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FFA Leaders Blossoming

As almond blossom begins, farmers from up and down the Capay Valley bask in the soon-to-be fruit of their labor. Farmers reflect on the many months of preparation and hard work that have led to this year's yield. Esparto FFA has a great crop of young leaders! Growing leaders through public speaking is akin to nurturing an almond tree to fruition. Just as an almond tree requires care, attention, and the right environment to blossom, so do aspiring leaders need guidance and opportunities to develop their skills. Like the delicate blossoms that eventually yield almonds, effective public speaking can bear fruit in the form of confidence, influence, and inspiration.

Like the flowering trees that surround us, Esparto FFA is blossoming; growing young leaders to serve the future of our community. EHS FFA was proud to have six young men and women compete in various public speaking contests at the sectional level. Impromptu Public Speaking; Makenzie Karlstad, Anna Rickey, and Jonah Barnes. Spanish FFA Creed Recitation; Areli Frausto, Giselle Villegas, and Leo Taffolla. All participants proudly represented our chapter and community. Makenzie Karlstad received 1st place in Yolo County Impromptu Public Speaking and will move on to compete at the Regional finals. The goal for all our members is FFA will provide them with opportunities to branch out, bud and blossom; a prime example of this is the researchers that the EHS FFA Plant Science course has helped foster; ten students have conducted plant system-derived research projects that consist of designing a research project, conducting an experiment, collecting data, annotating a 12-page research paper, developing a presentation board and a five-minute speech on their research. Four of our students will be continuing to compete at the State FFA Competition in late March; Alexis Prado, Areli Frausto, Marissa Kelly and Nevaeh Gamboa. In addition to these phenomenal young people participating in public speaking-based events EHS FFA recently took Eleven young leaders to the Made for Excellence Conference in Modesto, CA., where students networked, learned the importance of goal setting, and honed their ability to lead and serve their communities. We are proud of the growth each of our members has made over the past few months and will continue to root our members on the importance of promoting, protecting and advocating for the agriculture industry whose rich tradition and history make up our beloved town. In FFA just as in farming it takes a village.

Esparto FFA would like to thank the community sponsors who generously donated to help our program host another successful Almond Festival Pancake Breakfast with over 800 community members in support. Our chapter was able to raise funds to continue to provide opportunities for our FFA members to grow! Thank you Ag West Farm Credit, Cache Creek Casino, and the Yolo County Fair Grounds for your continued support. Your investment in our students is an investment in our community's future!



Esparto FFA members competing at the Yolo Section FFA Speaking Contest at River City High School.

Left: Anna Rickey, Mackenzie Karlstad, Areli Frausto, Raven Castro, Jonah Barnes, Leo Taffolla

Esparto FFA members attended the Made for Excellence Leadership Conference in Modesto, CA.

Back Left: Aaron Dabalos, Miguel Loza, Lily Buenvenida, Osvaldo Hernandez, Librado Estrella Front Left: Riley Valle, Haley Cano, Ramiro Mojica, Giselle Villegas, Akenzie Karlstad and Anna Ricke



In this Issue of the Valley Voice:

Almond Festival 10 years ago
What is RISE?

New Seasons: The Wyatt Building
RISE Valley Senior program

Updates from Esparto Unified School District

Esparto Community Schools

Esparto Middle School Science Fair

ROARING Students and Staff

FIREWISE Safe Community
and MORE!

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For article inquires, email Tina Minges, Editor, at ValleyVoice@riseinc.org.

For billing inquiries or ad rates, call (530) 787-4110 ext 209.

All articles and *payments* are **due on or before the 15th of each month.**

*We reserve the right to edit articles at our discretion,
due to space limitations and other criteria.*

**The Valley Voice is published monthly in partnership with Yocha Dehe
Wintun Nation, RISE Inc., & Esparto Unified School District.**

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Let all your friends and relatives know that for just \$25 per year we will mail them each month's edition! This is the perfect way to keep up with all the Capay Valley news and events.

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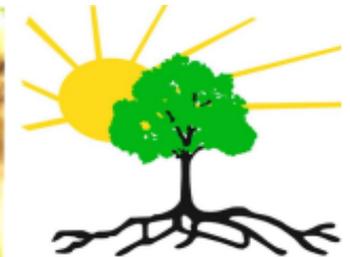
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**All are invited to Rumsey Improvement Association's
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Monday, March 5th

Meet at 6:00, eat at 6:30

Please bring food to share.

Please bring your own plate, utensils,
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We Need Your Input

Dear Members of the Esparto Unified School District Community,
As we continue our commitment to providing exceptional education and opportunities for all students within our district, we are reaching out to solicit your valuable input on the development of our strategic plan.

Following an extensive review and analysis of the results of our Graduate Profile assessment, it has become increasingly clear that the collective insights and perspectives of our community members are integral to shaping our strategic direction effectively.

Your feedback will play a crucial role in identifying key priorities, setting goals, and outlining strategies to ensure that every student receives the support and resources they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

To facilitate this process, we invite you to participate in upcoming community forums, surveys, and focus group sessions. These opportunities will provide a platform for meaningful dialogue and collaboration, allowing us to collectively chart a course that reflects the aspirations and priorities of our diverse community.

Your input is invaluable to us, and we are committed to ensuring that all voices are heard and considered as we work together to advance the mission of the Esparto Unified School District.

We will soon be sharing details regarding the dates, times, and formats of the upcoming engagement opportunities. In the meantime, if you have any questions or suggestions, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Thank you for your ongoing support and partnership in creating a brighter future for all students in the Esparto Unified School District.

Warm regards,

Christina Goennier Ed.D.



Esparto Community Schools

By Juan Juarez

Coordinator of Community Schools

The Esparto Scholars Extended Learning Opportunities has launched their third Trimester, a new course has been developed in E-games designed to challenge our students to think critically in computer literacy, social and emotional learning and communication skills this approach is designed to enhance learning experiences and student engagement. By dividing the school year into three trimesters, the district aims to offer a more flexible and immersive curriculum that caters to individual student needs and interests. Along with trimester two, summer school opened at the end of January and closed on February 23. Our trimester 3 performance is scheduled for Thursday, May 23, 2024. This innovative model is set to foster academic excellence and personal growth among students in our Esparto Community.

In conjunction with the Esparto Scholars Trimester, the district has initiated a strategic planning process to shape the future of education in our community. Community engagement plays a central role in this endeavor, with opportunities for parents, students, educators, and community members to share their perspectives and aspirations for the district. A recent community session was held on February 22 at the Esparto Middle School saw enthusiastic participation and yielded valuable insights that will inform the development of our future educational strategic plan.

As the district moves forward with its strategic planning efforts, it continues to encourage community involvement and input. Through collaborative dialogue and collective action, Esparto Unified School District aims to build a future-ready educational system that prepares students for success in the 21st century. With ongoing opportunities for participation, everyone in the Esparto community has a role to play in shaping the future of education and ensuring the success of all students.

Esparto Middle School's Annual Science Fair

By: Aman Kullar, Principal

Our students have officially begun working on their science fair projects! Our wonderful science teachers, Ms. Guerrero, Ms. Simons, and Mrs. Rupchis are guiding our students as they work through the four different components of the project: 1) Conduct an experiment, 2) Write a report, 3) Create a visual board, and 4) Present to the judges.

Why does Esparto Middle School have our students participate in a science fair every year? Participation in science fairs offers middle school students numerous valuable benefits beyond traditional classroom learning. Engaging in science fairs fosters critical thinking, problem-solving, and experimentation skills, all of which are essential for success in science and other fields. It encourages students to explore their interests, cultivate curiosity, and develop a deeper understanding of scientific concepts through hands-on projects. Science fairs also promote teamwork, communication, and presentation abilities as students collaborate with peers, mentors, and judges to showcase their findings. Moreover, science fairs inspire creativity and innovation, empowering students to address real-world challenges and make meaningful contributions to scientific inquiry. Overall, participating in science fairs nurtures a passion for science while equipping middle school students with the skills and confidence needed for future academic and professional endeavors. We can't wait to see the final projects of all of our students!



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Congratulations to our ROARing Students & Staff of the Month:

Alejandro Pulido, Keyanna Fuentes Flores, Jazmine Villegas-Flores
Yareli Segura, Dylan Caldwell, Isabel Prado, Ulises Venegas, Angel Muniz
Diego Delgado Melendrez, Cassandra Lopez Miramontes
Christain Negi, Scarlet Urias, Ms. Maria Avina, Ms. Lily Conrique, Mr. Myles
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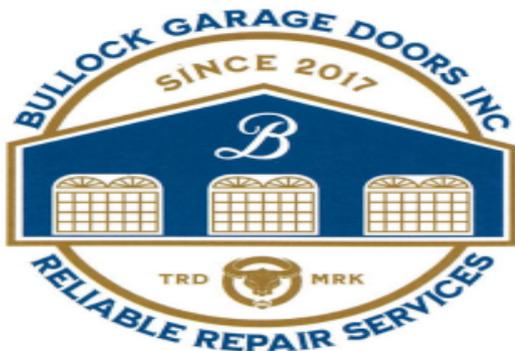
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Candice Schaer, B.Sc., MT, HHP

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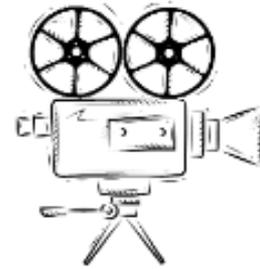
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Esparto Regional Chamber Making a Difference Sign Painting Project Underway

Dear Esparto Community,

We're thrilled to share that the Esparto Regional Chamber has embarked on an exciting initiative aimed at beautifying our beloved region: the Sign Painting Project! This project, which is now underway, embodies our commitment to enhancing our community's aesthetic appeal and creating a welcoming environment for residents and visitors alike. We are incredibly grateful to Tracy Nash and her painting crew for making this happen. The Sign Painting Project is a collaborative effort led by the Esparto Regional Chamber to revitalize and refresh signage across our valley. From town signs to banners, our goal is to breathe new life into these important elements of our valley landscape. Signage serves as the face of our town, offering a glimpse into the vibrant spirit and character of Esparto and the entire Capay Valley. By investing in the beautification of our signs, we not only improve the visual appeal and also showcase our community pride and commitment to creating a welcoming atmosphere for all. If you're interested in joining us on this exciting journey or have ideas to share, please don't hesitate to reach out. Your support and participation are essential in ensuring the success of this community-driven initiative. Thank you to everyone who has already contributed to the Sign Painting Project. Your dedication and passion are what make Esparto such a special place to call home. <https://www.espartoregionalchamber.com/>



Also in the community, please welcome Rose Rodriguez, certified massage therapist. We met Rose when she went to a local chamber mixer at Lucy's Cafe. If you haven't been to a mixer, they are a great opportunity to meet your local business owner and operators. Rose has an amazing story of her own that leads her into healing work. According to Rose Esparto is a wonderful small community to raise her family. Rose has an office in Woodland and is hoping to develop a clientele large enough to an Esparto location soon! She can be reached here <https://meadows-bodywork.square.site/>

ECAC UPDATE

Submitted by G. Morris, ECAC Secretary

The Esparto Citizens Advisory Committee (ECAC) will meet March 19 to elect officers and host a community forum with the California Highway Patrol (CHP). Captain Tien of the CHP will be present to answer questions from the committee and community. This is a public meeting (like all ECAC meetings) and all are welcome to attend and ask questions.

The ECAC meets on the third Tuesday evening of each month, as needed (typically at the Esparto Library). To receive notices of upcoming meetings, including agendas and minutes, you can subscribe via the Yolo County website (<https://www.yolocounty.org/government/advanced-components/subscribe>)

The Esparto Citizens Advisory Committee is appointed by the Board of Supervisors to act as advisors to the Planning Commission concerning land use matters. The opinions expressed by this committee are not necessarily those shared by the Planning, Resources, and Public Works Department.

Seasonal Recipes

Using ingredients sourced from farms in the Capay Valley

By Pamela Bateman

Kaleidoscope Carrot Salad



Dressing

- 1 garlic clove finely minced
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

In a small bowl whisk together the above ingredients and set aside.

- 4 or 5 carrots of differing colors * julienned or thinly sliced
- 3 large handfuls of Ruby Streak mustard greens lightly chopped
- 1/4 teaspoon salt

In a salad bowl combine the above ingredients and toss. Drizzle with dressing and serve.

*Note

*Our local farms grow carrots of many colors from the typical orange, to pink orange, purple and yellow. All are delicious, fresh and sweet this time of year. Ruby Streak mustard greens are a beautiful lacy vegetable.

Firewise USA Community

Jonathan Flora

CVERA Core Team and Yolo Fire Safe Council Chair

CVERA, Capay Valley Fire District and with the support of the Yolo Fire Safe Council is establishing an Upper Capay Valley Firewise USA community. The goal is to help everyone better prepare for wildfire by ensuring all that is reasonable and possible can be done to maintain defensible space and harden homes towards wildfire embers. CVERA already has several community members who have been trained in making defensible space assessments.

Firewise USA Community Meeting Wed March 6, 7:00pm Rumsey Town Hall, 14380 Manzanita St., Rumsey, CA. All are welcome for this informative event.

The ultimate goal is to improve the community's resilience towards wildfire. By becoming a Firewise USA community we can tap more resources to support everyone in the community with education, outreach. If we can develop enough volunteers to support those who are unable to financially pay for or physically unable maintain defensible space around their home we will organize limited support volunteer crews.

The goal of becoming a Firewise Community is to demonstrate to insurers that our community is prepared for wildfire. A large incentive to get most of the community involved so we can obtain Firewise USA certification is that California Insurers, including the Fair Plan, are required to provide a 10% discount to homes in the community that meet the maintenance requirements for defensible space and home hardening against embers. We don't have to get to 100% compliance in year one, but we need the community support to document and show progress year over year. However, we must meet the data collection and certification requirements and will need community outreach and participation to obtain Firewise certification. The data submitted is on a community basis indicating percentage of properties meeting varying levels of wildfire reliance, so it is anonymized community data.

For this meeting we are going to be providing more information on the process required to capture the data to meet Firewise USA requirements. Currently most residents need to be able to document time spent or having a service maintain defensible space in the zones around their residence, clean gutters, check vents screen. The minimum work requirement is an hour per year for defensible space. Many will spend more hours, we need the community to provide input and we need to survey the community to determine and document the current community wildfire reliance.

To ensure we have a manageable area we have decided to include the communities of Gunida and Rumsey, generally along and north of County Road 68 to include Rumsey Canyon Road. For communities North and West of Esparto as much as CVERA would like to support, there are limits to the program so we needed to keep the Firewise community within a reasonable number of homes and areas. If a group would like to organize additional Firewise Communities please reach out to the Yolo County Fire Safe Council <https://yolofiresafe.org/> for additional information and support.

From the NAFA Website: <https://www.nfpa.org/Education-and-Research/Wildfire/-Firewise-USA>

The national Firewise USA recognition program provides a collaborative framework to help neighbors in a geographic area get organized, find direction, and take action to increase the ignition resistance of their homes and community and to reduce wildfire risks at the local level.

Any community that meets a set of voluntary criteria on an annual basis and retains an "In Good Standing Status" may identify itself as being a Firewise Site.

The Firewise USA program is administered by NFPA® and is co-sponsored by the USDA Forest Service and the National Association of State Foresters. While the NFPA administers this program, individuals and communities participate on a voluntary basis.

Firewise USA Community Meeting Wed March 6, 7:00pm Rumsey Town Hall, 14380 Manzanita St., Rumsey, CA. A meeting at the Guinda Grange Hall to follow in the next week or two but not yet confirmed. All are welcome for this informative event.



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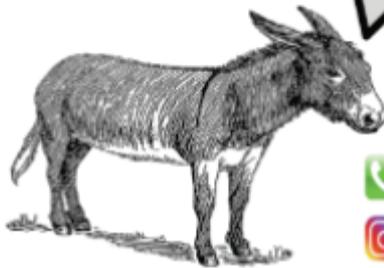
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ORGANIC GROWERS



Madison Community Food Closet Distribution

The Madison Community Committee Food Closet new distribution dates are the second and fourth Monday of each month from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm.

(Submitted by Rachel de la Cruz)

Esparto: New Season and the Wyatt Property, Part 2

After the Wyatt building had been demolished and hauled away, what remained was a hole in the ground where the basement once existed. The landowner had a 6' fence encircling the lot with a scattering of bricks and debris remaining from the demolition. It was an eyesore for a crucial corner in Esparto. The property consisted of two lots fronting Yolo Ave. and one lot fronting Woodland Ave.

New Season worked with local artist/photographer, Susan Cohen Byrne, to create murals to put around the safety fence to improve the site. It was during this time that New Season learned two important things about the property:

1) It had underground contamination. This prohibited any building upon it without remediation and clean-up.

2) Pastor Bob and his church, current owners of the property, had signed a balloon payment due to the lawyers in Poway who "donated" it to them. He and his church could not afford to move forward with clean-up or this payment or even property taxes! (Some donation huh?)

Overtime, Yolo County foreclosed on the property and put it up for tax sale. New Season's board knew that while individuals were no longer eligible for cleanup funds from the State of California, nonprofits were still eligible. The Board decided to take a chance. With the help of Board members Linda Pillard and Lynn Rolston, they monitored the tax sale and placed a bid. The County accepted the bid and New Season now owned a critical if contaminated property.

Once New Season became the owner of the Wyatt property, it became possible to apply to the California Water Quality Control Board for grants to monitor and clean up the site. Backed by grant funds, New Season is working with an engineering firm to ensure that monitoring wells are maintained and measured. We are hopeful for closure on the site sometime in 2025.

In the meantime, New Season had dirt hauled in and filled the hole and leveled the lot. This allowed for the removal of the fence. Flowers were planted each spring by Durst Organic Growers and the Esparto Farmer's Market set up on the back of the property. New Season endeavored to keep it looking better for our community with the goal of clean-up finally in our view.

When you go around that corner coming in or out of Esparto, think of its history. It is a story to remind us that property speculation without local connections, often leads to abandoned properties that are detrimental to our community.



Picture of the Wyatt building as it came down in Esparto. Corner of Yolo and Woodland Avenue.



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RISE Valley Senior Program

RISE Valley Senior Program meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. in the new RISE building, 17340 Yolo Avenue, Esparto, CA.

9:00 .am. Coffee and a light breakfast is served.

Lunch is served at 11/11:30

Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. until 10:00 Tyler & Marilyn from SL8 Fitness teach a Senior Fitness Class.

Thursdays we do chair exercises for seniors via video.

We enjoy speakers and presentations, arts and crafts, field trips, movies, cooking classes and other fun activities. Most of all we enjoy each others company. Please join us to reconnect with old friends and make new ones.

We currently have a gentleman who is interested in having someone to play chess with. If you would like to meet to play chess or other games please call Tina Minges, Senior Program coordinator at 530-787-4110 ext.209

Do you have a craft or hobby that you enjoy? Do you sing or perform? Teach a dance class? Do you enjoy photography? Garden? Craft? Arrange flowers? Have a collection you like to share with others? We would love to have you join us! Its a great opportunity to share your interest with others.





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our Esparto location: 530-787-3454



“A non-profit public benefit corporation serving the rural community to enhance the quality of life and opportunity for self-sufficiency...”

RISE Inc. es una organización que proporciona servicios gratis para el beneficio del público en Madison, Esparto, Valle de Capay y la comunidad de Winters. Nuestra oficina está localizada en 17340 Yolo Ave. y 417 Haven Street in Winters. Estamos abierto de las 8:00 de la mañana hasta las 5:00 de la tarde, de lunes a viernes nos pueden llamar al número (530)787-4110. Nuestro programa proporciona una variedad de servicios que abarcan lo siguiente:

- **IMPACT** para niños (0-5 años)
-
- **Help Me Grow Program** (Programa De Desarrollo para Niños de 0-5 años de edad)
-
- **SunRISE** Centro de Desarrollo Infantil para niños de edades 2 mos.-3 años
-
- **Programas de Después de la Escuela** para los niños en grados Kinder-8
-
- **Programa de Recreación de Verano** para los niños en grados Kinder –8
-
- **Dispensa de Alimentos** cada viernes de 2:00pm-5:00pm en RISE 17317 Fremont Street en Esparto
-
- **Distribución de Alimentos** cada cuarto lunes del mes de 10:00 am a 12:00 pm en RISE 17317 Femont Street en Esparto
-
- **Distribución de Fruta y Verdura** cada primer y tercer jueves del mes a las 9:30 am en RISE 17317 Fremont Street in Esparto
-
- **Programa de Recreación Social para Personas Mayores** martes y jueves de 9:00am a 12:00pm en la oficina de RISE 17340 Yolo Ave. En Esparto
-
- **Servicios WIOA** para el Empleo de los Jóvenes/preparación para el trabajo
-
- **VITA**-Preparación de Impuestos (Febrero-Abril)
-
- **Solicitudes de Desempleo**
- **Medi-Cal/Cal-Fresh- Asistencia de inscripción**
- **Consejería**-Recomendaciones de consejería
- Distribución de periódicos (**Valley Voice**)
- **Traducción** de información o documentos/Ayuda con Aplicaciones
- **Información Sobre Recursos Locales**
- **STEAC** (Comité de Ayuda de Emergencia de Corto Plazo)
- **Asistencia de Utilidades** (Programas de CARE/FERA y HEAP)
- **Renovaciones de Tarjeta de Residente Permanente**

Visítenos y hable con nuestro personal bilingüe
Que están disponibles en ayudarle con sus necesidades.

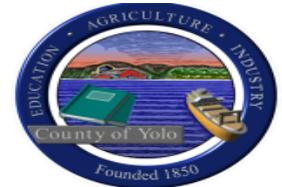


“A non-profit public benefit corporation serving the rural community to enhance the quality of life and opportunity for self-sufficiency...”

RISE, Inc. is a non-profit public benefit organization that provides free services to the Madison, Esparto, Capay Valley & Winters communities. Our office is located at 17340 Yolo Avenue in Esparto and 417 Haven Street, Winters, CA 95694 we are open from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday through Friday. We can be reached by calling (530)787-4110. We provide a variety of services that encompass the following:

- **IMPACT** for children ages 0-5
- **Help Me Grow Program** Case Management for families with children ages 0 - 5
- **SunRISE, Early Child Development Center** children ages 2 mos. - 3 yrs.
- **RISE Youth Engagement Program** for kindergarten - 8th grade
- **Summer Youth Recreation Programs** for kindergarten - 8th grade
- **Food Closet** every Friday 2:00 pm-5:00 pm at RISE Inc. 17317 Fremont Street in Esparto
- **Food Distribution** every 4th Monday of the month at 10:00 am at RISE Inc. 17317 Fremont Street Esparto
- **Produce Distribution** on the 1st & 3rd Thursday of the month from 9:30-until supplies last, at RISE, Inc. 17317 Fremont Street in Esparto
- Seniors Social Recreation Program every Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 am-12:00 pm
- **WIOA** Youth Employment Services/Job Readiness/Employment Services/Resume/Application Assistance & Job Placement
- **VITA** –Tax Preparation Service (February-April)
- **Filing Unemployment Claims**
- **Enrollment Assistance** on Medi-Cal/Cal-Fresh
- **Counseling Referrals Elementary to High School (5 to 18 yrs. of age)**
- **Energy/Utility Assistance** (CARE/FERA and HEAP programs)
- **STEAC** (Short Term Emergency Aid Committee) Application Intake
- **Valley Voice** Newspaper Distribution
- **Translating Services/Application Assistance**
- **Information on Local Resources**
- **Referrals to County Agencies**
- **Permanent Resident Care Renewals**

Drop by and meet our bilingual staff
who are available to assist you in meeting your needs.



March 13th, 2024

9:30 am to 2 pm

ESPARTO CONVENIENCE CENTER

27075 COUNTY ROAD 19A, ESPARTO



TIRE AMNESTY EVENT

Funded By
CalRecycle



NO:

- NO MORE THAN 9 TIRES PER VEHICLE.
- NO BUSINESS WASTE TIRES.
- NO HEAVY EQUIPMENT, SOLID OR FOAM FILLED TIRES.

YES:

- ALL PASSENGER CAR, TRUCK AND FARM TRACTOR TIRES THAT ARE AIR FILLED ARE ACCEPTED
- TIRES WITH OR WITHOUT RIMS ARE ACCEPTED

NEW RESTRICTIONS

- NO DUMP TRAILERS ALLOWED
- NO TIRES GREATER THAN 60"
- (WE WILL MEASURE!)

EXEMPTION:

YOU MAY OBTAIN AN EXEMPTION TO HAUL UP TO 20 TIRES AT ONE TIME WITH AN EXEMPTION FROM YOLO COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH.

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Valley Voice

Free

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ALMOND FESTIVAL 2014

March 2014



Pictured above are the four candidates for the Almond Queen Pageant. Left to right: Mariesa Cramer, EllaRose Eldon, Mikayla Shera, and Marlee Wallace.

Almond Queen Pageant

On Saturday, February 15, the Guinda Grange Hall held the annual Almond Queen Pageant to a full house. A delicious dinner was prepared and served by members of the Guinda Grange, and enjoyed by all present. Local area farmers donated much of the food served, including potatoes, broccoli, and lettuce. The Pageant began at 8:00 p.m. by Master of Ceremonies, Thaddeus Barsotti. Alexis Kersting, EHS Counselor, and Hallie Muller were co-coordinators of the pageant. The Rumsey Improvement Association is the sponsor of the Almond Queen Pageant.

Four Esparto High School seniors were candidates in the Pageant this year: Mariesa Cramer of Madison, EllaRose Eldon of Brooks, Makayla Shera of Guinda and Marlee Wallace of Guinda. There were three components to the contest: an essay, an interview, and the speech presentation. The essays and interviews were completed earlier in the process. On the night of the pageant, each candidate delivered a five-minute speech on the topic "How will your future achievements in education and work reflect on what you have learned as a member of the Capay Valley community?" After speaking, they were each asked a follow-up question on their speech, a current event question, and a fun question. The judges, Alice Meserve Manas, Frances Burke, and Joe Krovoza, had the most difficult task of the evening. Each judge lamented that judging was a more difficult task than they had originally anticipated because of the unique talents each candidate brought to the pageant.

Congratulations to Makayla Shea, 2014 Almond Queen, Mariesa Cramer, First Runner-Up, and Marlee Wallace, Miss Congeniality. The Almond Queen and her court spent their time visiting each town during the Almond Festival, making stops in Esparto, Capay, Guinda, and Rumsey.

Thank you to the Cache Creek Casino for the generous donation of a limousine for the Almond Queen to travel in during the Almond Festival. Thanks also to the Scholarship Sponsors for this event, and to those who donated items for the raffle that was held during the pageant.

Submitted by Hallie Muller

"Most Successful Almond Festival Ever"

So said long-time vendors in the Esparto town park, who were waxing poetic over the number of visitors. Other comments made to those of us in the Chamber Booth:

"I loved Rumsey! Everything was so beautifully displayed."
"The lambs at Rumsey and Guinda were very special!"
"Cars are packed end-to-end all up and down the valley!" (This said joyously, because it proved a good attendance.)

"We sold out early!" from a number of food vendors.
"We had to keep refilling our stock...and couldn't keep up with demand."
"Thank you for putting on this festival!" from any number of visitors who handed in passports full of stamps proving they'd been to every stop on the route.

The *Almond Dessert Contest* had a record number of entries, from both adults and students. The 5 judges were wondering if they would have enough appetite to taste them all! (But that soon passed as they began sampling the wonderful food.) The youngest entrant was 11; the oldest...well! Cakes were decorated with almond blossoms, cookies were shaped like almond blossoms, candies featured almonds with chocolate or fudgy consistency, an ice cream was slightly melting but still absolutely delicious. **Rumsey House B&B** (www.rumseyhouse.com) awarded cash prizes of \$100 to first place, \$50 for second place in each division. **Ginger Elizabeth Chocolates** (www.gingerElizabeth.com) donated a \$50 box of gourmet candies to third place in each division.

The winners in each division were:

- Adult:** **First Prize** David Hayes' Hungarian Almond Torte,
Second Prize Linda Marshbanks' Fruit and Almond Nougat,
Third Prize Amy Lichty's Orange Almond Tea Bread
Student: **First Prize** Alyssa Noguera's Burnt Almond Cake,
Second Prize Samantha Scruggs' Hello Dolly Cookies,
Third Prize Erika Barajas's Almond Cupcakes

Recipes will be featured in the next issue of Valley Voice; please watch for them.

This was my first opportunity as Chamber Executive Director and I was mighty nervous at coordinating the Almond Festival. The greater valley community really pulled behind me and made it a pleasurable experience and a true Capay Valley event. THANKS TO THE STEERING COMMITTEE AND OTHERS WHO VOLUNTEERED TIME, MONEY AND ADVICE. Listed below are some of the people who worked directly with me. If I have forgotten to list your name here, please remember my brain is fuzzy from yesterday's event and I will try to make it up in future editions of Valley Voice!

Pat Harrison
Alice Manas
Greg Kringen
Lori Day-Reynolds
Alan Humason
Gene Rutan
Shawn Rutan
Cindy Kringen
Trudie Martin

Gretchen Ceteras
Linda Wilson,
Tico Zendajas
Mike Leonard,
Hallie Muller
Keli Rutan-Jorgansen
Gage Hutchens
Christine DeMaria
Candy Schaar

Dru Rivers
Paul Muller
Bob Bramlett
Trini Melendrez
Fred Manas
Enid Williams
Lynette Hjerpe
Lindsey Metzger
Greta Taber

All pictures in this edition were sent by Hallie Muller, Trini Campbell, Camilla Barry, Frances Burke and Melissa Jordan. Thanks to you all.

Cont. on pg. 3

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

Please contact the group you are interested in, to see if they are still meeting at this time.

AA Meeting: Tuesday at 7 pm in the basement of the Countryside Community Church in Esparto. 1 hour open.

Spanish AA: Alcohólicos Anónimos: Detrás de El Toro. Los lunes, miércoles, y viernes a las 7 pm - 9 pm.

Spanish AI-Anon: Spanish AI-Anon: Detrás de El Toro (26628 N. Grafton). Los Martes a las 7 pm - 8:30 pm.

AI-Anon: Countryside Community Church on Tuesday from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Calvary Baptist Church: Meets Sunday's at 11 am at 26479 Grafton Street.

Calvary Baptist Church Community Dinner: Every Tuesday at 4 pm located at 26479 Grafton Street, Free, Everyone Welcome.

Capay Valley Christian Fellowship: 11 am adult Sunday school; 11:45 am social; 12:10 pm - 1:10 pm worship/children's Sunday School at the Guinda Community Church.

Capay Valley Fire Commission Meeting: Meets the 2nd Monday of each month at 6:30 pm at the Guinda Fire Station.

Capay Valley Garden Club: 4th Wednesdays, 6 pm, location varies, see Facebook page for more information.

Capay Valley General Plan Advisory Committee: Meets every 1st Wednesday at 7 pm at the Grange Hall in Guinda. Open to all.

Capay Valley Science Club, 4th Mondays, 6 pm, location varies. See Capay Valley Science Club" Google Group for information.

Capay Valley Vision Board: Meets on the third Wednesday of every month at the Esparto Library at 6:30 p.m. (Meetings are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC.)

Cottonwood Cemetery District: Next meeting will be February 13th, 2023 at 9 am at the Esparto RISE office (17317 Fremont Street).

Countryside Community Church: Sundays at 9 am Worship Service and Sunday School.

The Farm Stop: Our next event is Almond Festival, February 26th, 10-5, in Guinda, located in the lot across from The Corner Store.

Esparto Ag Boosters: Meets on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 6 pm in the Ag Department at the high school.

Esparto Citizens Advisory Committee Planning Council: Meets 3rd Tuesday at 7 pm at the Esparto Regional Library.

Esparto Community Services District: Meets on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Esparto Family Practice: Open: Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 9 am - 5 pm, Wednesday 2 pm - 6 pm and Thursday from 1 pm - 6 pm

Esparto Food Distribution: Esparto Food Distribution 1st and 3rd Thursday of the month from 9:30 am - Supplies Last and 4th Monday of the month 10 am - noon.

Esparto High School Ag Boosters Meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. in the Ag Classroom at the high school.

Esparto Lions Club Meeting: Meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays at the Boy Scout Cabin Social hour at 5:30 pm, 6 pm Dinner, For Zoom link, please call (787-3892)

Esparto Regional Chamber of Commerce: Meets monthly on the 2nd Thursday at 6:30 pm, currently via Zoom. (For Zoom Link, please call (787-3242))

Esparto Unified School Board Meeting: Meets on the 4th Wednesday at 6 pm in Room A - 7 at the High School.

Esparto Fire Commissioners Meeting: Meets the 2nd Thursday of each month at 6 pm at the Esparto Fire Station.

Food Distribution at Countryside Community Church: Fridays: 2 pm - 5 pm.

Friends of Esparto Regional Library Board of Directors' Meeting: The 2nd Wednesday at 4 pm (except for July and November) at the Library

Guinda Community Church: Sunday Service at 9 am

Guinda Food Distribution: Produce distribution on the 2nd Monday and canned and dried goods on the 4th Monday from 10 am - 11 am at the Guinda Grange Hall.

Homeschooling: Carly Castruita Gordon at (916) 616-5419.

Madison Advisory Committee: 4th Wednesday at 6 pm at the Madison Community Services District. No meetings in May, November or December.

Madison Community Committee: 3rd Thursday at 6 pm at the Madison Community Services District.

Madison Fire Commissioners Meeting: 1 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Madison Fire Department at 17880 Stephens Street.

Madison Food Closet: Open the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month from 4 pm to 5 pm at the Madison Community Services District Building

Madison Service District Meeting: 3rd Thursday at 6:00 p.m. in the District office at 28963 Main Street in Madison.

New Life Christian Center in Madison: Sunday Service at 11:00 a.m. with Jr. Church for ages 5-12. Home Bible Studies on Wednesday.

On Fire Fellowship of Esparto: Sunday service at 9 am Bible Study: Wed. at 6:30 p.m. Youth Group: Friday at 6:30 pm; Ladies: 1st/3rd Tues. 6:30 pm.

RISE Collaborative Meeting: 4th Friday of each month at 9 am. Meeting held in-person at the RISE, Inc Esparto Office (17317 Fremont Street).

RISE Valley Seniors: Meet Tuesdays & Thursdays at the RISE office (17317 Fremont Street) 9 am - noon. Meet at Boy Scout Hall (17020 Yolo Ave) First & Third Thursday of each month

Rumsey Improvement Association: Monday night Ping Pong, Rumsey Hall at 6:30 pm (Every week except 2nd Monday in January), all ages and levels welcome.

St. Martin's Catholic Mission Church: English Mass: 8:30 am on Sundays; Spanish Mass: 7 pm on Saturdays at St. Martin's Catholic Mission, 25633 Grafton St.

Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW): Western Yolo Post 7143, meets 1st Wednesday each month, at Post Home, Orleans St. and Highway 16.

Western Yolo Grange: Meets on the 3rd Tuesday at 6 pm social, and 6:30 pm potluck dinner and meeting at the Grange Hall at 16787 Forrest in Guinda.

4-H: Meets at 6:30 pm on the 2nd Monday of each month at the Community Center in Esparto.