

VIEWPOINT

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October 2020

Does city need a 'strong mayor'?

YES

City leaders would be more accountable

By Jay Schenirer

Sacramento voters have a chance to vote for change and progress this November, of course with the choice for president, but also much further down on the ballot, with a choice for change to Sacramento's city governance system.

Measure A would shift how our city is governed, making the elected city leader directly accountable for implementing policies that advance equity and economic progress in Sacramento.

In Sacramento's current structure, an unelected city manager is the executive head of government who is in charge of all operations. Under the Brown Act, a City Council member may talk with only three colleagues about a specific issue prior to a public hearing; the city manager can speak with all council members.

Neither the mayor nor any council member may require an action of the city manager or city staff. This means no one elected by the people has the authority to direct action by city government. We can simply encourage city staff to get things done. This makes it difficult, and sometimes impossible, to respond appropriately to constituent concerns.

When there is no accountability, and no elected leader has the authority to get city government to act, the result is painfully incremental progress on anything in our city. As I wrote in my

Please see YES, Page 2

If passed by a majority of voters, MEASURE A would revise City Charter from 'council-manager' form of government to 'mayor-council' form.



Valentina Polendo-Rodriguez of East Curtis Drive casts her ballot at the Sierra 2 Center Vote Center during the primary election on March 3, 2020.

Photo/Joan Cusick

NO

Residents would lose their voice in city decisions

By Rosanna Herber

Measure A would concentrate political power with the mayor, while simultaneously relinquishing the policy-making ability of City Council. This loss of power would diminish the voices of neighbors, neighborhood associations and city residents.

How? Under Measure A, the mayor would be separated from the council and no longer required to attend council meetings to hear directly from neighborhood leaders and community advocates. The mayor could veto any council ordinance he or she didn't like and fire the city manager without cause. Councilmembers could overturn a mayor's veto with six out of nine votes, but that's a higher bar than now, where a neighborhood association can win a decision at council with five votes.

Who would benefit if you split power in a community? Not neighborhood associations that would lose weekly access to the mayor. Not marginalized communities that feel heard by the mayor and council now.

If this measure passes, special interests funding this campaign (developers, chambers, labor unions) will only need to influence ONE elected official to have their way at City Hall. Now, they must lobby all eight councilmembers and the mayor, just like our neighborhood association does. This shift of power to

Please see NO, Page 2

Questions and answers about how to vote

By Joan Cusick

Curtis Park residents will have options in how they vote in the general election – by mail, by drop box or in person at authorized Vote Centers, including the Sierra 2 Center.

Still have questions? Here are some answers, based on information from the California secretary of state, Sacramento County and the League of Women Voters of California.

Who is eligible to vote?

To register, you must be a U.S. citizen and resident of California who will be 18 years or older on Election

Day, Nov. 3. Pre-registration is available to 16- and 17-year-olds who will be automatically registered to vote on their 18th birthday. Currently incarcerated persons, those on parole following conviction of a felony, and those found mentally incompetent are not eligible to vote.

How do I register?

Visit RegisterToVote.ca.gov before midnight on Oct. 19. After that, you must register in person at a Sacramento County vote center and cast a conditional ballot, which will be counted only after elections officials verify your eligibility to vote.

Please see Voting Q&A, Page 3

Oct. 2 is Porch Picnic deadline to order food

This fundraiser is totally virtual except for the food... delivered to you. Page 5



Its 'scold' call identifies this territorial bird

With their bold behaviors, scrub jays can store up to 5,000 acorns for winter. Page 7



New pharmacy on Freeport Boulevard

Independent drug store offers personal care and information. Page 8



YES

Continued from Page 1

last *Viewpoint* column, it took more than three years to get a new crosswalk installed in front of the Children’s Home on Sutterville Road. While I am proud this was accomplished, it shouldn’t take that long to make progress.

Our mayor is elected citywide, based on a vision for Sacramento and commitments to improve our collective future. The mayor should have the authority to get that vision accomplished and should be accountable for implementing policies that advance equity and economic progress in Sacramento. And, while we need our city leader to be accountable for more efficiency in the routine government operations, this need is even greater in times of crisis.

But, since Measure A would shift accountability to the mayor, does that mean that perspectives of neighborhoods represented by City Council members would carry less weight?

Actually the opposite is true. Measure A would give neighborhoods a bigger voice and would strengthen City Council. It would give City Council exclusive authority over land-use and planning decisions, ensuring that neighborhood perspectives would be taken into account.

With Measure A, the mayor would no longer lead or serve on City Council, and a ninth seat would be added to City Council, which would improve diversity among our elected leadership.

The strengthened City Council would have the power to override the mayor’s executive authority with a two-thirds vote. Measure A also would establish term limits for the mayor to no more than two terms.

Measure A also would establish in our City Charter a process that would increase citizen participation in establishing budget priorities and elevate input from our neighborhoods.

Many of these changes can happen without a change in the charter, but there is no guarantee that future councils will be supportive.

As we face the pandemic and related economic crisis, homelessness, climate change and racial justice reckoning, Sacramento has big challenges. We need an accountable leader and City Council that can take action and leverage opportunities to address these pressing issues and move Sacramento forward.

Under Measure A, we the people could fairly hold city leaders accountable for making progress.

Jay Schenirer is the District 5 member of City Council.

IMPARTIAL ANALYSIS OF MEASURE A

Prepared by Susana Alcala Wood, City Attorney

The Sacramento City Council has placed Measure A, the “Sacramento Mayoral Accountability and Community Equity Act of 2020,” on the ballot.

Measure A, if passed by a majority of the voters, would revise the Sacramento City Charter, the voter-approved “constitution” that established the framework for city government.

The chart below summarizes the comparison of the features of Measure A to the current system.

Current Charter	Measure A
Mayor is one of nine councilmembers	Mayor is no longer a councilmember, but may attend and be heard at council meetings Nine-member council with president and vice-president (eight members until 2022)
City manager is city’s chief executive officer	Mayor is chief executive officer City manager is chief administrative officer
Council appoints city manager	Mayor appoints city manager with council concurrence
Vote of six councilmembers required to remove city manager	Mayor removes city manager; council has six-vote override if removal is without cause
No mayoral veto	Mayor can veto ordinances, with exceptions, subject to six-vote council override Mayor can veto council’s approved budget (includes line-item veto), subject to six-vote council override
No term limits	Mayor has two-term limit
City manager presents proposed budget to council	Mayor presents proposed budget to council
Mayor appoints persons to boards and commissions, subject to council concurrence	Council-adopted ordinance may set method of appointment; mayor may appoint representatives to outside agencies, subject to council concurrence

Measure A forum on video

Viewpoint Staff

Former SCNA President Patrick Soluri moderated a Sept. 12 forum on Measure A for SCNA board members, with City Councilmember Jay Schenirer speaking in favor of the measure, and SMUD board member Rosanna Herber in opposition.

A video recording of the forum may be seen at <https://sierra2.org/educational-forum-on-measure-a-the-strong-mayor-ballot-measure/>.

NO

Continued from Page 1

the mayor would weaken our ability as neighbors to be heard.

I worked for a strong mayor in Fort Wayne, Indiana’s second-largest city. I saw what happens when political forces run city government instead of professional expertise. Honestly, it was great working for my strong mayor because we did get things done faster, but not better. When my “strong mayor” ran for governor, he ordered me to reallocate dollars only to Democratic neighborhoods. He didn’t care if a public process had decided differently; people could vote him out in three years. Three years? That’s accountability?

I resigned and moved to California, where I worked as chief of staff to Sacramento City Councilmember Kim Mueller. Here, I saw how the professional city manager-council form of government makes for less political havoc and better government outcomes. But it requires the electeds to work cooperatively.

Wouldn’t Measure A address inequities for communities of color, fund economic development and youth services in low-income neighborhoods, and require city government to analyze the racial, ethnic, LGBTQ and gender impacts of its decisions? Yes, but all those excellent ideas can be done right now, without taking the radical step of changing the City Charter.

According to Councilmember Larry Carr, every neighborhood president in District 8 (South Sacramento/ Meadowview) is against Measure A. In North Sacramento, both the Gardenland/ Northgate and Del Paso Heights community associations are against it. These are the poorest neighborhoods in our city. They understand this measure would diminish their voices.

You can love Mayor Darrell Steinberg, feel his genuine compassion to fix Sacramento’s problems, and still vote against Measure A. We need his leadership to help the council work better together, not give up the professional form of city governance for a political one.

Sacramento is at a crossroads. Special interests have decided that gifting ONE person with more power would be better than having everyone work out issues in an open, public setting. It’s true this would make things easier for the mayor and for the council, but not for the residents and neighborhoods they are elected to serve.

Measure A is a power grab for the mayor’s office. Please vote No.

Rosanna Herber is the Ward 4 member of the SMUD board.

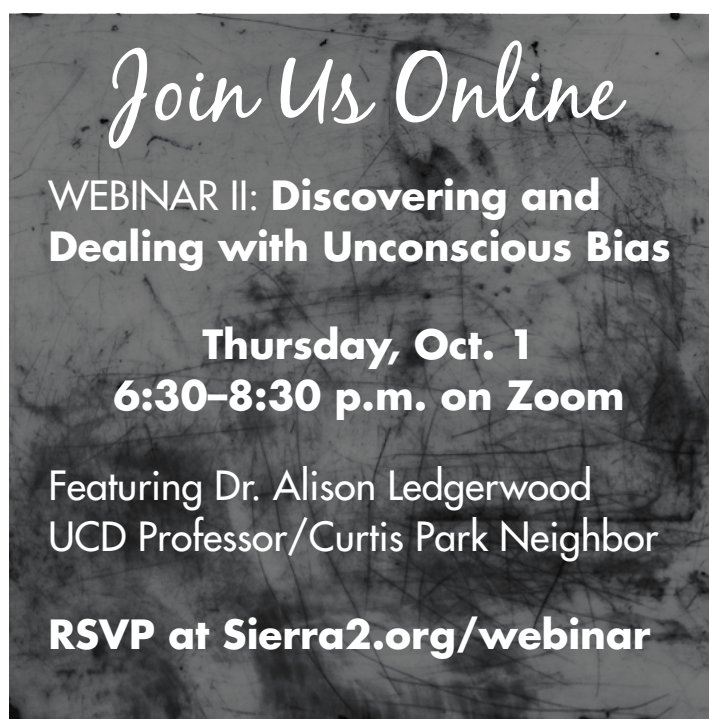
Unconscious bias to be addressed in Oct. 1 webinar

By Bruce Pierini

In the webinar “Discovering and Dealing with Unconscious Bias,” psychologist Alison Ledgerwood of Castro Way plans to help people unpack the ways racism can be unconscious.

She says we can all point to someone who utters a racist slur and say, “That’s racism.” But some racism can be difficult to notice, especially for white people who don’t have to grapple with its effects on a daily basis. That makes it more difficult to act on the many ways that racism creeps into and shapes our everyday thinking, actions, organizations and policies.

In this webinar, from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Oct. 1, Alison will talk about how people can be unaware of the ways that our history and systems shape our thinking; U.S. history itself, institutional racism that we perpetuate and racism that’s “already in motion” through neutrality and inaction; a focus on disadvantage while not considering advantage; and patterns of experience, so that we tend to think about our intentions (Did I mean well?), rather than the impact (Did my action harm someone?).



Join Us Online

WEBINAR II: **Discovering and Dealing with Unconscious Bias**

Thursday, Oct. 1
6:30–8:30 p.m. on Zoom

Featuring Dr. Alison Ledgerwood
UCD Professor/Curtis Park Neighbor

RSVP at [Sierra2.org/webinar](https://sierra2.org/webinar)

Making these unconscious aspects of racism conscious can be empowering. By recognizing racism in our daily actions and social environments, we can realize the power we have to change what happens in the spaces we occupy.

Everyone is invited with no charge to attend. Register for the webinar at sierra2.org/event/webinar. Once registered, you will receive an email with a link to join the Zoom webinar.

Note: If you're new to Zoom, there is an easy YouTube lesson at support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-video-tutorials.

Resources available on racial justice

By Kathy Les

An extensive list of reading, listening and viewing resources on racial justice has been posted at <https://sierra2.org/racial-justice/> by SCNA’s Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice.

Posted resources include a video of the Sept. 24 webinar on racial exclusion in Curtis Park, and an article from last month’s *Viewpoint*, “The color lines that divided us,” by Dennis Cusick. Also included are links to Richard Rothstein’s best-selling book, “The Color of Law”; and three short videos, “How the Racial Gap Was Created,” “Redlining” and “Segregated by Design,” that bring to life a historical understanding of the role that redlining played in creating segregated communities and wealth disparity.

The website has materials related to the Oct. 1 webinar on unconscious bias, including the books “So You Want to Talk about Race,” by Ijeoma Oluo; and “Me and White Supremacy: Combat Racism, Change the World and Become a Good Ancestor,” by Layla F. Saad. Also available are a TED Talk by Kimberle Crenshaw, “The Urgency of Intersectionality”; and the New York Times podcast “Nice White Parents.”

Other resources at the website discuss the history of slavery and its aftermath, racial inequities in the criminal justice system, and how to be anti-racist. A few books are especially for children.

Voting Q & A: Options on how you can vote in the general election

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Do I need to request a mail-in ballot?

No. Every registered voter in California will receive a paper ballot in the mail about four weeks before Election Day.

How do I complete my ballot?

After you receive your ballot in the mail, set aside time to vote. Read the instructions. Mark your ballot. Then put your completed ballot in the special return envelope provided in the mailing. The final step is extremely important: You must sign and date the outside of the return envelope. If your signature doesn’t match your voter registration, elections officials are required to notify you, giving you an opportunity to verify your signature and have your vote counted. But if you do not sign and date the outside of your return envelope, your ballot will not be counted.

Can I mail in my ballot?

Yes. Postage is now prepaid so no stamps are required. Mail-in ballots must be postmarked by Nov. 3 and must

be received no later than 17 days after Election Day.

I’d rather return my ballot in person. Is that an option?

Yes, and advance voting is encouraged. Here are a few key dates:

- Beginning Oct. 5, you may vote at the Sacramento County Elections Office at 7000 65th St., or deposit your completed ballot at a ballot drop box. The nearest drop boxes to Curtis Park are inside Raley’s supermarket, 4690 Freeport Blvd., and inside McKinley Library, 601 Alhambra Blvd. The Raley’s drop box will be accessible from 6 a.m. to midnight every day through Nov. 2, and from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Nov. 3. The McKinley Library drop box will be accessible from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays (except Oct. 8), and from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. on Nov. 3.
- Beginning Oct. 24, you may vote at some vote centers, including the Golden 1 Center and Oak Park Community Center.
- Beginning Oct. 31, you may vote at Sierra 2 Center and other vote centers.

What if I prefer to vote on Election Day?

Sierra 2 Center and all vote centers will be open Saturday, Oct. 31, to Monday, Nov. 2, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. for voting in person or depositing your marked ballot. On Election Day, Nov. 3, all vote centers will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m. As long as you are in line by 8 p.m., you will be allowed to vote. In Sacramento County, you may vote at any authorized location – not just at your local precinct.

Should I take my ballot to the polling place?

Yes. If you received a ballot in the mail, take it with you. You may surrender that ballot and vote with a regular ballot if you choose. If you did not receive a ballot in the mail, a poll worker will find your name on the list of registered voters and you will be asked to sign your name before you vote. If the poll worker cannot find your name on the voter rolls, you may request a provisional ballot, which will be counted only after elections officials verify your eligibility to vote.

Will I need to show ID at the polling place?

First-time voters should be prepared to show identification, such as a driver’s license, passport, student ID or any document sent by a government agency, such as a recent utility bill.

Can I have a friend or family member return my ballot for me?

Yes, but you must fill out the authorization box on the return envelope.

Is there a way to track my ballot after I’ve voted?

Visit WheresMyBallot.sos.ca.gov to sign up before you cast your ballot. The Where’s My Ballot tool will send updates when your ballot has been mailed, received and counted. You will also be notified if there are any issues with your ballot.

Craig McCulloch contributed to this report. For a complete list of Sacramento County Vote Centers and ballot drop box locations, visit <https://elections.sacounty.net/VoteCenters/pages/locations.aspx>.

Notes from Sept. 2 SCNA board meeting

SCNA opposes West Broadway Specific Plan

The SCNA board voted overwhelmingly to endorse a letter the Executive Committee had sent to the city in opposition to the West Broadway Specific Plan.

The letter expressed opposition because “the plan fails to protect the 751 units of public housing and the 2,000 low-income residents living in Alder Grove and Marina Vista with a guarantee that they be allowed to remain in the planning area if it is redeveloped.”

The board vote was 13 in favor with one abstention.

The board’s Ad Hoc Committee on Racial Justice had drafted the letter.

The development plan, for an area west of the Old City Cemetery and south of Broadway, “streamlines the housing development process and provides a vision for future riverfront planning and a destination for community events and new recreational opportunities,” according the city’s website.

City Council approved the development plan Aug. 25.

Treasurer

Treasurer **John Bailey** described a draft reserve for replacement policy similar to the policy SCNA adhered to during the 1980s and 1990s. The policy is modeled after the approach homeowners associations use to ensure adequate funding for maintenance and replacement of major building components. President **Bill Hoover** tabled the item for the October board meeting.

Executive director

Executive Director **Terri Shettle** reported that the

whistleblower policy is tied in with the harassment policy. The issue was tabled for 30 days.

Heritage

Dan Murphy advised the board that the Heritage Committee is defunct with \$2,000 allotted to it in the budget. He questioned the wisdom of returning the funds to the general fund. He said he believes the \$2,000 should stay in the Heritage Fund.

Development

Erik Fay urged board members to sell 10 tickets each to the Oct. 10 Porch Picnic fundraiser because it is SCNA’s major fundraiser this year.

Tickets for \$150 per household are on sale until Oct. 2 at sierra2.org. Each ticket will pay for dinner for two or four (depending on the restaurant) and a one-year membership in SCNA. There is an art activity link on the sierra2.org website. Music performed live at the Side Door will be part of the online festivities.

Food orders will go to restaurants Oct. 5.

Attendance

In attendance at the Sept. 2 meeting via Zoom were President **Bill Hoover**, Executive Director **Terri Shettle** and board members **John Bailey**, **Kathy Les**, **Andrea Rosen**, **Bruce Pierini**, **Martin Pierucci**, **Erik Fay**, **John Mathews**, **Dan Pskowski**, **Gerre Buehler**, **Dan Murphy**, **Nury Enciso**, **Susan French** and **Bill French**. Guests **Shannon Motley** and **Sharon Helmar** observed the meeting.

— Submitted by *Bruce Pierini*,
board secretary

President’s message

SCNA bylaws revised to allow board to make rapid response

The board has unanimously approved changes to the SCNA bylaws that became necessary as a result of COVID-19 restrictions and other recurring events.

While electronic meetings have become nearly universal, implementation by SCNA (a nonprofit organization) was not that simple.

SCNA bylaws, which contemplated in-person meetings, were silent on the subject of electronic meetings. The state Corporations Code and Robert’s Rules of Order have been helpful, but we needed a more permanent solution.

Additionally, we often receive requests requiring board action prior to board meetings. We needed to find a way to act in a timely manner, but still allow the board to have final say over any action taken. This provided the impetus for the second amendment.

The two amendments, with all members voting, were formally approved by the board.

The language of the amendments follows:

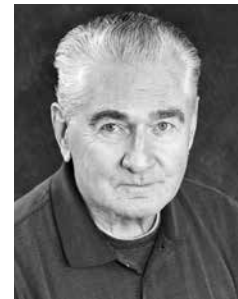
ARTICLE IV, Board of Directors, Section 6. Meetings, B. Whenever conditions or circumstances exist, not the product of SCNA Board action or inaction, that prevent the conduct of in person board, committee or other meetings permitted under these Bylaws, such meetings may be conducted through the use of videoconference or other electronic communication means designated by the President or the Board.

Such communication services shall have the following minimum capabilities:

1. Identifying all participants
2. Ability of all participants to see and hear one another.
3. Support for anonymous voting
4. Identifying those seeking to speak
5. Support for document retrieval and visual displays (i.e. vote tallies, pending motions, etc.)

**BILL
HOOVER**

**SCNA Board
President**



The conduct of any electronic meetings shall be subject to rules adopted by the Board, which may include reasonable limitations on, and requirements for, Board members’ participation. Any such rules adopted by the Board shall supersede any conflicting parliamentary authority. Anonymous voting conducted at a meeting conducted electronically shall be deemed a valid ballot, fulfilling any Bylaw or rules requirement for a ballot vote.

ARTICLE V, Section 3. Executive Committee
The Executive Committee shall consist of the Officers of the Board and one At Large board member. The at large member shall be elected by the Board of Directors at the January Organization meeting.

The Executive Committee shall meet as required on matters of routine management of the SCNA and, *further, shall have the power to act on behalf of the Board in any matter where action is required prior to the next Board meeting. Any action by the Executive Committee taken prior to a board meeting shall appear on the next board meeting’s agenda for ratification.* The Board may also delegate certain responsibilities and duties to the Executive Committee, provided that all corporate powers, activities and affairs of SCNA shall be exercised under the ultimate direction of the Board.



**Become an
SCNA member:
sierra2.org**

Next SCNA board meeting

The next regular meeting of the SCNA board will be a Zoom meeting from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Oct. 7. If you’re interested in attending, please contact president@sierra2.org.

Porch Picnic orders by Oct. 2

By Kathy Les

Orders must be placed by Oct. 2 for SCNA's fall fundraiser, the Porch Picnic event scheduled for Saturday, Oct. 10, from 4 to 7 p.m.

The fundraiser is totally virtual except for the food, which comes delivered to your house along with other treats – an art project, links to special entertainment to accompany your picnic, plus a one-year membership to SCNA. All this for \$150.

Participating restaurants include Taylor's Kitchen, Revolution Cafe, Paragary's, Urban Roots, Pangaea, Vallejo's, Hop Gardens and Sampino's. Some restaurants offer meat and vegan or vegetarian options; the three-course menus include servings for two or four,

depending on the restaurant.

Two local musical groups, The Cover Girls and The Undulations, will provide online entertainment.

Cara Gregor, an art instructor with Sierra 2's Learnery, will give an art lesson with drawing materials included in your Porch Picnic bag.

Log on to Sierra2.org for detailed information and to purchase your Porch Picnic dinner. A few days before the event, participants will receive an email with the unique Zoom and YouTube links for the art project and music.

This year's fall fundraiser is an attempt to offset revenue losses while the Sierra 2 Center is closed under COVID-19 restrictions. It's SCNA's way of bringing the neighborhood together while we continue to shelter in place.



Photo/Joan Cusick

Broc and Arlene Krause look forward to enjoying a Porch Picnic from Vallejo's restaurant with their two children on the side patio of their home on Donner Way.

Neighbors share ideas for Halloween this year



John and Allison Cotterill, 26th Street

"This year we still plan to dress up and do a Zoom call with Sydney's friends. (Sydney is 9). Maybe spend the evening making treats for friends, putting them in a fun decorated bag and dropping them off on their porches Sunday morning."



Lora And Jim Ward, Fifth Avenue

"Halloween is our great tradition on Fifth Avenue. This year may be different, but we will still decorate our house with crazy, eerily looking monsters that peer out of our attic windows and spookiness on our porch."



Judy and John Brush, Third Avenue

"We will have a backyard celebration – just us and the grandkids. We'll come up with some sort of treasure hunt or pumpkin hunting, like Easter egg hunting. For safety reasons, we won't be handing out candy, but will still have carved pumpkins out front."



Shana and Marshall Cook, Portola Way

"Not sure how we're participating – Gordon is 9, Russell is 7. If we trick-or-treat this year, it will be limited to our immediate neighbors here on Portola who we already know and will practice safe distancing."

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Castro Way friends meet in the middle, walk for decades

By Judy Green Scheible

Two decades of shared confidences make a rich, textured history for Ricki Bergado and Michele March. Twenty years ago these two were strangers. They met at a Concert in the Park and were invited to join an existing walking group. Over the years the others drifted off, but not these two.

After 20 years of walking together five days a week, they are so close that neither would consider moving. They live at opposite ends of Castro Way. Each weekday at 6:30 a.m., they meet at Sierra 2 Green to walk and talk. For a long time their route took them one and a half times around William Curtis Park. After the pedestrian bridge was built over the railroad tracks, they altered their trek. Now they cross the bridge, climb the stairs in the City College parking garage to the fourth floor and return. Their walk takes about 45 minutes, just enough time to wake up and discuss whatever's on their minds.

That ranges all over the emotional and practical map, according to Ricki.

"We've talked about thousands of things, from funny to serious," Ricki says. "We have 20 years of sharing snapshots of our lives."

"Now I can't imagine not starting my day like that," Ricki says. "It's the thing that doesn't change. We've seen each other through everything – the kid stuff, work stuff. That's what that hour is for. Pretty amazing."

In the beginning Ricki's son was 8, and Michele had a 7-year-old and a newborn. Ricki worked at her son's school, and Michele worked as a nanny. Ricki later worked in retail, and now volunteers at Capital Public Radio. Michele went back to school and is now a speech therapist at an elementary school in the San Juan Unified School District.

Throughout their journey Michele says they have left "no detail untouched in each other's personal lives."

"Not until lockdown did we run out



Photo/Judy Green Scheible

Ricki Bergado, left, and Michele March met more than 20 years ago at a Concert in the Park and have been daily walking buddies since then.

of things to talk about," Michele says. "We're not going anywhere or doing anything. We do read the same books."

Their loyalty to the walk has faced a few challenges. When one of them tries to weasel out, the other urges her on. It has worked. Both say they need each other to get going. Through rain and fog and heat they trudge on. Only

illness and vacations have interrupted their routine. Then came this year's wildfire smoke, which kept them indoors for a few days.

Ricki has lived in Curtis Park since 1985. "I can't imagine living anywhere else," she says.

Michele is a Sacramento native and a Curtis Park resident since 1996.



Rolling with the times

Indoor cycling classes at CycleLife have moved outdoors. The new-ish fitness business on Freeport Boulevard puts its clients through their paces in the parking lot. CycleLife offers classes at various levels of fitness. Early birds can catch a class at 5:30 a.m. Information about introductory specials, on-site child care and how to reserve a favorite bike is available at www.cyclelifefac.com.

Photo/Judy Green Scheible

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Viewpoint Wants Your Story Ideas

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

Please send your ideas to: denniscusick52@gmail.com with Viewpoint in the subject field or info@sierra2.org.

Deadline for Viewpoint copy is the 15th of the month prior to publication.



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Photo/
Susan
MacCulloch



Calling all Preservers...

By Susan MacCulloch

Do you appreciate the satisfying “pop, pop” sound of sealing jars? Whether you’ve preserved summer’s bounty for many years or this is your first season, *Viewpoint* wants to hear from you. We’re planning a story for the November issue that highlights the neighborhood’s creativity in using the wealth

of Central Valley produce.

How long have you been preserving? Where do you source your fruits and veggies? Have you experienced supply shortages (as with flour and yeast earlier this year)?

Share a favorite recipe, send us a photo of your preserves, and we’ll highlight a few.

Send your comments and photos to denniscusick52@gmail.com

A scold of jays will warn foes to stay away

By Dan Murphy

The most conspicuous bird residing in our neighborhood is the California scrub jay. It makes itself known with a frequent repeated unmelodious call aptly known as the scold call. Hence, a group noun is a “scold of jays.” Often the scold call or other calls are given during short flights, distinctive, with a series of quick wing beats followed by a stiff glide.

Scrub jays are territorial. Sometimes their scold calls are literally scolding potential predators, like humans or house cats. But most often the calls alert other jays that they are in the territory of a monogamous breeding pair. These territories are small enough that the calls can be heard at the border even when the pair is in the interior. Good scolding makes good neighbors.

Unpaired jays, known as floaters, are tolerated on the periphery of territories until breeding begins in the spring and they must retreat to the hinterlands.

Scrub jays in general do not migrate. The eponymous scrub jay’s natural habitat is scrubland and oak and pine woodlands from British Columbia to Baja. However, they also make their homes quite successfully in suburban backyards. They are omnivores, subsisting 75% on plants, mainly fruit and acorns. The remainder is mostly insects, and smaller animals and birds.

Scrub jays also make themselves known to us with their striking appearance and bold behaviors. Adults have blue heads, wings and tails with a gray-brown back, white underneath, with a blue necklace.

California scrub jays have prodigious memories, caching up to 5,000 acorns for the winter. Usually they store these by driving them into the ground, often covering them with a leaf, rock or other object. They use landmarks and a sun compass to find the caches when needed.

They often perch and forage in the open, moving on the ground with a hopping motion. They are not bashful and tolerate close encounters with humans. One of my first successes upon retiring from work was learning to tempt our backyard pair to take whole peanuts from my hand. If you hold more than one peanut in your hand, a jay will make a careful selection before flying off.

This boldness bespeaks a confident intelligence. They have prodigious memories, caching up to 5,000 acorns for the winter. Usually they store these by driving them into the ground, often covering them with a leaf, rock or other object. They use landmarks and a sun compass to find the caches when needed.

Perhaps their most anthropomorphic behavior is in summoning others to screech over the body of a dead jay for up to a half hour.



Photos/Dan Murphy



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Independent pharmacy by Taylor's Kitchen

By Judy Green Scheible

With so many giant pharmacies in the area, why would a pharmacist go independent?

Sonya Frausto explains. She is the owner and pharmacist at Ten Acres Pharmacy, which opened in August next door to Taylor's Kitchen on Freeport Boulevard.

Frausto's friendly "hello" greets visitors. A Sacramento native, she's a graduate of Florin High School and Sacramento State University with a bachelor's degree in biology and Spanish. She earned her doctorate in pharmacology at the University of Southern California. After years of working in big pharmacies, she managed to go independent.

Frausto's dream was to customize care for her patients without the layers of bureaucracy. She tells a story about a young mother who came to her in the big pharmacy with a prescription for amoxicillin for her child. It cost \$33. The mother could not afford it, and she left without the medicine.

If Frausto had her own pharmacy, she could have sold the medicine for \$6 and still made \$1.

Ten Acres' walls are bright white, and the shelves are stocked with colorful boxes and bottles of nonprescription merchandise from local small businesses. Just inside the door on the left is a table with neat stacks of



Sonya Frausto, owner and pharmacist of the new Ten Acres Pharmacy that opened in August, focuses on customizing care for her patients.

Photos/Judy Green Scheible

brochures. The medicines are behind the counter.

Frausto wants to be a resource to help patients understand what medicines they need and why. She wants to provide information that extends to mental health, school and disposal of old medicines. She's working to secure a disposal bin, which requires layers of permits and inspections.

As a full-service pharmacy, Ten

Acres offers vaccines and birth control options as well as medicines. Frausto recommends that people get their flu vaccine in October so it will still be good in January and February.

Ten Acres is not the first pharmacy in the neighborhood, but it's now the only independent one except for the Land Park Pharmacy by the zoo. Longtime neighbors may remember the Highland Park Pharmacy on 24th Street at Castro Way.



Ten Acres Pharmacy is located at 2930 Freeport Blvd.

Frausto named the pharmacy after the historical custom of 10-acre plots that fanned out from the railyard when the neighborhood was developed.

An added dimension at the pharmacy is a doctor's office. Dr. Thomas Anker, D.O., takes walk-in patients on a cash-only business. Dr. Anker is fluent in Spanish and Chinese as well as English.

At home in Midtown, Frausto is the mother of two teens. Her daughter is a junior in the HISP program at McClatchy High School, and her son is in seventh grade at Sutter Middle School. Frausto's husband is a respiratory therapist at Mercy/Dignity General Hospital.

For more information, visit tenacrespharmacy.com or call 916 942-9575.

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Artist restoring vandalized Black Lives Matter sign

By Kathy Les

The giant Black Lives Matter sign that was constructed in June at the southern tip of William Curtis Park became a nightly gathering spot for neighbors and passersby.

With candles at its base, the sign attracted people seeking a way to heal during the national outrage over the May 25 death of George Floyd in Minneapolis as well as other recent police killings.

The sign stood for about 30 days before vandalism took its toll – the entire sign was knocked down and the large BLM letters were broken into pieces. Neighbors tried fixing it, but ultimately the broken pieces were too compromised for the sign to remain standing.

“When I first built it, it took weeks and so you can imagine my frustration rebuilding and repairing about 40% of the sign, repainting and rewriting every

single name,” said Zach Trowbridge, the sign’s creator. “Whoever vandalized the sign really wanted to destroy it.”

Trowbridge has been rebuilding the sign, though a tedious and expensive project. Tedious, he says, because the entire sign is built with beams and pocket holes, a particularly cumbersome style of construction.

Trowbridge, who lives in the Hagginwood neighborhood and does woodworking as a hobby, is grateful that the sign was allowed to stand for as long as it did. The assistance of city parks director Mario Lara and Councilmember Jay Schenirer made that happen. The sign was never intended to be permanent, though its popularity motivated Trowbridge to rebuild it.

Trowbridge says it’s unlikely the city would allow it to return to William Curtis Park after the damage incurred at that location. He is considering other locations, including James



Photo/John Mathews

The Black Lives Matter art installation at the south end of Curtis Park at Sutterville Road before it was vandalized. It is being rebuilt.

McClatchy Park, Sojourner Truth African Heritage Museum and Oak Park Art Garden.

“I tried to not take the spotlight by advertising that I made the sign since I’m white and this moment is very much for the Black community,”

Trowbridge said.

To see what happens to the BLM sign, follow Trowbridge on Instagram at @build_repeat. Contributions to the cost of rebuilding can be sent to the artist by Venmo at @ZachTrowbridge.

In OCTOBER

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Sat. Oct. 10: SCNA PORCH PICNIC ZOOM CONCERTS

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SIERRA 2 CENTER
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Readers can reach Bill Hoover at president@sierra2.org. General neighborhood requests/issues/concerns can be communicated to ncc@sierra2.org. Other general inquiries can be directed to info@sierra2.org where it will be forwarded to the appropriate person. And, Sierra 2 Executive Director Terri Shettle can be reached at terri@sierra2.org.

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City gives go-ahead for 2-story building at 24th and Castro

By Erik Fay

The city's Planning Division has approved the mixed-use two-story building project at Castro Way and 24th Street, proposed earlier this year by HK3 Development Co.

SCNA's Neighborhood Concerns Committee worked with the developer and made several recommendations on building design to fit in better with existing homes, Sierra 2 Center, and other historic buildings in the neighborhood.

With the recommended changes, the project was approved Aug. 31. A seven-day reconsideration period followed, with a deadline of Sept. 8. No requests for reconsideration were received by the city's Community

Development Department. The project then became eligible for building permits.

The Neighborhood Concerns Committee communicated with HK3 Development regarding the project's next steps. HK3 principal Kevin Khasigian said the company was working on construction documents and plans, anticipating that the documentation and plans will be submitted to the city in the next few months.

Khasigian estimated construction will start in the spring of 2021, weather permitting. He estimated it will take eight to 10 months to complete construction of the building, which will include both residential and commercial tenants.

SCNA seeks new board members

The SCNA board has approved the Nominations Committee's recruitment of potential new board members for the December 2020 election. These characteristics will help round out the board's perspectives, strengths and neighborhood representation.

Prime characteristics are leadership; racial, ethnic, geographic and age diversity;

fundraising; creativity; willingness to volunteer time and follow through while working collaboratively; enthusiasm; and nonprofit experience.

Interested neighbors should contact Bruce Pierini, chair of the Nominations Committee, at NCC@sierra2.org with the subject line "Nominations."

Sierra 2 Center remains closed

By Terri Shettle

Nearly seven months into the Sierra 2 Center closure, we are still in somewhat of a holding pattern. There are no changes since the last update in the September Viewpoint and, at least for now, no changes on the horizon.

Staff has been significantly reduced. While we have facility staff on site at least five days per week to provide security and general upkeep, the facility

remains closed to the general public. Only tenants with approved essential business activities and essential staff are allowed on the property.

We continue to assess the current restrictions and will reopen to some degree when approved to do so by the local and state authorities.

We thank everyone who continues to support the organization during this challenging time.

We will get through this together.



SIERRA 2 CENTER
SIERRA CURTIS
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

Clarification:

I wrote an article for the September issue of *Viewpoint* that misstates how long City Council has to conduct a new hearing about developer Paul Petrovich's request to build a gas station adjacent to Safeway in Crocker Village.

My article suggested the Council has 60 days to conduct the new hearing. The actual deadline is unclear.

The new hearing is required as a result of the state Supreme Court's decision in August not to review two lower courts' rulings that City Council treated developer Paul Petrovich unfairly in rejecting the gas station proposal in 2015.

After the City Council vote, Petrovich sued the city. Superior Court Judge Michael Kenny ruled in favor of Petrovich in 2018. The judge ordered City Council to:

- rescind its 2015 decision rejecting the gas station;
- conduct a new hearing on the gas station proposal;
- direct Councilmember Jay Schenirer to recuse himself from the new hearing;
- report back to the judge within 60 days on its compliance with the order.

Dennis Cusick
Viewpoint Editor



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Photo/Joan Cusick

Portola Way residents were entertained at an impromptu vocal concert.

A porch singer

Piper Thrams, a sophomore at UCLA, gave a socially distanced porch concert on Portola Way on Sept. 5. Earlier in the day, she had auditioned via Zoom for the TV show “American Idol.” Before packing up and returning to school, she learned she wasn’t selected for the show. But she was a star in the neighborhood. Piper is the daughter of **Andrea Kincaid** and **Brent Thrams**.



Photo/Judy Green Scheible

New neighbors on Castro Way are Hugh Kern and Laurie Nile.

They were looking for ‘friendly’

Once the second child finished high school, **Hugh Kern** and his wife, **Laurie Niles**, were free to move from Chico to Sacramento, home to Hugh’s bicycle business. After looking around town, they landed on Castro Way in Curtis Park. They wanted a home within bicycling distance of Hugh’s business at 12th and C streets and a friendly neighborhood. They said they were particularly drawn to the Sierra 2 Center.

Hugh’s company, Alphabent Recumbent Cycles, builds recumbent tricycles for adults. Some are electric. He said he’s been building his business for seven years and wanted to anchor it in Sacramento.

Laurie works as a manager at Faria Bakery in Oak Park. In Chico she taught gardening and cooking at a local school. Both are looking forward to the end of the pandemic shutdowns so they can meet their neighbors.

New kid on the block



Photo/Joan Cusick

Don Fields, left, and his wife, **Ginger Rutland**, enjoy a visit with their two grandchildren. **Theodore “Theo” Schwartz** showed up June 20 to the delight of his brother, **Isaac**, 5. Their parents are Don and Ginger’s daughter, Eva, and her husband, Brent. Don and Ginger live on Donner Way, and the Schwartzes live in East Sacramento.



Photo/Carol Blackman

Rochon Way neighbors picked up a piece of cake to mark a 50th anniversary.

Delivering anniversary wishes

Neither heat, nor smokey skies, nor gloom of pandemic stayed these well wishers from congratulating **Mark** and **Sharon Helmar** of Rochon Way on their 50th wedding anniversary. Over the course of 90 minutes, about 20 masked neighbors with smiling eyes enjoyed a piece of cake (some took it to go) and offered a “how ya’ doin’?” – with great fidelity for the happy couple.

POINT OF VIEW

Why stop at 3? Many schools should get new names

By Mat Cusick

I'm all for the city school district's recent announcement that it may rename three schools that were named after people with racist legacies, although it's far easier to make such minor symbolic changes than the real substantive ones.

In early September, the Sacramento City Unified School District announced that it was considering renaming Sutter Middle School, which I attended; and also Peter Burnett Elementary and Kit Carson International Academy.

I think institutional names should be changed often, especially since most early historical figures prove to be horrible upon reflection. In fact, looking at the list of city school names, I find it hard to understand why they have limited their name changes to just three.

Collis P. Huntington, Charles Crocker, Mark Hopkins and Leland Stanford were nefarious railroad monopolists, Theodore Judah was the enterprising engineer who brought them together, and John Morse Waldorf was one of their principal investors. They should all get the boot.

James Marshall and John Bidwell worked for John Sutter, and they served in John Frémont's imperialist and genocidal California campaign in the Mexican-American War, as did John Sloat and Edward Kemble. They should all go.

Sam Brannan was a scoundrel millionaire, leader of vigilante lynch mobs. No hero in my book.

John Cabrillo (weirdly half-Anglicized – really Juan Cabrillo) was a

genocidal conquistador and slave lord, one-time partner of Hernán Cortés (the Killer). SCUSD politely calls him a “navigator” who “discovered San Diego Bay.”

And nothing more needs to be said about the human traffickers George Washington and Thomas Jefferson that everybody doesn't already know.

Even some of the less obviously terrible names honored by SCUSD deserve to be taken off their pedestals. For instance:

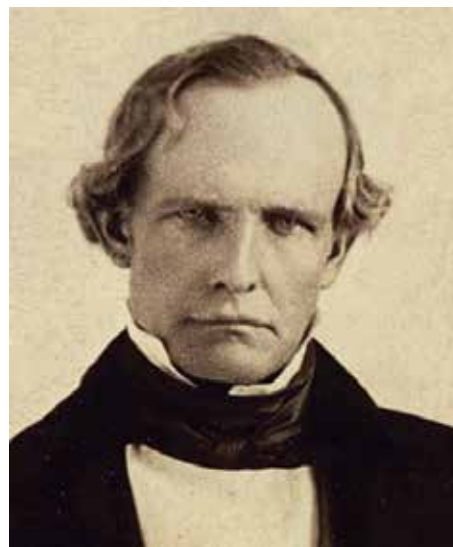
Hiram Johnson was a leading force behind the Asian Exclusion Act of 1924.

Earl Warren was a leading force behind the internment of Japanese Americans in California, and led the ridiculous whitewash of the FBI and CIA (and by extension, the Mafia) following the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

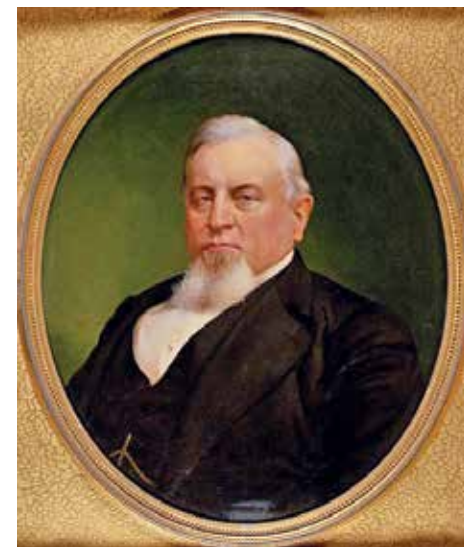
John Muir was racist, as was Albert Einstein, who was also an abhorrent misogynist whose documented mistreatment of his wife, one of the most brilliant scientific minds of her era, was inexcusable.

Cesar Chavez was also a misogynist and an authoritarian, who weirdly supported Ferdinand Marcos and was enamored of a bizarre California criminal cult, and aggressively opposed immigration by Mexican “illegals.”

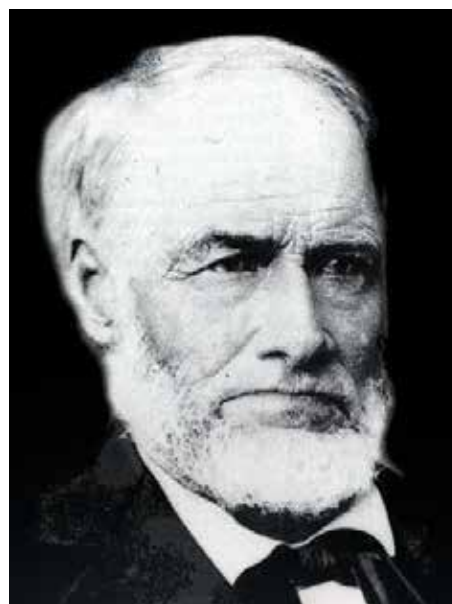
Susan B. Anthony opposed the 15th Amendment with such vehemence that it caused a decades-long rift in the women's suffrage movement, on the reasoning that “an oligarchy of race, where the Saxon rules the African, might be endured,” but not an oligarchy of sex.



Peter Burnett



Charles Crocker



James Marshall



John Sloat

Images via wikipedia.org

Burnett, Crocker, Marshall and Sloat are names of city schools and streets in the neighborhood.

Even PTA co-founder Phoebe Hearst was no saint, having financed the looting of the cultural heritage of Egypt and Peru for the sake of American “anthropology.”

Nobody's perfect, of course, but there are plenty of folks worthy of recognition without such notable blemishes on their records. If a symbolic stand against racist legacies

means anything, then where the line is drawn to excuse acts of racism also means something. It appears to me that plenty of symbols upholding “a legacy of racism, oppression, and exclusion” shall yet be tolerated by the city school district.

Mat Cusick is the son of Viewpoint editor Dennis Cusick and a graduate student at the New School in New York.

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