eyed Possum, an exuberant folk-Americana trio led by lion-maned identical twins, Jason and Jonah Howard. Brotherly vocals are always a joy, plus they do a rippin' "Whippin' Post."

Saturday, March 28: The Crooked Jades, important SF-based pioneers who brought old-time music to contemporary audiences, "American Gothic for a new age." --Americana UK.

THE GUILD THEATER

2828 35th St.

sthope.org/guild-theater-home

Sunday, March 1: "Remember the Time" author talk with Teddy Riley. Grammy Award-winning R&B and hip-hop legend Teddy Riley recounts his journey from growing up in the projects in Harlem to inventing the genre New Jack Swing, selling out shows at Madison Square Garden, and creating music for Michael Jackson, Snoop Dogg, Pharrell and more. General Admission ticket includes a copy of his book. Tickets: \$35 @Eventbrite.

Saturday, March 28: "RCAF Presents: Cesar Chavez Celebration/Poetry & Music with Paloma Negra." A fun celebration honoring the legacy of Cesar Chavez, featuring singer Araceli Collazo and Paloma Negra led by Dominic Garcia. Poetry, song and music, community, culture and memory capture the spirit of the amazing leader. Tickets: \$35 @ Eventbrite.

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

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Sunday, March 1: Sacramento's beloved Sammie Hall of Fame member, the 9-piece Latin/alternative band Sol Peligro, is turning 21. Filming a new video. 4-6 p.m.

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.

— Mindy Giles

Taproom

Continued from page 1

Always an optimist, Archie hopes to relocate and would like to stay close to Curtis Park.

"I'm pretty humbled right now by how many people have reached out — neighbors, regulars, landlords with suggestions — even the mayor, councilmembers and other brewers," he said. "We are actively exploring new locations for Pangaea and are committed to carrying this community forward into its next chapter. But there aren't a lot of places nearby.

"Pangaea is really a special place, a sacred place, to me," added Archie, who has lived in the neighborhood for 18 years, along with his wife Kindra and their two children, Myles and Dylan. "I've built the business at the same time I was building a family."

Archie also has served on the Sierra Curtis Neighborhood Association board and been a sponsor of the wine tasting event at Sierra 2.

Archie was drawn to European beers, especially Belgian ones, when he played basketball for a season in Italy. He decided to share his love of specialty brews by opening Pangaea, which became an instant success. Since then, his entrepreneurship has vastly expanded with Urban Roots Brewery and Smokehouse, Bawk, The Roost, Cerveceria on Folsom Boulevard and his newest venture, Good Neighbor.

His employees, who are also sad and will miss

the camaraderie of fellow staff members and regular patrons, will be offered employment at Archie's other locations.

Scott Macumber, Pangaea's head chef and general manager, will relocate to Urban Roots until another location for Pangaea is found.

"I'm going to miss all my regulars here, where neighbors come to gather, and the community spirit of this place," Macumber said. "It's like Cheers, where everyone knows your name."

Once word got around about the closure, many have come to gather, express their sadness and reflect on what Pangaea has meant to them.

Andrew Gibson and Emily Papalardo of Sixth Avenue have been going to Pangaea for more than 10 years. "It's been our gathering place," said Papalardo, who, along with her husband, said they will truly miss the place. "This is where we hang out with friends, celebrating family events."

Liz Boileau, a Crocker Village neighbor, described it as "a place where we can be ourselves, enjoy the food, beer and community."

Another Curtis Park neighbor, Carl Lee of Huntington Way said, "It's like losing a home for the whole neighborhood. It's a loss for the whole community. But Rob is such a visionary; I know great things will come."

Curtis Park resident Mindy Giles expressed her surprise and sadness upon hearing of the closure. "Oh dear, we've been coming since the beginning. Thank you. Rob, you're a community anchor in our neighborhood, and one of the reasons we moved here. We will follow you."

Pangaea closes March 19. To honor its Curtis Park legacy and with an eye toward a future location, Pangaea is producing commemorative tote bags and t-shirts with its logo, which will also be available for



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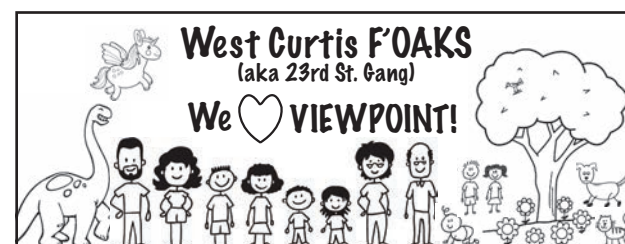
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Neighborhood nursery to move in March

By Andrea Rosen

Angela Pratt opened The Plant Foundry 10 years ago at 3500 Broadway in the Oak Park Historic District, relying on her horticulture degree and work experience at several nurseries. She wanted an outlet for her creativity and envisioned a fun and inviting nursery.

Pratt's vision is intact, and over the years her plants and unique garden products have drawn many dedicated customers, including residents of Curtis Park, Land Park, Elmhurst and Midtown.

Pratt, who lived on Portola Way as a child, wanted more control over her vision of a neighborhood nursery/boutique but was limited as a tenant. After an arduous, two-year process, she bought a property at 3621 Broadway, a site previously occupied by T&R Taste of Texas BBQ, and will move the business there this month. Her dedicated and knowledgeable staff are excited about the move.

Architect Ron Vrilakas, who owns the current site, has city-approved plans to build a mixed-use commercial development with 24 apartments and ground-floor retail.

As the property and business owner of the new site, Pratt said she can be more creative and take some risks. She plans to add on-site parking, an office and an all-gender ADA restroom for customers and employees. She will also invest in better lighting, signage and heating and air conditioning. She noted that the building will have great natural light and skylights, which are perfect for plants. A new, more attractive and secure fence will be an important addition.

Pratt said the Plant Foundry has Sacramento's largest selection of Sonoma County's Sweetwater Nursery (wholesale) plants, which means her plants are almost 100% organic. She also carries a wide variety of hard-to-find herbs, veggies and flowers. In addition to plants, she sells garden-themed accessories, gardening tools and whimsical gift items.

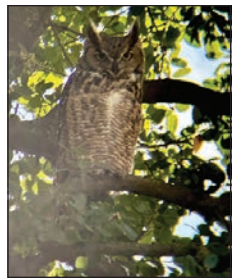


Angela Pratt at her Plant Foundry on Broadway.

Photo by Andrea Rosen

Have you heard our new neighbor?

If you happen to hear hooting after dark, it might just be the calls of the great horned owl recently spotted in the sky above Curtis Park. According to the National Audubon Society, these owls, which are up to 2 feet tall with a wingspan ranging from 3 to 4 feet, are found throughout North and South America. They typically take up residence in old nests of other large birds. One is using the Cooper's hawk nest from this past summer.



Spotted in Curtis Park: a great horned owl.

Photo by Kelly Salina

Great horned owls hunt at night and can take down large prey with their vice-like grip; it takes 28 pounds of force to open their talons when clenched. If you think this owl is looking at you, it probably is. Their large yellow eyes, though excellent for night vision, cannot move within their sockets. You won't get a side eye from this feathered friend. It swivels its head 180 degrees to look in any direction. The oldest great horned owl on record was 28 years old. Here's hoping our new neighbor will stick around for a while.

– Kelly Salina, Portola Way

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RIVER CITY TAPS

A poster for the Grand Kyiv Ballet's production of Swan Lake. The background is a deep blue, atmospheric scene of a lake at night with jagged, ice-like rock formations rising from the water. In the foreground, a ballerina in a white tutu and a ballet master in a black patterned shirt and white tights are shown in a romantic pose, looking at each other. The text is in a classic serif font, with the title 'SWAN LAKE' being the largest and most prominent. The date and time are listed below the title, and the venue is at the bottom left. A QR code for tickets is in the bottom right corner.

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Trees in Curtis Park

Can we safely use glyphosate around trees?

By Daniel Pskowski

A neighbor recently asked me about the herbicide being sprayed around the base of the trees in William Curtis Park. Should he be concerned about his health and that of his dog? The synthetic herbicide being used is glyphosate. This non-selective herbicide will kill most plants. It prevents plants from making certain proteins needed for plant growth. Glyphosate's systemic action allows it to travel throughout the plant and to the roots. This standard herbicide treatment prevents mower and string trimmer damage to the base of the tree.

Roundup® is the most widely known glyphosate product and is commercially available. Glyphosate was first registered for use as a weedkiller in the United States in 1974 in agriculture, forestry and home gardening to kill weeds.

Starting in 1996, genetic engineering developed

glyphosate-resistant soybeans. Corn, alfalfa, cotton and wheat soon followed. These genetically modified crops enabled farmers to kill weeds without killing their crops. Glyphosate became the most used herbicide in the United States agriculture.

Getting back to my neighbor's health concerns: In 2017, California listed glyphosate as a chemical known to cause cancer under Proposition 65. The International Agency for Research on Cancer classified glyphosate as probably carcinogenic to humans. However, several other agencies, including the European Food Safety Authority, have determined it is unlikely to be a carcinogen. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to find there are no risks to public health when glyphosate is used as instructed on the label. The EPA warns that pets may be at risk of digestive or intestinal problems if they touch or eat plants that have just been sprayed.

San Francisco, Berkeley, Richmond, Novato,

Sonoma and Santa Rosa are just a few of the 37 cities in California that either ban or restrict glyphosate use. These cities use organic herbicides, mulch, weed barriers and mechanical control.

Organic herbicides are more costly because they must be reapplied frequently, especially on perennial weeds. With the City of Sacramento's projected \$66 million budget deficit, the Department of Youth, Parks, & Community Enrichment will not have the resources to transition to organic herbicides.

But what if the neighborhood partnered with the parks department and tried a different approach? Knock down the weeds and grass with a string trimmer, put down cardboard, then place 4-6 inches of wood chips on top of the cardboard. Perhaps the city can try this at Sierra 2 Green to compare its effectiveness to spraying herbicides around the base of trees.

Dan Pskowski is a retired Sacramento City arborist and urban forester. He is an ISA-certified arborist.

Immigrant rights, access to healthy food are city priorities

We are already two months into the year, and my office is hard at work planning community events, responding to constituent concerns and advancing policies to strengthen our neighborhoods. Part of this work is making sure every resident feels safe accessing city services, parks, libraries and community spaces.

In this moment, protecting our immigrant neighbors is not abstract policy. It is about families who live

CAITY MAPLE
City Council Member
District 5



next door, children in our schools and small business owners on our corridors. Immigrant civil and human rights are a core commitment for the city of Sacramento, and words alone are not enough. After the city council voted to update the city's Immigration Platform last month, my colleagues introduced a proposal to prohibit the use of city facilities and property for immigration-related enforcement activities. As chair of the Law and Legislation Committee, I was proud to introduce the proposal, authored by council members Eric Guerra, Karina Talamantes and Mai Vang. The committee unanimously advanced it to the full city council, and I am committed to moving this forward

quickly for final consideration.

At the same time, my office continues working to address everyday needs in our neighborhoods. While the Oak Park Farmers Market has closed, expanding food access remains a top priority. The Food Literacy Center is redirecting resources toward school meals and nutrition education programs that will serve up to 800 children each week, helping ensure that families continue to receive reliable access to healthy food. This winter, I was proud to support the Food Literacy Center's Kids Farmers Market, which helped nearly 300 Sacramento students bring fresh produce home to their families. Building on these efforts, my office is working to expand food access through investments in sustainable urban agriculture and neighborhood-based food programs.

Altogether, this work reflects our commitment to building a city where every resident feels safe, supported and able to thrive. Please consider my office as a partner and resource if you ever need assistance with a local issue. Call 916-808-7005 or email district5@cityofsacramento.org.

Join volunteers for a clean-up of the Fifth Avenue planters March 21

If you've passed the traffic circles on East Curtis Way, West Curtis Way and 26th Street recently, you may have noticed green shoots emerging in the beds. Thanks to neighbors who joined January's planting day, California native wildflowers and drought-tolerant plants are getting established. Winter rains and ongoing care from nearby residents are helping the circles take shape as small but meaningful neighborhood showcases.

A couple of more traffic planters on each end of Fifth Avenue also need some attention. The SCNA Clean and Quiet Committee will host a spring clean-

up at 10 a.m. Saturday, March 21, meeting at the intersection of Fifth Avenue and 26th Street. Volunteers will weed the beds and plant new plants.

Coffee, donuts, gloves and garden tools will be provided. No gardening experience is required.

These traffic circles may be small, but they reflect the pride and care of our neighborhood. It's an excellent opportunity to spend time with new neighbors and get to know them.

To volunteer, contact Michael Oates at michael.a.oates@gmail.com.

— Michael Oates

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HOME OF RIVER CITY TAPS

Curtis Park loses long-time resident Rona Browne Gordon

Rona Browne Gordon passed away peacefully on Jan. 13, after a nine-month battle with lung cancer.

She is survived by her beloved sister, Marcie Michel (Bill); daughter, Alyssa Murphy (Bill); son, Kyle Gordon (Stephanie); cherished grandchildren, Sammy, Hannah and Zachary; and her loyal dog, Lily.

Rona was active in the community, supporting local, state and federal campaigns, including rallying at the state Capitol for causes close to her heart by advocating for the rights and dignity of underserved communities. A long-time Curtis Park resident, Rona supported local restaurants and SCNA-sponsored events, such as the Curtis Park Home Tour and various theatre performances at the Sierra 2 Center.

Rona had an accomplished career with the California Department of

Education for more than 25 years, followed by nearly 20 years as an administrator in the close-knit community of Christian Brothers High School.

She also was fiercely devoted to her family's well-being. Rona gave wholeheartedly, always ensuring her children and grandchildren had everything they needed. She remained closely involved through every stage of her children's lives. She found deep joy in becoming a grandmother — proudly cheering on Sammy, Hannah and Zachary in their athletic and academic successes. One especially treasured moment came when Zachary gave her a new name and term of endearment: "Memo Ron."

Rona's small, close circle of friends meant the world to her. Their companionship, laughter and care brought her comfort and joy. Her family will always be grateful for the love they

showed her over the years.

Outside of her dear family and friends, Rona was adventurous. Her passion for travel took her across the states, from New Orleans to New Mexico and abroad, from a trip down under to Australia to a cruise down the Rhine River. At quieter times, Rona was a voracious reader and, at the appropriate time, would remind you of her history major at UCLA.

Throughout her life, Rona exhibited a love for her pets and animals and volunteered with the Sacramento SPCA, at the Doggy Dash and other initiatives benefiting local organizations supporting animals in need.

In lieu of flowers, the family invites you to consider a donation in Rona's memory to Sacramento SPCA or Shriners Children's Hospital Northern California.

— Alyssa Murphy



Rona Brown Gordon

Photo courtesy of Alyssa Murphy

Elinor Steffy, 22, mourned as a friend, teacher, mentor

By Michael Sicilia

Elinor Steffy, age 22, was a vibrant, talented and cheerful young woman of great promise. Curtis Park residents knew her from visits to Good Things to Eat on Franklin Boulevard, where she worked with her mother, Delcy. She had been working the morning of Jan. 22 before leaving for the Hawkins School of Performing Arts in Folsom, where she was a beloved teacher.

While commuting that afternoon, Elinor was standing on an elevated light-rail platform at the Iron Point Station in Folsom when a vehicle lost control, veered onto the light-rail tracks and struck her. The accident is still under investigation.

Word of Elinor's untimely passing shocked the many communities whose lives she touched. Her mother, Delcy, began a GoFundMe campaign to establish a nonprofit foundation to continue her legacy. To date, more than \$58,000 has been raised.

"Elinor Peace Steffy was more than a dance teacher," Delcy Steffy wrote on her GoFundMe page. "She was a mentor, a friend, and a beacon of creativity in the Sacramento community. Her passion for dance was matched only by her love for her students."

Steffy said donations will provide



Elinor Steffy with the Jamaican patties she created with her mother at Good Things to Eat on Franklin Boulevard.

Courtesy Good Things to Eat

dance education, master classes, workshops and cultural exchange experiences for Sacramento youth.

"Elinor believed in nurturing each child as an individual, helping them discover their own style and voice. She cared deeply about their growth, both as dancers and as people, always encouraging them to express themselves and push their boundaries. Her classes were filled with joy, encouragement, and a genuine desire to see every student thrive."

Good Things to Eat is currently closed, but will reopen soon.

To contribute to the foundation, visit gofundme.com/f/honoring-elinor-dance-community-fund.

Maggie Thomas returns home to Curtis Park

Over the past few years, I've watched my longtime Curtis Park friends welcome their grown children back to the neighborhood, many with kids of their own. I often wondered if my own daughter would ever do the same.

In January, I became one of those mothers whose child returned home with a family of her own. After 20 years living in San Francisco, New Haven and, most recently, Washington, D.C., my daughter Maggie Thomas, her husband Franz Hochstrasser, and their 14-month-old son, Henry, now live on Portola Way directly across the street from her parents, Hal Thomas and me.

"I'm thrilled to be returning home to Curtis Park," said Maggie. "The community is incredibly special and I'm so lucky to get to share it with my husband and little boy."

And, yes, life is wonderful with shared dinners, easy walks across the street for short visits with Henry and intermittent babysitting, to which we happily agree. Grandfather Hal sometimes strolls Henry to meet up with his coffee group, with a stop at the swings in Curtis Park on the way home. Grandmother Kathy helps with grocery store runs and gladly entertains Henry when he visits.

Born and raised in Curtis Park, Maggie previously worked for four



Maggie Thomas and Franz Hochstrasser with son Henry

Photo courtesy Maggie Thomas

years in the Biden White House. She is now consulting with clients around the country with her husband at the intersection of politics, climate and clean energy.

"I'm so excited to be in Curtis Park," said Franz. "The neighbors have welcomed me with open arms." Franz also hails from Northern California.

— Kathy Les

Pancake breakfast and garden tour support school activities

Spring at Bret Harte Elementary means sunshine, blooming gardens and pancakes. The school's annual Pancake Breakfast returns from 8:30-11 a.m. on Saturday, April 25, welcoming neighbors, students and families for a morning of food and community spirit.

The beloved event coincides with the Curtis Park Home & Garden Tour, offering tourgoers a delicious stop along their route. Organized by the PTA and hosted by parent and staff volunteers, last year's breakfast brought together about 120 community members. Proceeds from the fundraiser directly support the school library, classroom materials and student



Bret Harte's school mascot promoting last year's pancake breakfast.



**LAUREN
GOTHARD
and
LINDSEY
SIN**

academic programs.

The school garden also will be open for tours on April 18 during the 13th annual Gardens Got Natives Tour and again on April 25 during the pancake breakfast. This year, parent volunteers are especially excited to showcase the newly expanded butterfly garden.

"I love sharing the fun the kids have in the garden with the rest of the community," said parent volunteer Emily Grau. "We have so much joy and exploration in the garden, and it's really special to give the rest of the community a peek at that too."

The garden committee also will host a plant sale during a garden workday from 9-11 a.m. on Saturday, April 11 and again during the Pancake Breakfast. Garden enthusiasts can purchase 4-inch plant starts for \$3 each. Available varieties include tomatoes, eggplant, peppers, cucumber, squash, beans, basil, okra, loofah and sunflowers. A limited number of pipevines in gallon containers also will be available for \$10 each. Plants may be reserved in advance through the Bret Harte garden website: bit.ly/bhplantsale

The pancake breakfast remains one of Bret Harte's most important fundraisers. Funds raised have helped refurbish the school library and replace essential equipment such as sports gear and classroom supplies.

Looking ahead, next year's sixth-grade class will begin fundraising for its annual outdoor education trip to Sly Park in Pollock Pines. For the past five years, the district covered the trip's cost using COVID relief funds, but, beginning next year, families and the school community will need to raise the funds. The trip costs about \$300 per student.

"We already have many ideas," said sixth-grade teacher Michael Rule, who will work alongside Prin-



Bret Harte students harvest lettuce in the school garden.

Photos by Janet Moody

cipal Jasmine Piring-Jones, the PTA and families to coordinate fundraising efforts. "But we'll need lots of support from the Bret Harte community to turn those ideas into the funds needed for the trip."

Students are already excited. "I'm looking forward to snow, hanging out with my friends and exploring nature," said Isla, a fifth-grader.

Taken together, these events highlight what makes Bret Harte special: a school where families, neighbors and students come together to support learning both inside and outside the classroom. Whether stopping in for pancakes, touring the garden or purchasing plants for spring, community members are invited to take part in a tradition that nourishes more than just appetites. Every ticket purchased and every plant sold helps ensure Bret Harte students continue to thrive, explore and learn.

Tickets for the Pancake Breakfast are \$10 each, with a 20% discount available for purchases made before April 19. Tickets can be purchased online at bit.ly/bhpancake, at the school starting in late March and at the door the day of the event. Community members are encouraged to come hungry and help support Bret Harte students.

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