

What's happening

Today-Saturday

■ The **Sacramento Regional Competition for FIRST Robotics** returns to the UC Davis ARC Pavilion for two days of competition with the winning team advancing to the World Championships in April. More than 50 will be competing in the 2017 challenge, FIRST Steamworks. Competitions will take place on Friday and Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Come cheer on Davis' own former world champ and perennial power Citrus Circuits as well as teams from Winters and Woodland high schools. Admission is free. Visit www.firstinspires.org for more information.

Saturday

■ It's **Family Movie Time** at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St. in Davis, beginning at 2 p.m. All children and their families are welcome to view a family-friendly movie (rated G or PG). For the movie title, call 530-757-5593.

Monday

■ Chess players of all ages and experience are invited to attend the **Davis Spring Break Chess Camp**. Taught by U.S. Chess Federation life master John Langreck, the program will cover chess rules, basic strategy, tactics, tips and game analysis, and will include lots of time for questions and fun activities. The camp will run from 1 to 4 p.m. March 27-30 in the New Harmony Community Room, 3030 Cowell Blvd. in Davis. Call 916-996-1428 or email john.langreck@gmail.com to register.

Tuesday, April 18

■ Celebrate **Dia de los Niños/Dia de los Libros** at the South Davis Montgomery Library, 1441 Danbury St., from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Children will receive a free book and participate in various activities, watch a special performance and listen to a story time program. No reservations are required and the event is free. Learn more at <http://www.yolocountylibrary.org>.

Thursday, April 27

■ High school juniors and their parents are invited to learn more about the college application process during **Davis High School's annual College Night**, which takes place from 7 to 9 p.m. at the Brunelle Performance Hall, 315 W. 14th St.

Saturday, April 29

■ Celebrate **Dia de los Niños/Dia de los Libros** at the Stephens Branch Library, 315 E. 14th St., from 10 a.m. to noon. Children will receive a free book and participate in various activities, watch a special performance and listen to a story time program. No reservations are required and the event is free. Learn more at <http://www.yolocountylibrary.org>.



COURTESY PHOTO

When February weather proved too stormy for biking to school, Davis students walked instead, and their efforts resulted in the school district saving 14 polar bears during the Polar Pedal Challenge.

February's Polar Pedal challenge lived up to its name

Special to The Enterprise

The Polar Pedal program ran all February long and lived up to its name. Brrrr! Feb. 1 was a dry but chilly 42 degrees and was followed by seven straight days of rain.

In fact, there were 11 days that students pedaled to school in the rain, as the total rainfall for the month reached 8.66 inches. Compare this to February 2016, when the monthly rainfall was a mere 0.84 inches.

Not only was it wet, it was windy as well. Of the 18 school days on which students rode their bikes, only one day was not windy, organizers reported.

Despite the adverse conditions, Davis students braved the weather

and successfully biked, walked, scooted or skipped to school 7,220 times.

Thanks to their efforts, the Davis School District will be "adopting" 14 polar bears!

Each school will receive a polar bear adoption certificate and the book "The Polar Bear" by Jenni Desmond; it was nominated as one of the best science books of 2016 by NPR's "Science Friday." Organizers will continue to add books to the local libraries as part of its ongoing Books on Bikes program.

Parents have been saying that helping polar bears has been great motivation to get their kids on bikes. Other parents have been pleasantly surprised by the fun

that can be had walking to school in the rain — exploring for worms, looking for wayward tree limbs and marveling at the grand scale of the neighborhood puddles.

The bike riders reported that epic puddle splashes and were observed, and students arrived at school wearing huge grins.

Willett Elementary School had a classroom challenge where the class with the most bike/walk/scoot/skateboard trips in February would win a Klondike bar party and naming rights to the polar bear. The winner was Jed Millie's fourth-grade class, with a whopping 76 percent of the students participating.

Polar Bear International even

featured Davis' program on its website: <http://polarbearsinternational.org/news/article-polar-bears-international/polar-pedal-davis-students-help-polar-bears/>.

A polar bear-sized thank you to the parent and volunteer champions who not only encouraged the students to ride but who also were out in the polar conditions bright and early every school morning.

Organizers say the program would not have been possible without generous funding from Kaiser Permanente and they also offer their thanks to graphic designer Tara Parker-Essig, a UC Davis student who volunteered her time to create the goal chart, banners, stickers and pledges.



COURTESY PHOTO

Students honored for robotics work

By ANNE TERNUS-BELLAMY
Enterprise staff writer

Two Yolo County students — Kelly Ostrom of Davis High School and Christine Pamplona of Pioneer High School — have been honored by the National Center for Women and Informational Technology Northern California.

Ostrom and Pamplona received the 2017 Aspirations in Computing Northern California awards and were named national honorable mention winners.

The awards were presented at a ceremony held at UC Davis honoring winning students and STEM educators from throughout Northern California. The program included a panel where UCD students shared their experiences as women in the computer science department and the group discussed how to better integrate and involve women in STEM fields.

The program is sponsored by the Bank of America.

The NCWIT Award for Aspirations in Computing honors high school girls who are active and interested in computing and technology and

encourages them to pursue their passions. This multi-tiered competition includes recognition at local and national levels.

Ostrom is the head robot programmer and vice captain on the Citrus Circuits robotics team in Davis; she operates the robot during the team's competitions. A senior at Davis High, Ostrom has been active on the team since eighth grade and creates program architecture, writes complex autonomous robotic sequences and designs state space controllers for elevators and shooter mechanisms.

Pamplona, a senior at Pioneer High School in Woodland, is captain of the Woodland robotics team Digital Minds. She was one of the founding members of the team and has been the lead robot programmer since 2014.

Pamplona led her team to victory at the 2015 Sacramento Regional FIRST Robotics Competition and has been working hard since then to keep improving the team.

Citrus Circuits helped start Digital Minds in 2014 and since then has continued to provide additional mentorship and technical support for the team.



COURTESY PHOTO

Christine Pamplona, left, a senior at Pioneer High School, and Kelly Ostrom, a senior at Davis High School, are this year's recipients of the National Center for Women and Information Technology Northern California Aspirations in Computing awards.

One-stop shopping for college

Ah, finally, spring is in the air. And you know what springtime brings? Right, college fairs! Here's the who, what, where, when and why on college fairs.

First things first — the why. Well, there are many reasons why it makes sense to attend college fairs. Here are just a few:

■ **Cost-effective.** Since college fairs are free to attend, they are a cost-effective way to meet college reps. No need for air travel, lodging, car rental, etc.

■ **One-stop shopping.** Fairs are probably the most efficient way to compare and contrast different colleges in a short amount of time to help sort through the options.

■ **Most up-to-date information.** Because you can ask questions to people who work for the college and get the answers back in real time, you get the "inside scoop," so to speak. What are the new majors? What summer programs are available?

■ **Demonstrated interest.** You can sign up to receive information, make a good impression on the reps and open a future line of communication ... always helpful come application time.

■ **Dry run.** Allows practice for interviews.

Who: Many different organizations put on college fairs. Some of the most well-known fairs are through the National Association for College Admission Counseling, Western Association for College Admission Counseling and Colleges that Change Lives.

What: College fairs bring together college admissions representatives from many different colleges and universities under one roof to meet with prospective students and families to answer questions about their schools.



JENNIFER BORENSTEIN
COLLEGE CORNER

Each school usually will have a table or booth with promotional materials and handouts. There are also pens, pencils, banners, etc., to collect.

College fairs may have up to several hundred colleges or just a dozen, depending on the fair. Some fairs are organized around a type of college or university, such as historically black colleges or Christian schools. Others have a programmatic theme such as STEM.

Most college fairs require students to register. Registering online in advance will save time at the fair since, once you are registered, you'll have a bar code for the fair that you can scan at the different college tables. Instead of spending time handwriting all of your information at the college tables where you want to learn more, you'll just show your bar code and they'll have all of the information they need.

Some fairs do not require registration (for example the CTCL Fair); when this is the case, make sure to sign up on each colleges' information sheet during the fair to receive information or join the listserv.

Where and when: Here is information on just a few of the college fairs that are near us, but check these websites for more information: www.nacacfairs.org and www.wacac.org/college-fairs/wacac-fairs.

■ **Sacramento STEM Fair Career and College Expo:** Saturday, March 25, from noon to 5 p.m. at American River College, 4700 College Oak Drive.

■ **Western Association for College Admission Counseling:** Sunday, April 30, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Sacramento State, 6000 J St.

■ **Colleges that Change Lives:** Tuesday, Aug. 1, 7 p.m. at Marin Center, Exhibit Hall, 10 Avenue of the Flags, San Rafael.

And, no "College Corner" column would be complete without the tips section. So here you go:

■ **Be prepared.** Learn which colleges will be in attendance and select the ones you want to make sure to visit. Be forewarned it can be overwhelming depending on the size of the crowd, so prioritize your visits.

■ **Do your homework.** Figure out your favorite schools ahead of time and prepare questions to ask. Please try to think of questions that show you know something about the school.

■ **Stay organized.** Gather information and take notes about what you learn. It may be helpful come application time to have jotted down your first impressions about why you like that school.

■ **Follow up.** Ask reps for their cards. Send emails with follow-up questions or just to say thank you for their time and that you are excited about what you learned.

With all of this in mind, I hope you fare well during this fair season!

— Jennifer Borenstein is an independent college adviser in Davis and owner of The Right College For You. Her column is published monthly. Reach her at jenniferborenstein@therightcollegeforyou.org, or visit www.therightcollegeforyou.org