

# Solano Scene

## Suisun ponders fireworks

By IAN THOMPSON  
DAILY REPUBLIC

SUISUN CITY — The City Council will decide whether \$25,000 in seed money is enough to plan for a Fourth of July fireworks show this summer -- or it may wait two more weeks to see if an ad hoc committee on community events can raise more cash.

Those are the questions council members will have to answer Tuesday when they get a report from the committee tasked to find ways to fund the city's biggest public event now that the now-defunct Redevelopment Agency can no longer foot the bill.

The council will also be asked by the committee if it wants to approve selling Safe and Sane fireworks in town as a long-term funding source for future fireworks shows.

The demise of redevelopment forced Suisun City

### At a glance

**Who:** Suisun City Council  
**What:** Deciding whether to go forward with Fourth of July fireworks show.  
**When:** 7 p.m. Tuesday.  
**Where:** Suisun City Council chamber, 701 Civic Center Blvd.  
**Info:** 421-7300.

to eliminate its entire events budget late last year, killing nearly its entire calendar of events, such as the Fourth of July fireworks display and the Christmas on the Waterfront festival.

The council created a committee to work out ways to fund the events from other sources. It concentrated on saving the fireworks show, which costs between \$80,000 and \$100,000 to operate.

So far, the group has \$25,000 in pledges, includ-

ing a \$10,000 matching challenge grant from Pacific Gas & Electric Co. The committee targeted \$50,000 in initial pledges, according to a report to the City Council from Marketing Manager Scott Corey.

To secure long-term funding for the fireworks festival, the committee is asking if Suisun City wants to do what Dixon did last year -- approve selling Safe and Sane fireworks.

The Dixon City Council ended a 40-year-old ban on fireworks in April 2011 and approved a two-year pilot program to help local nonprofits by allowing eight of them to sell Safe and Sane fireworks.

The eight locations raked in \$215,500 last July. The American Legion Post 208's Auxiliary, which ran the busiest stand, collected \$52,000 in sales. It was also estimated that only 25 percent of the customers

at that stand came from Dixon.

Next year, the Dixon council will examine the ordinance to see how much money was raised by non-profit groups, how much illegal fireworks were confiscated in Dixon and if the Sane and Sane fireworks contributed to any fires.

Suisun City's version of allowing fireworks sales by nonprofit groups is expected to include a surcharge or percentage of the sales to be turned over to the city.

Corey's report anticipates that Suisun City could support four fireworks stand locations and would gross about \$200,000. Just how many of those sales would be made to residents from adjacent Fairfield, which bans fireworks in city limits, is not known.

Reach Ian Thompson at 427-6976 or [ithompson@dailyrepublic.net](mailto:ithompson@dailyrepublic.net).



Robinson Kuntz/Daily Republic

Nikki Zhang plays the Guzheng Saturday at the Chinese New Year Celebration at the Ulatis Cultural Center.

## Crowd celebrates Chinese New Year

By DAVID DEBOLT  
DAILY REPUBLIC

VACAVILLE — A sold-out crowd packed the Ulatis Cultural Center Saturday for the Chinese American Association of Solano County's 16th annual Chinese New Year.

About 400 people came out to celebrate the Year of the Dragon.

C.C. Yin, a CAASC founder, said the dragon, a symbol of power and strength, will breathe fire into the tepid economy.

"This will be a good year," he said.

The festivities began with the lion dance by Eastern Ways Martial Arts of Vacaville. Each of the sequined and feathered lion costumes were worn by two people, one maneuvering the head and the other hunched over as the back. The lions circled the tables to the beat of drums.

CAASC President Gaylord Gee instructed people to pull out money to feed to the lions.

"This will bring you good luck in the upcoming year," Gee said.

Congressman John Gar-

amendi, D-Walnut Grove, dressed in jeans and a dark blazer, stood up, walked over to the green lion and dropped a bill in the mouth. He then gave a thumbs up. Garamendi, a Democrat, is up for re-election this year and is facing six Republicans in the June 5 primary.

Later in the evening, CAASC honored 15 college-bound students from Solano County schools with scholarships.

Jessica Fadrigo, a senior at Vanden High School, earned a \$500 scholarship. Fadrigo, 17, has applied to UC Davis, UC Berkeley and California Polytechnic State University and plans to go into nursing with the hope of becoming a health care director.

Arielle Mendieta, 17, a senior at Vacaville High, also wants to become a nurse. She also earned a scholarship and plans to attend Sacramento State by way of Solano Community College. Mendieta is choosing nursing because it is steady work, and, no matter where she lives, there will likely be a hospital nearby.

"You'll always going to need nurses," she said.



Robinson Kuntz/Daily Republic

Salvation Army Capt. Jonathan Harvey gives a tour of the new KROC Center Saturday, with Robert Reid, left, Jocelyn

Fernandez and their daughter Tehya Fernandez. The walls, support beams and roof are up, but work still remains.

## Locals tour KROC Center

By DAVID DEBOLT  
DAILY REPUBLIC

SUISUN CITY — Annie Jack could not contain her excitement Saturday. She and others were given up-close tours of the nearly completed Salvation Army KROC Center, the state-of-the-art facility at the former YMCA site on Pintail Drive and Wigdon Way.

Jack moved back to Suisun City from Texas and had planned on joining the YMCA, but it closed a few months later. The KROC Center partially opens May 25, roughly four years after the YMCA shut down. Jack hopes to get a job at the center and has signed up as a volunteer.

"I love the fact that it's a Christian organization, conducive to families," Jack said.

KROC Center workers shuttled tourists from the

Heritage Shopping Center to the KROC Center in a limousine and SUVs borrowed from the Mercedes-Benz dealership in Fairfield. The walls, support beams and roof are up, but there is still work to be done at the site, so residents had to use their imaginations Saturday. Displayed were renderings of what each room will look like when furnished.

Salvation Army Capt. Jonathan Harvey, during one tour, said he wants the center to become what the industry calls a "third place." The first place is the home, the second place is work or school, and the third place for residents, he hopes, is the KROC Center.

"From scrapbooking to Zumba, it's all under one roof," Harvey said.

When completed, the center will have a fitness room, lounge with fireplace, cafe and kitchen and rock-

climbing wall along with locker rooms, multi-purpose rooms, classrooms and a 300-seat theater for church services and concert recitals. Remnants of the YMCA are the gym and swimming pool. Each are undergoing renovations.

Citing City Councilman Mike Segala, Harvey said the center is within walking distance of 75 percent of Suisun City's population.

"I can" walk it, said Marva Simmons.

Simmons is excited about the price. At \$69 a month per family, Simmons said it is cheaper than her current gym -- and larger, too. The KROC Center is also starting a scholarship program to raise money to cover membership fees for people who cannot afford to pay them.

"There is no comparison," Simmons said.

Reach David DeBolt at 427-6935 or [ddebolt@dailyrepublic.net](mailto:ddebolt@dailyrepublic.net).

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