

LANDSCAPING COMPANY BENEFITS RODGERS HOUSE

Contributed

Crews from K&D Landscaping recently installed a new irrigation system at the Rodgers House at the Santa Cruz County Fairgrounds, part of the company's monthly community outreach project. The work included installing a new Hunter rain sensor controller, which shuts off when rain occurs. "It is so important to have an annual irrigation system check done, as parts we can't see can get worn out, causing leaks, which leads to water waste," said Kelsie White of K&D Landscaping. "With the help of Hunter Industries and Ewing Irrigation, we were able to give a complete system makeover to a significant historical landmark in our community."

COMMUNITY BRIEFS**PVUSD announces results of reading challenge**

WATSONVILLE — Pajaro Valley Unified School District Superintendent Michelle Rodriguez announced that the district read 9,959,810 of the 10 Million Words reading challenge that ended on Jan. 17 using "Paso a Paso, Creciendo Juntos," or Step by Step, Growing Together, an app promoting early literacy in English and Spanish.

The 10 Million Word Challenge was five times the originally established challenge of two million words, which was reached soon after the challenge was announced mid-September.

According to PVUSD, through the challenge, students spent almost 5,000 additional hours on literacy and read 38,110 books.

"Paso a Paso, Creciendo Juntos, Step by Step, Growing Together is a strategy to accomplish our PVUSD Target for Student Success, and is integral to helping every child read on grade level by third grade," Rodriguez said. "We are pleased to support our students and future students in becoming successful readers through Paso a Paso. Early access to literacy is key to fostering a love for reading."

Top readers included the Child Development Department (1,395,473 words), Amesti Elementary (1,354,962 words) and HA Hyde Elementary (908,477 words).

Rodriguez announced another challenge that would result in two young students winning a donated Chromebook. Omnipro of San Francisco donated Chromebooks to PVUSD in support for early literacy achievement. The challenge will be rolled out to the schools on Valentine's Day and the winners will be announced at the end of spring recess, April 9.

County Clerk offering Watsonville office hours

WATSONVILLE — The County Clerk will hold its monthly office hours in Watsonville on Wednesday for people who are applying for passports, marriage licenses, or fictitious business names;

getting married; being sworn in as a Deputy Commissioner of Marriage; obtaining a health officer verification; or registering as a notary.

The hours are from 7:50 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the City Clerk's Office located at 275 Main St., fourth floor (sixth floor of the parking garage).

The County Clerk offers office hours in Watsonville one Wednesday each month in an effort to make clerk services more accessible for South County residents.

For information or to make an appointment, call 454-2060 or visit the County Clerk's website at www.sccoclerk.com.

Corralitos Grange offering scholarships

CORRALITOS — The Corralitos Grange #487 is offering scholarships for ag majors.

Those who are interested and would like an application can call Shirley Spain at 724-7962 or email patnovakovich@aol.com.

The deadline is April 1.

Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center honored for reducing C-sections

SANTA CRUZ — Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center of Santa Cruz was recently recognized by the California Health and Human Services Department (CHHS) for reducing cesarean births for first-time mothers with low-risk pregnancies.

Nine hospitals at the not-for-profit network have among the lowest cesarean section (C-section) rates in California, and were named to the state's 2017 Hospital C-section Honor Roll.

The agency announced the honor roll recognition on behalf of Smart Care California, a coalition of public and private health care purchasers that collectively cover 16 million people statewide — or 40 percent of all Californians.

It is the second consecutive year that Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center of Santa Cruz has made the list.

"Quality and safety are our top priorities here and our clinicians work hard to ensure our C-section rates are low," said Trina White, chief administrative officer of Sutter Maternity & Surgery Center of Santa Cruz.

"We deliver patient-centered care to make sure that mothers and babies are supported in every way and that they are healthy and happy throughout the birth process."

Even for low-risk, first-birth pregnancies, there is a huge variation in hospital C-section rates.

Rates in California hospitals range from less than 15 percent to more than 60 percent.

To respond to the rise in unnecessary C-sections, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services adopted the Healthy People 2020 target of reducing nationwide C-section rates for low-risk, first-births to 23.9 percent.

The Smart Care California honor roll acknowledges hospitals that have achieved — and in many cases gone beyond — that goal.

The Sutter Health system NTSV C-section Rate for a rolling 12 months ending Nov. 30, 2017 was 21.3 percent, below the 23.9 national goal.

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