

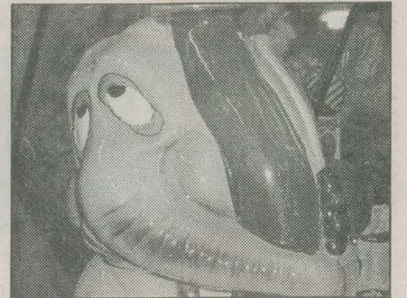
OBITUARIES

Barbara J. Bolan



Walnut grove kids learn past their bedtime See page A10

River News-Herald & Isleton Journal



Step back in time with Joani's favorite things See page A7

Vol. 121 No. 31

Wednesday, September 26, 2007 • Rio Vista, California

50¢

Learning by submersion: Rio Vista students dive into Delta ecosystem

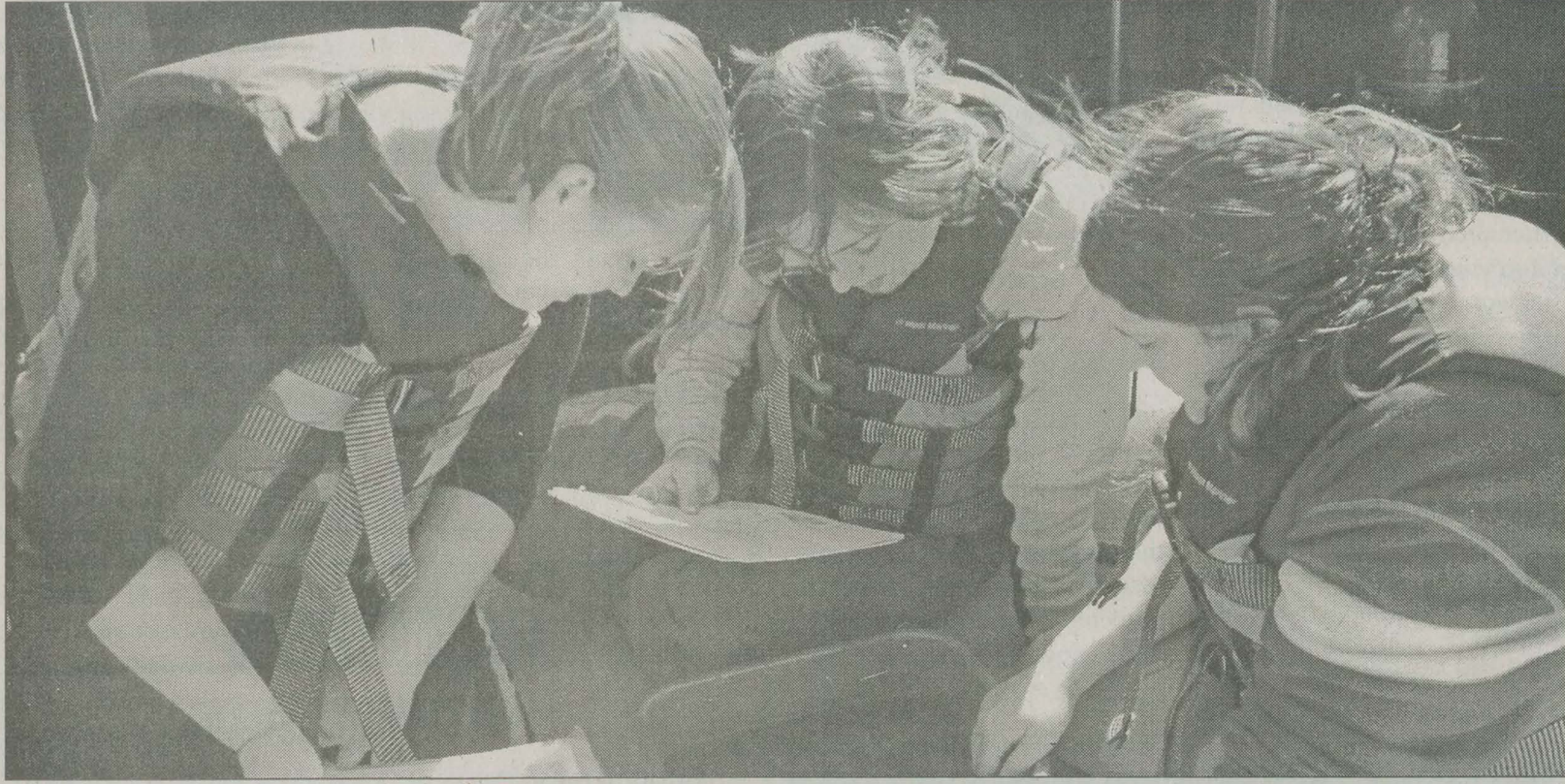


Photo by Arlene Rivera

Tazmen Evans, Andrea Ross, and Kaylee Severs use a key to identify the type of fish their class had trolled from the Sacramento River on Sept. 19.

BY ARLENE RIVERA
Staff Reporter

The morning of September 19 was brisk and sunny. On Wednesday, Captain Jackson Gentry of the Robert G. Brownlee headed an informational voyage on the 92-foot ship for a group of youths from Rio Vista to better acquaint the students with the Delta in their backyard.

The Robert G. Brownlee was created as an educational vessel. There are multiple tools for exploring the biology of water and fish, each of which has been slightly modified so that students can more easily use and understand them. There are troll nets with large, sturdy ropes designed for students to use for fish and shark trolling. A benthic mud station will allow the students to sift through the mud and sludge on the bottom of the Delta. A hydrology lab located below deck transfers the image from slides in a microscope of the water samples the students obtained to



Photo by Arlene Rivera

Instructor Jeremiah Vernon teaches Rio Vista High School students how to handle the fish they just pulled in.

a 25-inch television, showing them the plankton in the river water up close and in color.

Rio Vista High School students boarded around 9 a.m.

The weather was perfect, sunny and a bit windy, fall has definitely arrived. The kids were buzzing with excited conversations and wide eyes

over the ship and the view the ship provided. First on the agenda was safety class, during which one of the four instructors engaged the students' attention right away. Instructor Haley Huffman used a few volunteers and some humor to get the kids into her presentation. As the program unfolded, the instructors kept the students behaving and laughing, active and learning.

After safety instruction, the students were split into four groups to rotate through the workshops. The plankton lab was a surprise to the students; they oohed and aahed at the colorful little beings that live in our water. Many were surprised to see what was in the water. As they looked at the actual plankton samples, they used poster keys for a discussion about the different types they had found. The facts they learned about our Delta help students understand what

See BROWNLEE/ Page A2

Fruit flies in Solano cause emergency quarantine

BY ARLENE RIVERA
Staff Reporter

On September 12, Mediterranean fruit flies were discovered near the intersection of C and Washington streets in Dixon. Four Medflies were found on September 12 by county staff during a regular inspection of the early pest detection program traps. A fifth fly was found early Tuesday in another similar trap while the county staff was deploying and additional 125 fruit fly detection traps within one square mile of the first detection. Up to date, there are 13 confirmed wild Medflies found, and two larvae sites.

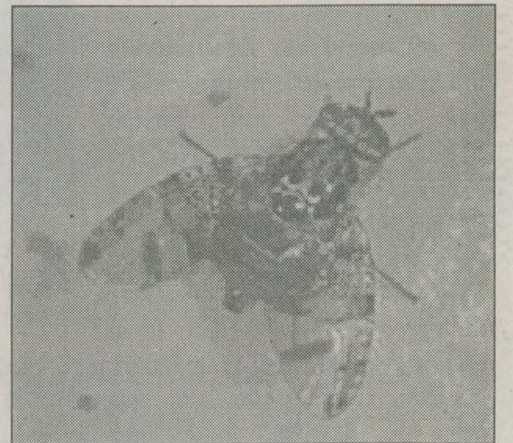


Photo from <http://www.cdffa.ca.gov> Mediterranean fruit fly.

Within days of the Medfly discovery, the California Department of Food and Agriculture began deploying more than 1,700 fruit fly detection traps from near the Yolo County border to Midway Road.

"We are taking this very seriously. This is the single biggest threat to agriculture there is," said Solano County Agricultural Commissioner Jerry Howard.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture is also using a new science to combat these insects. Proven as successful in the Los Angeles area, an aerial release of more than 3 million sterile Medflies to interact with the wild female, a twice-weekly program until June of 2008. This creates an unproductive breeding process that has a proven track record of eradicating the species.

The Mediterranean fruit fly is native to Africa - but has spread to multiple other parts of the world. The Solano County found flies have been DNA tested and found to be from Hawaii and/or Venezuela. The fly is a short, squat fly about 1/4 inch in length with a blackish thorax marked by silver, a tan abdomen with darker stripes, and clear wings with two light brown bands across the wings and grey flecks scattered near the base of those wings. It is not the Medfly, however, that does damage directly. The Medflies larvae feed on fruit at a fast rate- with devastating results. They are laid beneath the skin of the host fruit itself, feeding on it for 6-11 days. Fruit infested by this larvae is not fit for human consumption.

The Medfly has the widest range of any pest fruit fly and is considered the most important agricultural pest in the world. In California alone the combined 2005 gross value of fruit hosts lost to the pest was over \$9.5 billion dollars, according to a report by the United States Department of Agriculture.

According to Solano County Public Information Officer Stephen Pierce, the good news is that the Medfly has been

See FLY/ Page A3

A day in the life of a Coast Guard mate

BY ARLENE RIVERA
Staff Reporter

Docked off the riverbank in Rio Vista, California, the U.S. Coast Guard station covers 1,500 miles of waterway. Those who live in the territory covered by this unit, which spans the Delta waterways from Antioch to San Joaquin County, are in the hands of the Rio Vista based station that was awarded a Sumner I. Kimball Readiness Award on February 28, 2006. The award is given to units based on crew proficiency,



Photo by Arlene Rivera

Rio Vista Coast Guard's Alvan Welch and Dave Gamble.

See GUARD/ Page A3

Council lands budget, airport improvements

BY MYRIAM BELTRAN
Editor

Rio Vista's bimonthly city council meeting on September 20 capped off the budget process and set in motion resolutions for the improvement of city streets and the city's airport.

During public comment, Asa Mathat of A Gallery commended Rio Vista Police Chief Bill Bowen and his officers for their efforts during an incident at a Sept. 14 Rio Vista High School football

game during which a student allegedly brought a gun to campus. Mathat said he has not seen a significant effort to enforce codes throughout the city during what he termed his "two-year rant." Although he acknowledged low staffing levels as an obstacle to enforcement, he added that small lapses contributed to a situation such as Friday night's Community Development

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NEWS on the run

BROWNLEE

Continued from page A1

Residents arrested on drug charges

On Thursday, Sept. 13, the Solano County Sheriff's Calmmet team (California Multi Jurisdictional Methamphetamine Enforcement Team) served a search warrant without incident at a home on the 600 block of Main Street in Rio Vista. Four residents were arrested during this search warrant on various drug charges including the sales of a prescription drug oxycontin. A stolen motorcycle was also found at the residence.

Martza Isab Schoengold, 35, was arrested on possession of marijuana and posted \$10,000 bail. David Michael Friedel, 19, was arrested on possession of opiates for sale and committing a felony while out on bail. Friedel is currently in custody, as he has been unable to post his \$23,333 bail. Timothy Carl Friedel, 48, was held on \$10,000 bail with charges of possession of a controlled substance. Guy Ferrari was arrested for possession of methamphetamine, possession of marijuana and a probation violation. Ferrari is in custody at the Solano County Jail with a \$10,000 bail.

Suspect wanted in armed robbery

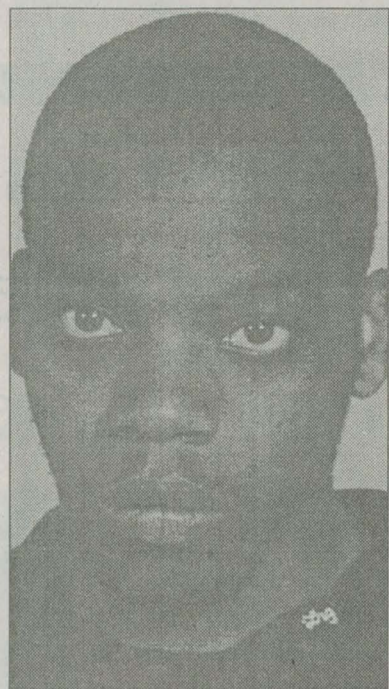


Photo courtesy of Solano County Sheriff's

Armed Robbery suspect Maurice Brewer.

On Thursday, Sept. 13, an armed robbery took place at the corner of Sperry Ave. and Thomas Ave. in the unincorporated area of Vallejo. The victims were four males on the property hired to conduct outside work. Three suspects in addition to a female driver drove up in a white Ford Taurus, brandished a firearm, and demanded money and valuables. During the incident,

the weapon was fired in the direction of the victims. No persons were physically injured during the incident. An undisclosed amount of cash in two wallets was taken. Sheriff's detectives were called upon and an investigation into the matter quickly ensued.

Intelligence gathered in the course of this investigation has lead Sheriff's detectives to Maurice Brewer, a 21-year-old Vallejo resident. Brewer is 5' 7" tall, weighs 150 pounds, and has brown eyes and black hair.

An arrest warrant has been issued for Brewer for the charges of Robbery and Attempted Murder. If you have information on this case, this suspect, or know of his whereabouts please contact detectives with the Solano County Sheriff's Office at (707) 421-7050 or Sheriff's dispatch at (707) 421-7090.

In an emergency call 911. Anyone wanting to remain anonymous may do so by calling Crime Stoppers at (707) 644-STOP. Citizens are urged not to attempt to make contact with Brewer. The investigation into this matter continues.

pollution in the water can mean to us in the long run. Instructor Jeremiah Vernon informed them that "the whales have been skinny in the surrounding areas because the plankton, their main staple of food, are dying off due to pollution." It isn't hopeless, though - Vernon talked with the kids about the new field of Environmental Engineering, a field that specifically works towards reversing environmental damage.

The most popular workshop station was the fish trolling. The instructors get the students involved as they pull on the rope to troll, chanting: "When I say we want, you say sharks... We want... sharks! When I say Jack you say Sparrow... Jack... Sparrow! Jack... Sparrow! When I say hali you say but (halibut- get it?) Hali... But! Hali... But!"

This had them moving fast and laughing hard. After the net is pulled in, the students look more closely at their bounty in buckets. Like the plankton lab, they use keys to help them identify what they found. Students were not shy about discussing fish anatomy and markings in amazing detail. Student Dylan Wyatt said that



Photo by Arlene Rivera

Students examine their catch on Wednesday.

the experience was more memorable and interesting than just read it in a school book. The captain loves the program because "whatever they're looking at they have ownership of."

The three and a half hour program, sponsored by the Solano County Water Agency, is one of many run by Bay Lines and the Marine Science Institute, which you can find more information about at their Web site: <http://www.sfbaymsi.org>. Organizers fear this may be the only trip for the year. Bill Mortimore, a community member who plays a large role in getting information out about programs such as this, commented on possible further funding which would enable more students, possibly from other districts, to experience this tour.

Obituaries

Barbara J. Bolan

Barbara J. Bolan, 71, of Rio Vista, CA passed away Friday, September 21, 2007. She is survived by her husband of 34 years; Paul, two children; Pamela Robb and Ron Starkey, three grandchildren; J.R. Robb, Reed Starkey and Morgan Starkey. Visitation will be held Saturday, September 29, 2:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. at Oak Hill Funeral Home. Funeral Services will be held at 2:00 PM, Sunday, September 30, at Oak Hill Funeral Home's Chapel of Roses, 300 Curtner Ave., San Jose. Interment will follow at Oak Hill Memorial Park.



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COUNCIL Continued from page A1

Director Tom Bland reported the Solano Transportation Authority has made Rio Vista's waterfront its number one priority in providing funding for pedestrian safety.

Public Works Director Brent Salmi said the city pier was declared too dangerous to use over the week of Sept. 10 and was blocked off from public access by caution tape; a chain link fence is planned to further protect visitors. Salmi estimates replacing the deck and railing on the pier will cost over \$200,000. Vice Mayor Bill Kelly inquired as to whether the pier would be repaired in time for the upcoming Free Fishing Day and Bass Derby. City Manager Hector De La Rosa responded funds were not immediately available to the city for the pier, but could come from Proposition 40 funds or a state loan.

Recreation and Community Services Manager Jenny Symons reported 19 members attended the responsible beverage training program, adding that Rio Vista is at the forefront of the training providers.

The police chief noted there

are increasing problems with youth in the city and called for volunteers to help staff a Big Brother and Big Sister program. He also noted that Detective Vicki Rister is working on a child molestation case, a suspect for which fled to Sparks, Nevada amid questioning. The suspect has an arrest warrant out of the Rio Vista Police Department, was picked up in Nevada for a similar offense, and will be extradited to Rio Vista after he is tried in Nevada, according to Bowen.

Turning to concerns of gang activity, the chief acknowledged tagging on businesses and residences around town, but said the phenomenon is not of serious concern.

"The Rio Vista Police Department is well aware of the wannabe gang members and actual gang members," said Bowen. "We do not have a gang problem in the city of Rio Vista."

The police chief encouraged the public to report tagging to the police department and be aware of their children's choice of music, MySpace account, and the displaying of graffiti on their personal property. Ultimately,

the chief suggests a class to educate teachers on signs of gang activity.

Newly hired Fire Marshall Geoff Spinner reported attendance was "not good" at Saturday, Sept. 15's CPR class, but added he had high hopes for the next class. Spinner reported firefighter Daniel Babcock enlisted in the military and recognized firefighter Casey Morse for his service in the fire department.

Mayor Eddie Woodruff reported that the late Rio Vista Police Officer David Lamoree's family expressed thanks for the efforts of ACR 7 and AB 112 supporters in passing the legislations. Assembly bill 112 has passed both the Assembly and Senate and is awaiting a signature by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, while ACR 7, which will designate a portion of Highway 12 in memory of Lamoree, is scheduled to take effect.

Marty Rogers from the Airport Advisory Commission announced that Commissioner Page Baldwin will be vacating his seat.

Chamber of Commerce Executive Director Linda

Lannon announced this year's Bass Derby will run from Oct. 12 to Oct. 14, and that a 2008 Bass Festival planning meeting will be held on Oct. 9. Lannon noted downtown businesses will stay open until 8 p.m. and will offer incentives for shoppers such as a pizza eating contest during quarterly events starting Oct. 19.

To facilitate communication between business owners, the chamber will hold Meeting of the Minds events at 7 a.m. on the third Wednesday of the month that will feature a guest department head, starting off with the police chief on Sept. 26.

Auditors found the city to be out of compliance in regard to its redevelopment agency plan this year, a problem that city staff has been working towards rectifying.

"I'm really tired of this," said the vice mayor, referring to the city budget and other projects, such as the redevelopment agency outline, being late.

He expressed frustration over the lack of time afforded to him to review the redevelopment agency plan and make an informed decision. The mayor concurred, and the item was moved to a study session

for discussion prior to the plan's consideration on Nov. 1.

A series of resolutions involving the airport were passed during the meeting. One was a master plan for the Rio Vista airport, which had last been revised in 1994. Next was the approval of a weather monitoring system, AWOS, at a cost of \$52,000 to \$77,000 which will be funded using an FAA grant. The grant covers 95 percent of the cost, with the city matching the remaining five percent. Council then discussed hiring an airport manager at a cost of \$126,333 including benefits, approximately \$72,000 of which would constitute the manager's salary. The vice mayor asked the city manager how the salary was arrived at, suggesting staff call other airports of similar size, and noted compensation was on the high end of the scale. De La Rosa agreed to research the airport manager salary further and the matter was deferred to a later date.

The public works director presented a street maintenance project for approval by council, which will total approximately \$390,000. Potholes and cracks will be fixed: on Second Street between Beach and St. Gertrude, St. Gertrude from

Second Street to Front Street, Front Street from St. Gertrude to Main Street, Main Street from Highway 12 to its end, Front Street from Main Street to Logan Street, St. Francis from Rolling Green to Airport Drive, Rolling Green from St. Francis to its end, and Harris Road from Vieira to Church Road.

The project was approved by the council.

A \$1,374,000 bid to reconstruct the city pool was rejected by the council on grounds that the tab was too high for the city, and only one company submitted a bid.

Acting Finance Director Michelle Mingay next reported on the final draft of the city budget, noting that copies will be available at the library and City Hall. The Rio Vista Fire Department will receive an additional \$12,000, not including funds for Emergency Medical Service equipment, according to the final 2007-2008 budget. City deficits include \$420,000 in the general fund, \$118,000 in the water fund, and a \$1.1 million sewer deficit that includes \$650,000 devoted to a settlement with the city's former waste management provider Eco Resources Inc. for breach of contract. The budget was approved by the council.

GUARD Continued from page A1

current exercises, the condition of boats and personal protective equipment, training programs and written tests.

The Coast Guard serves the community with a number of services, including helping lost boats or boats in distress, derelict vessels, debris blocking the waterways and a number of maritime law enforcement activities. Each unit acts as a

combination of law enforcement and medical rescue agencies; it assures that the public is acting in accordance with the law and provides medical attention for injured water enthusiasts. Every member of each unit is trained in first response medical aid, and there are two members of the team nationally certified as EMTs.

Alvan Welch and Dave

Gamble, two members of the Rio Vista team, attended the same school in York Town, Virginia. Both of them received core training as Boat Swain Mates, a position which includes navigating and driving the boats, overseeing the other unit members and keeping the boating equipment looking and running in good condition. Welch has been in Rio Vista for

three years. He has had his eye on a position with the Coast Guard since elementary school in Waldport, Oregon, where the position is prestigious for the bravery shown on the job. Welch knew as a kid he wanted to save people as a living.

"We strive to be a law enforcement agency and more, our first and foremost job is search and rescue," he said.

Gamble enjoys this location because of the weather and the people he works with. He also emphasized the search and rescue part of the job, "You can help people here more than in any other service."

For information on Coast Guard field trips, contact the Rio Vista station at (707) 374-2871.

FLY Continued from page A1

contained in Dixon as of now.

The Solano County Board of Supervisors amended Tuesday's agenda to consider an emergency declaration related to this infestation. Currently, there is a quarantine in place in the 114 square mile area surrounding Dixon. Fruit is not allowed in or out around this quarantined zone, and neighbors in the area have been asked not to share backyard fruit crops with each other.

"Until we have the eradication efforts under control, a generous sharing of back yard tomatoes could unleash the Medfly into other parts of the county or the Central Valley," warned Howard.

For 100 miles around the

larvae sites, all fruit bearing trees have been stripped, and for 200 miles around the site organic pesticides are being sprayed on the ground.

The impacts for Solano County farmers are yet to be mathematically quantified, but are sure to be severe, according to Pierce. Timing is good for the recently completed prune harvest, but Medflies will affect the tomato harvest—especially those leaving the restricted area to be processed. Instead of the usual heaping load of tomatoes being hauled, the crop has to be one foot below the truck's sidewalls.

Organic growers are not allowed to let any of their fresh fruit out of the quarantine zone.

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Late night learning at Walnut Grove library

BY ARLENE RIVERA
Staff Reporter

It's a crisp fall evening on Friday, September 21. At 7:30 p.m. the parking lot is buzzing as kids are checked in by their parents at the entrance of the Walnut Grove Public Library for a night of educational fun for the eight and nine-year-old members. Librarian Alan Candy plans a multitude of events for kids and adults, keeping the citizens of the town both comfortable with and interested in the library. Another popular program is Candy's "Turn Off the TV Week," during which adults and children are invited to a different activity for every night of the week. Tonight's program goes from 8 p.m. until about 11 p.m. The city has hired the Sacramento Zoo to come out, and volunteers will teach the kids crafts.

The Christie family, who frequents the library, arrives with their son Drew, who is smiling from ear to ear. James Christie, a fifth generation community member, shakes hands with Candy as his son puts a nametag on.

"Thank you for supporting my community," Christie says as he greets Candy. "This man's fantastic. He's like another school teacher to the kids."

Suzanne Holmberg, who usually works at the Courtland Library, echoes Christie's praise of Candy.

"His personality makes the children want to be here. His patience. He never yells at them, but he is able to keep them at their best behavior. They respond to him," she says.

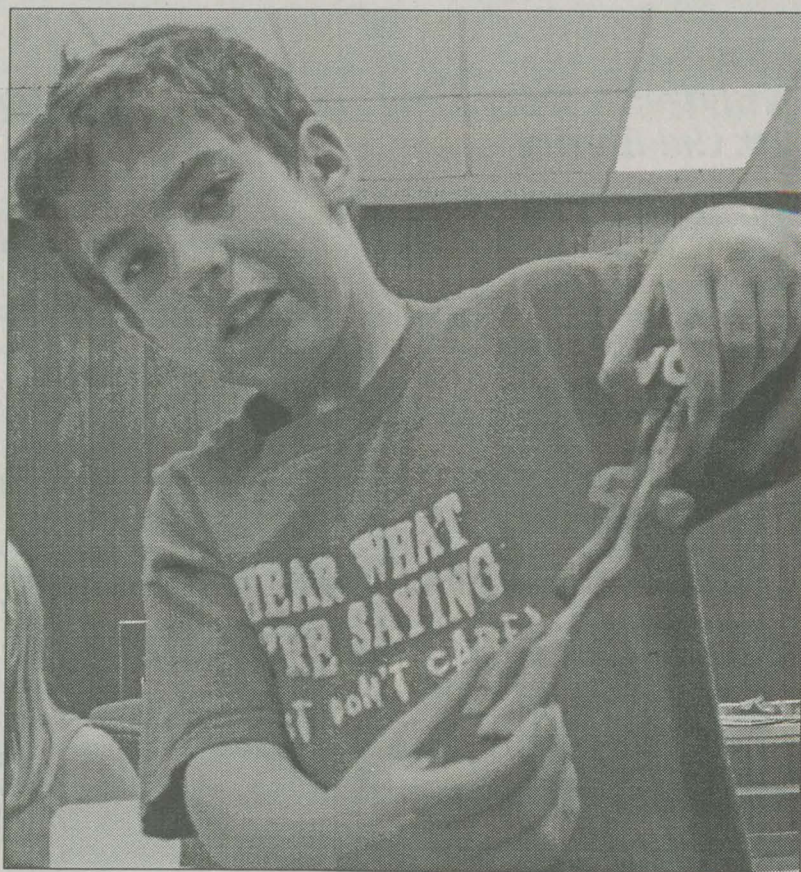


Photo by Arlene Rivera

Drew Christie shows off his penguin-human.

Having grown up in a family of eight, Holmberg remembers the library as a haven for her when she was a child. She used to find a quiet corner to read in, providing escape from the noise of the world while also opening the world to her in new ways.

While waiting for zoo animals to arrive, the children find simultaneous escape and discovery in a game of "Mad Libs" with Candy. Mad Libs is a game in which a story is completed by the insertion of nouns, verbs, adjectives and places into spots left blank for those specific parts of grammar. By inserting these important parts of the story, the children create a story of their own. As

Candy asks for them to come up with the different pieces of grammar to fit the story-puzzle, they enthusiastically shout out correct answers. Throughout the night the kids remember the story, repeating it to each other and giggling hysterically.

The Sacramento Zoo animals arrive at around 8:45 p.m. Mary Eidem and Brooke Webber are the staff members who host the animal portion of the event. Eidem and Webber provide entertainment with these exotic animals as well as education about them. First is a large desert tortoise. They inform the crowd that he is an endangered species, and define the term (he'll be extinct in 50 years if we don't intervene).

They discuss the tortoise's visible "adaptation" features - features that he has to help him live in his habitat. For example, his beak and shells help him to burrow in the desert sand and protect himself from the rough environment. They also provide interesting lesser-known facts about the animals, such as the tortoise's spine is connected to his shell, which enables him to feel his shell.

The other animals featured include a leopard gecko, African pygmy hedgehog, rat snake and a kinkajou. The kids learn about the animals through these fascinating facts, through participation as the zoo staff ask them to keep identifying "adaptation" signs on them, and by the feel of the animals, as they are allowed to touch each one for a few seconds.

After zoo time, the kids separated to participate in arts and crafts. Each of the craft tables also appealed to their five senses. They learned paper mache, created colorful clay animals and objects and beaded necklaces and such. During these activities the kids are encouraged to follow directions to learn a new craft while also being creative with their ideas. The finished product from each activity reflects this, they are all different in color and style.

At around 11 p.m. the kids (and some of the adults) start to yawn. The night is coming to an end.

Drop by your local library for questions and information on other programs, or log on to <http://www.saclibrary.org>.



Scrapbook Corner Locke resident receives first mosquito abatement honor

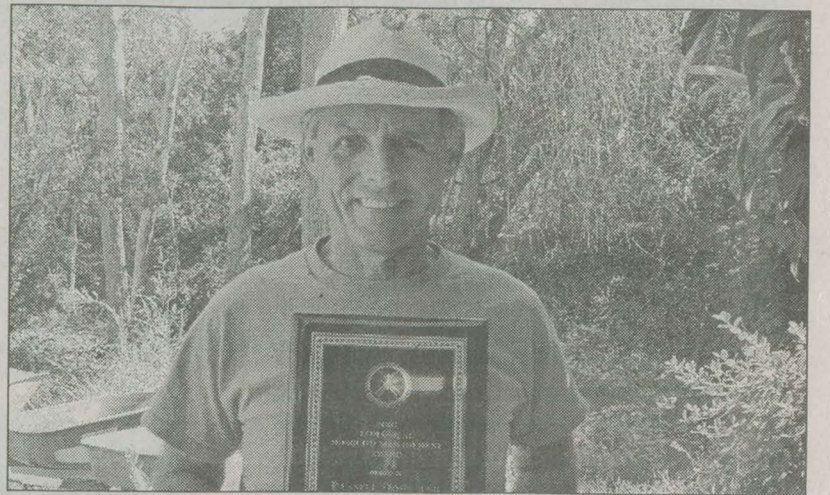


Photo contributed by Russell Ooms

Russell Ooms with his award.

Russell Ooms, a Locke resident who worked to cleanup his town of debris, has been awarded for his efforts.

As reported in a December 20, 2006 River News-Herald article, Ooms had volunteered to remove a pile of discarded items that had grown near the small town's community garden. The Locke Management Association whose mission is to preserve the historic town, agreed to allow Ooms to cleanup the garbage pile comprised of tires, chunks of concrete and other rubble. By his estimates, Ooms removed 40 tires among piles of debris, and cleared out an area adjacent to his home where a foundation lay in ruins and provided a breeding ground for mosquitos during high water years when the area became flooded.

Ooms was granted the first Ecological Management Department award by the Sacramento -Yolo Mosquito and Vector Control District on June 23.

Organist honored for service at Walnut Grove church

Robert James was recognized for his 48 years of volunteer service as church organist at Walnut Grove Community Church on September 16 during a surprise celebration. As a tribute, a choral work was commissioned by the members and friends of the church and was directed by Allan Robert Petker, a noted choral composer, conductor and arranger. The choral work was sung by the church choir, which James has accompanied for almost half a century. Past and present choir members gathered to rehearse without his knowledge and the newly composed piece was sung and directed by the composer at a regular church service. Some 250 people attended the service and the reception that immediately followed.

Parents, students readjust at Rio Vista's Back-To-School night

BY ROSIE SUECHTING
High School Scene Writer

"The main purpose for this night is to communicate, to see each other, and to know that the door of communication is open," said Principal Jim Lake. Big hopes of a great night were expected on September 19th when students and their parents came together for the first 2007-2008 Back-To-School night. With the fourth week of school quickly passing, it was great to have everyone come together.

At 6 o'clock, students and their parents all met in the gymnasium for a brief introduction by Mr. Lake, who welcomed new teachers and AFS students, Nathan Ceschin and Pierre Vicquery, and also relayed his goals and plans for

the future of Rio Vista High School. The welcoming ceremony also consisted of Mike Osgood, who spoke for the ASB Leadership class announcing its goals for the school year.

Suzanne Malta and Barry Waldie announced new elections for the Booster Club.

"I believe that the parents got to fully understand what this year will be like. I also believe that ASB made an impact with their speech and made everyone aware of what is going to happen," said Osgood about the night.

After introductions, students and their parents ventured off to their classes. Brief seven-minute classes were packed with information for parents from their student's

teachers, about course goals and objectives, as well as future projects and events. Parents were able to talk to the teachers one on one, and really got to know them better. Some teachers even gave extra credit to those students who came with their parents.

While summertime can distance people, this night proves to be a perfect time for getting teachers, parents, and students used to being back at school. The biggest accomplishment of the night was helping parents become aware of what's going on this year at RVHS. The principal's number one goal for the evening was to have "parents and teachers to communicate, [and] to open the door to communication."

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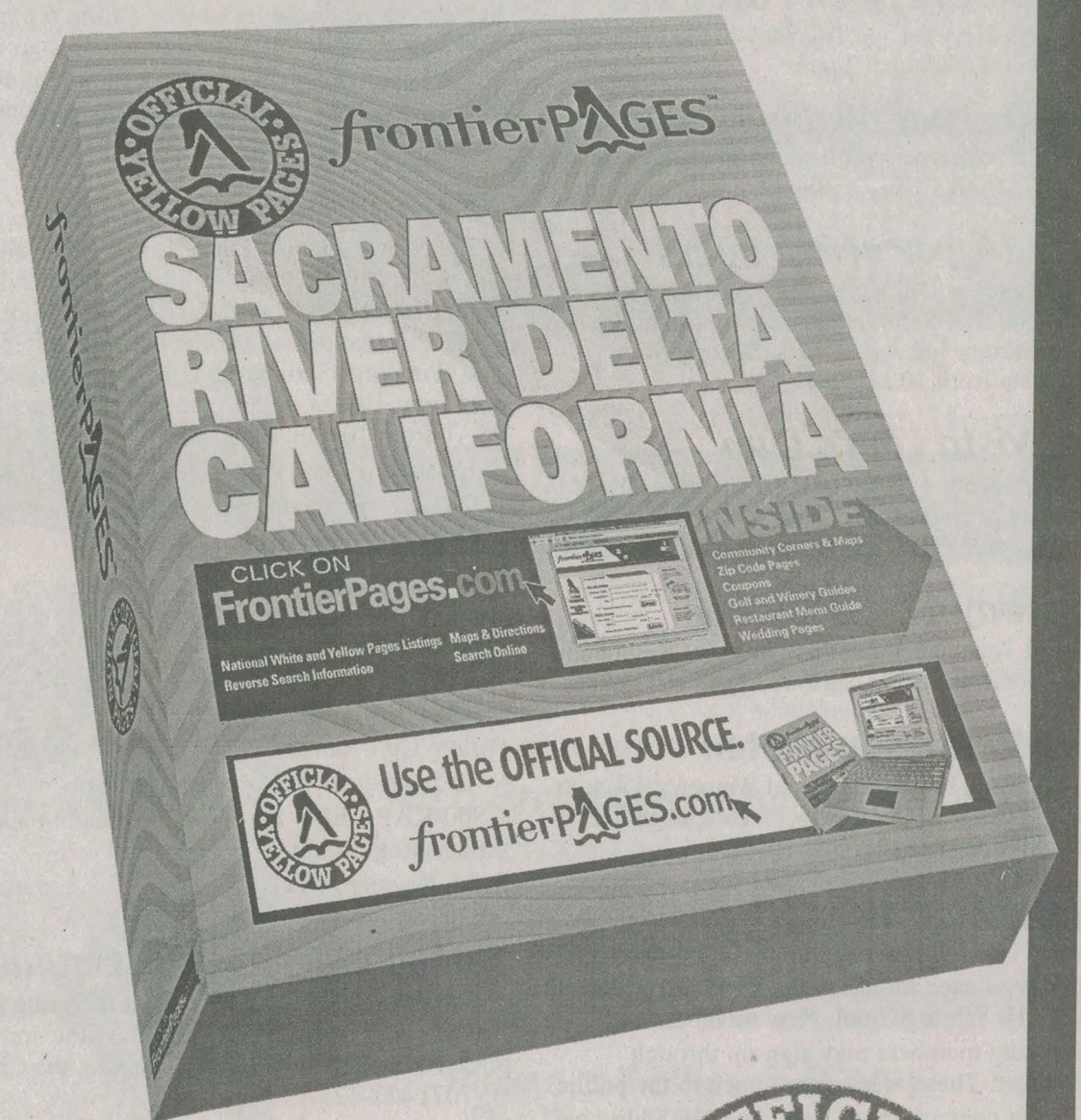
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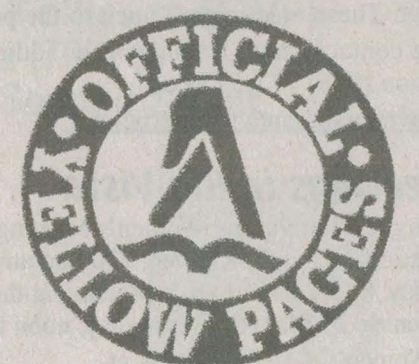
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