

Water ruling upheld
The U.S. appeals court upholds a decision barring the Pyramid Palouse tribe from transferring its water rights.
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SATURDAY
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REGION

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Police probe slaying of teen

Boy, 13, dies after being shot early Thursday outside a friend's home in south Sacramento.

By Crystal Carreon
BEE STAFF WRITER

A friend from school had invited 13-year-old Lenny Sam Visamoune to spend the night at his family's south Sacramento home and share in their Thanksgiving barbecue.

Around 1 a.m. Thursday, Lenny was still chatting and laughing with the friend and a few other teenagers in the driveway outside a house on 79th Street when a sedan pulled up.

Someone called over to come to the car ... Lenny thought it was his cousin," said Jonathan Saechao, whose teenage brother had invited Lenny over for the holiday. "We heard loud gunshots; one bullet went through the wall.

"My brother came in screaming, 'Call 911! Lenny's shot.'"
The 13-year-old died an hour later at UC Davis Medical Center. Police on Friday continued to search for the gunman.

Outside the house on Friday, Saechao recalled how his relatives scrambled outside to get Lenny, who was lying near the street curb, still alive and confused.

They dragged him to the doorway, where Saechao said he started to press a bath towel against the gunshot wound on Lenny's stomach.

"Just hang in there, Lenny," Saechao said he told the boy. "Help's coming."

After the shooting, the car fled south on 79th Street, where two other homes in the 5800 block were peppered by gunfire, said Sacramento Police Officer Michelle Lazzari, spokeswoman for the department. At least 30 rounds were fired along the street.

No other injuries were reported. Shante Johnson, a neighbor, said the sound of a dozen rapid gunshots rattled her from her sleep early Thursday.

She ran to the front living room, where her children were asleep, gathered them and brought them to a rear bedroom.

Months later, police were knocking on her door, she said, asking her questions about the shooting.

"I was shocked to be that close," she said.
SHOOTING, Page B3



Sacramento Bee/Letzie Sterling
Roto-Rooter's James Kellerman unclogs a drain at Donna and Jeff Garcia's home Friday, the busiest day of the year for plumbers.

Looking for a plumber? Get in line

By M.S. Enkoji
BEE STAFF WRITER

Celery. Good for you, bad for your garbage disposal.

It's the busiest day of the year, said Skip Craun on Friday. He's a recruiting and training manager for Roto-Rooter in Sacramento.

Craun has fished out everything from money dropped down disposals to kettens in sewer lines. He names any fibrous food item as the No. 1 culprit for a Thanksgiving snafu: they don't pulverize enough to pass through the drain.

With family and friends toiling in the kitchen, someone is likely to overestimate the capacity of the lowly garbage disposal, the pros say. Especially if it ain't your kitchen.

A lot of it is having Aunt Martha not paying at PLUMBERS, Page B4

Some giving cool weather a warm welcome

By Phillip Reese
BEE STAFF WRITER

The warmest November in a decade will end with a whimper, as Friday's cold rain ushers in frostier Sacramento temperatures, forecasters said.

Good riddance, say many local residents: November is supposed to be chilly.

"Bring it on," said John Hiduchick, who was hanging out near the capital city's Downtown Plaza mall Friday, adding that the area's often high temperatures are "the only negative thing in Sacramento."

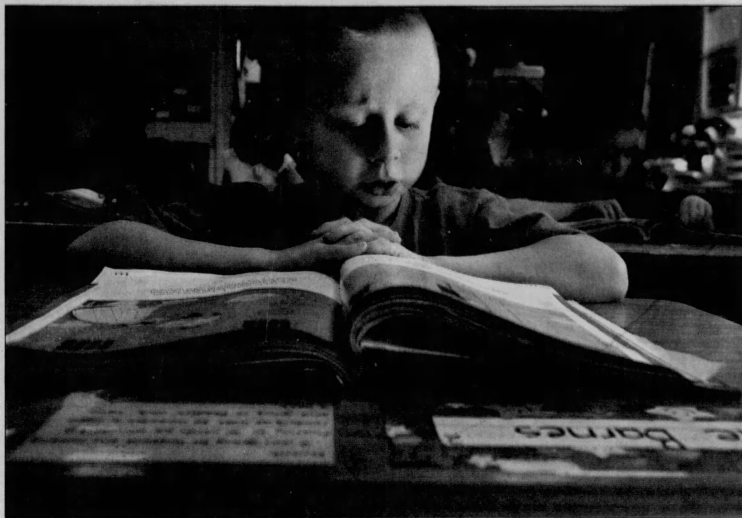
This month through Thanksgiving, there were 12 days with high temperatures above 70 in Sacramento - the most warm days before Thanksgiving since 1995, according to the National Climatic Data Center.

By comparison, last year there were no days in November where CHILL, Page B2

INSIDE

Motorists take heed: A new law in force requires you to drive with headlights on in gloomy weather.
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Wondering about the weekend weather picture? For complete regional and global forecasts, see Page B8



Sacramento Bee/Autumn Cruz
Duane Barnes, 7, works on his goal of improving his reading fluency during class at Erlewine Elementary. Just like the other students at his school, his goals are written on a card and kept at his desk. Experts say focusing on goal setting helps to teach kids about perseverance and delayed gratification.

Introducing the GOALIES of Erlewine Elementary



Nathan Duke, 8, works on his objective of improving his handwriting. In first grade, his X's looked like T's, but now he forms the letters correctly.

Principal designs a program that makes self-improvement part of children's lives in the classroom, at home and elsewhere.

By Laurel Rosenhall
BEE STAFF WRITER

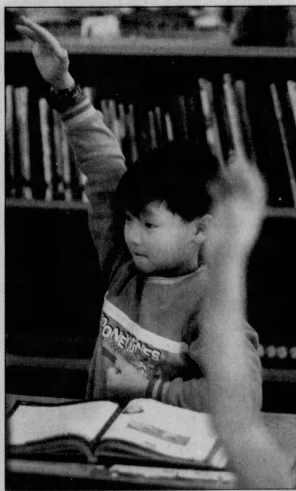
Allison Urban will read for 1,000 minutes this trimester. Nathan Duke will improve his handwriting. Adam Boles will memorize math facts. And Ansar Muhammad will complete all his homework - "neatly, every day, and turn it in on time," according to the pink index card taped to his desk.

These are just a few of the goals students at O.W. Erlewine Elementary School in the Sacramento City Unified School District have set for themselves. Under a program created by Principal Terry Smith, each student at the school in the Rosemont area picks an academic goal every trimester.

It's a simple program built on a simple philosophy - the idea that everybody can improve.

But it's teaching a lesson that can help children succeed long after they've mastered the three R's. By setting goals and working toward them, psychologists say, young students learn skills they'll need as teenagers and adults: planning for the future and persevering in the face of difficulty.

Here's how the program works: Students choose a goal and teachers tell parents the goals their children are focusing on. In many classrooms, students tape to their desk index cards with the goals written on them to remind them every day what GOALS, Page B4



Alex Yoo, 7, raises his hand to answer a question, which is fulfilling part of his goal to pay attention in class and to ask questions.

Students choose their goals themselves, and teachers talk to them about what they need to do to make sure they reach those goals. At the end, students who achieve their goals are rewarded with a certificate at an awards ceremony. Those who don't can try again next term.

Cop posing as prostitute finds W. Sac beat an eye-opener

By Blair Anthony Robertson
BEE STAFF WRITER

When she's not dressed up as a hooker, pacing and waving and chattering with would-be customers on West Capitol Avenue, she likes to bake cookies or tend to her garden.

She has big blue eyes and a pleasant countenance that suggests "girl-next-door." At her desk, she has pictures of her dog and two cats. She's articulate and self-assured, though she tones that down when she's working out deals with men through open car windows.

Her nails are well-manicured, which might give her away if any of these men bothered to look at her hands. Her hair is, well, it wouldn't be right to tell you about her hair or much else about her appearance, for that matter.

That might spoil everything. This, after all, is the story of a woman who is not always what she seems - a West Sacramento police officer who poses as a prostitute.

Her name, in this context, must be kept secret. But she has plenty to say about what she does out there on the street - how it feels to talk to men who want to exchange money for sex, what she thinks

about the women whose job she is mimicking, about the men she catches and carts off to jail, about what it all means to the bigger picture of a city trying to dig out from under its unseemly reputation.

The ongoing sting operations in West Sacramento entered the spotlight recently when it nabbed a man who was allegedly trying to arrange a prostitute for his 16-year-old foster son waiting in the car. The man was arrested and his foster children removed from the home.

In recent years, many people have come to believe the undercover officer's role is a key compo-

nent of West Sacramento's attempt to recast itself as a city that is safe, clean and on the rise.

"I think it has multiple implications, almost like the skin of the onion," West Sacramento Police Chief Dan Drummond said of the prostitution problem. "What some people might say is a harmless business transaction has greater implications as you peel away the layers. It's certainly a nuisance and blight issue in the areas where it's occurring."

The officer who goes undercover says she sees it as an opportunity to make a difference.

"It's not something I love doing, but I don't mind. COP, Page B4

"I think the men like the danger of it. I feel sorry for their families. Honesty is a big thing for me."

West Sacramento police officer who works undercover as a prostitute

# Cop: Undercover street work affects her personal life

► FROM PAGE B1

Obviously, prostitution still exists. It's not like we're going to get rid of it," she said. "But one of the big things for me is that a normal person should be able to walk through (West Capitol) without getting propositioned."

The officer, in her other life, may be the prototype of the "normal" person.

Born and raised in Roseville, she was a shy kid and a tomboy. She graduated from Oakmont High School and had her sights set on becoming a physical therapist. But her so-so grades, she discovered, limited her options and she changed her major to criminal justice.

She originally wanted to join the FBI. She graduated from the Sacramento Police Department academy in 1997 but was let go at the end of her probation, she says, after she crashed a police cruiser.

She landed the West Sacramento job and eventually was assigned one of two police positions devoted to cleaning up problem areas.

One of those problems, of course, is prostitution. "West Sacramento," said the police chief, "is changing from what it used to be, kind of a blue-collar backwater, to a premier city attracting all this new residential and business development. While the prostitution stings are good for the city, they're also important for the immediate community not to have this happen in their backyard." When it came time for the department to conduct street-level stings, officers were asked to try out.

This officer hardly fit the bill to go undercover. She's more Martha Stewart than Madame X.

But she is able to transform herself through make-up - she can make it appear she has a black eye - clothing and body language. Apparently, rough and rugged up is an appealing look to customers on West Capitol.

But how does she go from articulate suburbanite to streetwise prostitute with a likely drug habit?

"For me, less is more. The less I talk the better," she explained. "If you talk a lot and are fairly articulate, the guys will know."

In society's pecking order, there is little worse than the life of a prostitute working the streets. It is not a glamorous world. Many of the women are strung out, working in desperation or fear.

Yet the police officer who poses as one of them is not immediately sympathetic.

"I think it's all about choice," she said. "It's a quick way to make money. Any one of these women could go out and get a minimum wage job."

Many of the prostitutes, she says, start stealing to support their drug habit. Some are working the streets while six and eight months pregnant.

"These kids are born as addicts and have almost no chance in life," she added.

And what about her reaction to the men prowling for women living on the edge? Appearances are deceptive. Many of the men, she says, look respectable, like someone she would consider dating. At least half are married.

"They come from all walks of life. We have guys walking the street and businessmen passing through driving \$50,000 cars," she said. "One of the guys we arrested, I was working out at the gym and I saw him there."

"For a lot of guys, it's the thrill of having someone different, the thrill of being caught. The hard thing for me is seeing guys who look like the kind of guy I would go out with."

She has heard all kinds of post-arrest excuses - "I was only kidding," and "I've never done this before," the most common ones. She has also had men plead that their wives not be told. Or they say they can't go to jail because they have to pick up their kids after school.

"I think the men like the danger of it. I feel sorry for their families. Honesty is a big thing for me," she said.

Her line of work has had a direct impact on her personal life. Dating, she says, has been a problem. The men she meets are often scared off when they hear what she does at work.

And for her, trusting men these days can be a challenge. When she poses as a prostitute, she sees so many recent-appearing men and hears so many of their lies and distortions that she finds it a challenge to get past that in her personal life. She can tell in a heartbeat when a man is lying. Sometimes, she says, she finds herself listening too hard for fibs.

On the job, she has to have a thick skin. Occasion-

ally, for instance, someone will drive by and shout, "Whore."

The officer's family has had mixed reactions to her undercover job. Dad is proud and Mom likes to hear details of all the stories, though "she gets nervous and upset about how dangerous it is."

The officer is usually given a fine and probation. In addition to wearing a wire to pick up the conversations with would-be customers, she carries a cell phone and a gun. A video camera records the action on the street to aid prosecutions.

Nearby, her partner, Carl Crouch, is parked in an unmarked vehicle, listening to the officer's wire, ready to pounce if something goes awry.

Arrests usually come after the man discusses paying for a specific sex act. They are charged with prostitution and are usually given a fine and probation. Those who don't mention money, the officer explains, can still be charged with loitering for the purposes of prostitution.

The men are usually given a fine and probation, though public embarrassment may be the greatest punishment - the police department makes their names public.

And after the stings are done for the day? "You want to go home and take a shower," the officer said.

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# Goals: Kids learn to balance future with here and now

► FROM PAGE B1

Throughout the term, teachers talk to the students about what they need to do to make sure they reach their goals. At the end, students who achieve their goals are rewarded with a certificate at an awards ceremony. Those who don't can try again the next term.

Smith came up with the idea when she took over as principal last year while pursuing the professional credential required for school administrators.

"In all my administrative classes it was like, 'How are you going to move kids forward?'" she said.

"I was thinking, I always make goals for myself. So I thought maybe that will work for the kids." Eight-year-old Nathan Duke thinks it does.

"I'm working on my handwriting, and it's really improved," he said as he pulled out an example. "In first grade, X was really hard. I used to make the X look like a T."

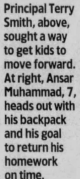
Two months into the second grade, Nathan's X's and his T's look like T's. Instead of sprawling crookedly across the page, all his letters fit neatly in the lines.

Cathy Singer, Nathan's teacher, said students can round out their abilities by setting individual goals.

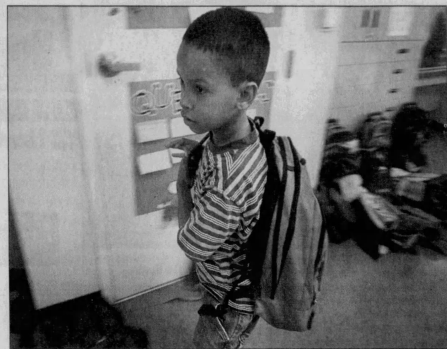
"(Nathan) was a great reader. His math was great. So we needed to find something else for him to work on," Singer said. "For him, it was neatness and handwriting."



Principal Terry Smith, above, sought a way to get kids to move forward.



At right, Ansar Muhammad, 7, heads out with his backpack and his goal to return his homework on time.



Sacramento Bee Autumn Cruz

Singer weaves the goals into students' regular school work. And every few days, she tells the class it's time for everyone to work on their goals.

"If it's reading, grab a book," Singer tells them. "If it's math, grab your flashcards."

Through the goal-setting program, students learn more than reading, writing and math. Smith tells teachers to talk to them each week about the process of working toward a goal.

Early in the semester they discuss what a goal is - something specific, something that is possible, something you will stick to. Later they talk to students about evaluating the progress they're making on their

goals. "Ask yourself, 'How much time am I really spending on this goal?'" Smith tells teachers to discuss with their students.

"Do I need extra help? Do I need my parent's help? Do I need my teacher's help?"

To keep children motivated, Smith tells teachers to acknowledge the small steps students make toward meeting their goals.

"As the semester went on, I would say, 'Don't give up. You can reach your goal. It was a positive reinforcement,'" Smith said.

Parents say they appreciate the school's focus on goal-setting. It's made self-improvement a normal part of children's lives,

said Nicole Plumley, whose twins are in the fourth grade at Erlerve.

"I see where they apply to in other avenues of life," she said.

For example, Plumley said, her daughter has begun setting goals in figure skating - to perform harder jumps - and in saving her allowance - for new pillows in her bedroom.

Setting goals may help children learn about delayed gratification and get them to understand that they can do well on things they work at, said Kristin Lagattuta, a psychology professor at the University of California, Davis.

"Kids think about their future and what's going to happen next, but often times they prioritize the here and now," she said. "Anything you can do to teach them to work towards something in the future... can be

really helpful." Many children believe that intelligence is something they have or don't have - while others see it as something they can acquire by applying themselves, Lagattuta said.

Those who believe they are not smart are more likely to give up when something is hard, she said. And those who believe intelligence is malleable are more likely to work at learning things that don't come naturally.

The goal-setting regime could help children improve their self-image, Lagattuta said. "It may encourage children to not give up when things get hard," she said. "If they work hard and put in the time they realize, 'I can do this.'"

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# Plumber: Be careful how fast you dump food in the disposal

► FROM PAGE B1

tention to what she's putting down the sink," Craun said.

Friday kicked off a long weekend for Craun and his brethren. Roto-Rooter, the country's largest plumber service, estimates a 47 percent jump in calls for the day after Thanksgiving, compared to other Fridays, and a 21 percent boost for the weekend.

Donna and Jeff Garcia found out something about the garbage disposal in their new home on Thanksgiving: not too good with potato peelings.

In their Sierra Oaks home Friday evening, they watched as veteran plumber James Kellerman ducked under their sink buffed by soiled Thanksgiving crockery.

Donna Garcia, 39, described how she was trying to get rid of the potato peelings.

"And then, the drain just started going gluck, gluck," she said. "I think I just put them down too fast."

"That shut down the kitchen sink, but not their holiday meal. 'And we didn't have to clean up afterwards,'" she said.

Jeff Garcia, who turned 45 on Thanksgiving, spent part of his birthday with a plumber's snake that he soon realized could be doing more harm than good. "We need a professional," he said he concluded. Kellerman, who works for Roto-Rooter, said he admires people who attempt to resolve their plumbing problems, but an amateur could poke holes in the line, upping the bill considerably.

As he ran a cable through the line to clear it, he flicked black, tarlike grit off the inside of the trap and showed the Garcias it could be more than peelings that backed up on them.

Sludge buildup from oil, he said, could be remedied by enzyme cleaners - which he just happened to have in his truck.

Dumping too much food too quickly into the sink disposal is a good way to guarantee a dinner delay, said Rod Allman of Mr. Rooter Plumbing in Sacramento. Thanksgiving chefs will hurry to clean up as the finish line approaches.

"They want to clear all that stuff out of the kitchen," Allman said.

Gradual feeding into the disposal and plenty of water to wash it down would prevent a holiday plumbing bill, he said.

"There's really a lot of people out there who don't have a clue about common sense. Let me put it that way," he said. "But that's what we're here for."

For those in older neighborhoods, such as east Sacramento, garbage disposal operation is particularly perilous because tree roots could already crowd sewer lines, said Jerry Henderson of All State Plumbing Heating and Cooling in Sacramento.

Generally, garbage disposals are designed to get rid of leftovers on a plate, he said. "If you burn a pot of beans, don't try to shove them down the sink," Henderson said.

He once had a customer who

tossed a box of instant mashed potatoes down the sink and added water. "It expanded like a sponge," he said.

There's an even broader reason to dispose with care. Between Thanksgiving morning and Friday evening, blockages caused Sacramento County's sewage lines to back up seven times.

Buildup from fats, oils and grease cause at least 350 blockages a year - 42 percent of all of them - in the county's 2,700 miles of sewer lines, said Gilbert Melis, underground construction and maintenance manager with County Sanitation District 1.

Just the way fat clogs human arteries, the same stuff wreaks the same kind of havoc on sewer lines, causing sewage to back up through manholes and - in worst cases - someone's home, he said.

The district is trotting out an education campaign - FOG for fats, oils and grease - part of a national effort to persuade people to dispose of cooking grease in jars or cans and toss them in the trash.

At the Garcias' house, pan drippings were not the problem. "That went into the gravy," said Donna Garcia.

At last, the sound of rushing water into the sink was a welcome noise. At least for a moment.

"Man," said Donna Garcia, "now I have to do the dishes."

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## SPECIAL REPORT

# In Monday's Bee

Final edition

## FLOOD MAPS

Spend a few minutes with Monday's Bee-in print and online and gain insight into how floods could affect your neighborhood. We'll show area flood maps, explain what they mean, look at the deepest spots, and talk about evacuation plans for schools, hospitals and other critical entities in the flood zones. Nobody gives you valuable information like The Bee.

► FLOOD MAPS — part of the *Tempting Fate* Special Report. Read it Monday, Nov. 28.

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