

Redding is ready for its close-up

By Fran Miller



Sundial Bridge

Photos Fran Miller

When planning a summer weekend getaway, Lamorindans likely look to Santa Cruz, Carmel, or Tahoe. But Redding? The largest town in California's northernmost region is not traditionally top-of-mind when plotting a little family R&R.

It should be.

Boasting a multitude of recreational activities, Redding (about a 3-hour drive from the East Bay) is ripe for discovery. A new hotel, miles of bike trails, and a nature preserve are just a few of the attractions. Travelers who've never been will be surprised with the town's offerings, and those who've visited in the past will find that recent revitalizations make the area nearly unrecognizable.

Key to the town's reinvigoration is the new Sheraton Redding at the Sundial Bridge. The first four-star level hotel in the region, it's adjacent to its namesake – Redding's most iconic landmark. The LEED-certified property offers comfy guest rooms with floor-to-ceiling windows that overlook Turtle Bay Exploration Park, which boasts 300 acres of botanical gardens, an interactive museum, and a

forestry and wildlife center filled with 64 different animal species. Sheraton's resort-style accommodations include a heated swimming pool and hot tub, a fitness center, and creative family amenities such as tents and sleeping bags which staff will set up in-room upon request. S'mores kits can be purchased at the front desk for use at the outdoor fire pit, and fishing poles are also available for those hoping to reel one in on the nearby Sacramento River. On Fridays and Saturdays, animal ambassadors from Turtle Bay greet guests in the hotel lobby.

Steps from the Sheraton is the spectacular Sundial Bridge, a sky-soaring beacon that spans the Sacramento River. The bridge – designed by renowned Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava – is one of the world's largest working sundials and is a day and night communal gathering spot for all ages. Steel, glass, and granite combine to create the stunning structure that alone is worth a visit.

The bridge connects the north and south sides of Turtle Bay, where visitors can visit Spike the porcupine, Whisper the bobcat, and Sweet Pea the skunk. During summer months, wander through the Butterfly House and observe Monarchs emerging from their cocoons. Deck yourself in colorful lorikeets at The Parrot Playhouse, an interactive aviary where guests become a parrot perch. Turtle Bay's 200-acre arboretum is a peaceful sanctuary of native trees and plants. A one-mile walking loop trail surrounds the arboretum and directly links to the paved, multipurpose, 11-mile Sacramento River Trail, just one of many trails in the area. Bring your bikes to take advantage of the more than 200 miles of paved and unpaved trails, all within a 15-mile radius of Redding's city center. You'll pedal past waterfalls, flowing rivers, mountains and forests.

Take an excursion to nearby Whiskeytown Lake, Mount Shasta, Lassen Volcanic National Park, Shasta Dam, or Lake Shasta Caverns, a geological wonder featuring multicolored columns, tall stone draperies, stalactites and stalagmites, glistening crystals, and limestone and marble formations, accessed via scenic boat rides across Lake Shasta.

The Sheraton's own Mosaic Restaurant, named for the white mosaic tiles lining the Sundial Bridge (which can be



Lake Shasta Caverns

viewed from the restaurant's back patio), is a popular Italian-inspired destination that's become a favored gathering spot for both locals and tourists. Chef James Vereb serves-up tasty items such as artisan wood-fired pizzas, shareable appetizers, and hearty salads and pastas, all made with local, farm fresh ingredients. Mosaic also boasts a vibrant bar scene; enjoy craft beers, creatively crafted cocktails, and curated local wines.

For more information, visit:

<http://www.sheratonredding.com>

<https://www.turtlebay.org>

<http://lakeshastacaverns.com>

<http://www.sheratonredding.com/redding-restaurants>

Family Focus

Help your child choose friends wisely

By Margie Ryerson, MFT

By the time they are in third or fourth grade, many children are already discerning in their selection of friends. Your child may pick someone to be a friend based on interests or personality or popularity or a variety of other criteria. Sometimes it's simply a matter of another child reaching out to your child in friendship. Friendships can be quite uncomplicated at this stage – until they're not.

What gets in the way for some elementary through middle school children is when someone they thought was a good friend either begins ignoring them to be with others or even worse, disparages them behind their backs. Occasionally the so-called friend says hurtful comments directly, but typically there are passive-aggressive displays of withdrawal that are difficult to decipher.

For example, Lila and Ava were good friends beginning in second grade. Now, in seventh grade, Lila is hanging out more and more with a new group of friends. Ava makes efforts to restore their close relationship, and frequently asks Lila if she's mad at her and to tell her if she's done anything wrong. Lila says everything is fine and she's not mad, but she continues to pursue other friendships while giving little attention to Ava.

No matter how a person chooses to de-escalate a friendship, the result is painful for the one who feels abandoned. I currently see

Ava in my therapy practice, and we spend much time rebuilding her shattered self-confidence and self-esteem. We look at how the fact that Lila is making different choices doesn't mean there is something wrong or missing in Ava. Lila, Ava, and their classmates are in the developmental phase of discovering and forming their identities. This process often means trying on various relationships to see which seem to be a good fit at certain times. If Lila wants to be more popular, she may gravitate to a certain group. If she wants to identify as more artistic, she may turn to a different group.

Sometimes some members of the most popular groups in elementary and middle schools behave meanly to those outside their circle. If your child tries to be a part of such a group and opens up to you about his or her struggles, help them examine their thinking. She or he may want to feel more popular or avoid being a target, so they want to align themselves with those in power. Encourage them to think about how it is important for them to like, respect and trust their friends. As the saying goes, we're known by the company we keep, so ask if they really want to endorse the way the popular group treats others.

It is important to identify what constitutes abusive behavior with your child. Some think this term only describes physical mistreat-

ment or verbally volatile behavior. But definitions include, "to treat in a harmful, injurious or offensive way," and "to speak insultingly, harshly and unjustly to or about; to revile; to malign." When you help your children recognize the signs of abusive behavior, they will be better able to make decisions about their relationships.

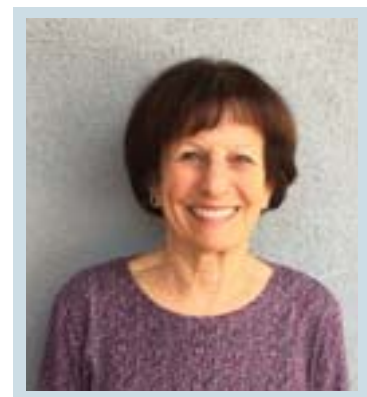
As your child's role model, if you are able to assess your own friendships that don't seem to be working well, you will be better able to help him or her pay attention to their feelings. If your child has negative feelings about a friend, she or he has choices. Your child can make peace with the friend's limitations, can try to directly address any problems, or can reduce the amount of contact your child has with the friend. The child doesn't need to disengage completely – or "ghost" a former friend – unless the relationship becomes abusive. It is always preferable to remain polite and cordial to people, but this doesn't mean your child needs to maintain an unhealthy friendship. Show him or her and tell your child how there are many other people to get to know and to befriend.

Often boys (and some girls) guard their feelings and don't share them easily, so it is especially important to look for signs that your child may be experiencing difficulty with peer relationships. When a child wants to maintain his or her

privacy and independence regarding friendships, and perhaps other matters as well, it is more difficult for parents to chime in. As many parents who have tried to steer their child know, the more you try to advise, the more resistance you will get. The best approach is a supportive one (even if you have to stifle yourself), where you let your child know that you trust his or her judgment and you're available if your child ever wants to talk. Think long-term instead of short-term. You want to pave the way for your child to eventually feel comfortable in sharing with you.

However, if you see your child showing signs of distress, such as withdrawing from family and friends, cutting, substance use, extreme mood instability, psychosomatic complaints or failure to engage in schoolwork, it is important to be proactive and not wait for him or her to come to you. You need to point out the signs you see, reassure your child that he or she is loved and accepted, and ask to please let you know what your child is experiencing. If your child is reluctant to talk with you or another trusted family member or friend, ask if they would be willing to talk to a therapist. You may need to insist that he or she be evaluated for depression. Too often, and sometimes tragically, when children keep painful feelings to themselves and don't express them verbally, they may act them out in a physical manner.

For parents with a child who doesn't share easily or welcome input, it can help to occasionally mention your own experiences – casually, so that it doesn't seem like you're trying to make a point. The goal is for your child not to feel that your attention is on him or her; rather that you are just trying to share some aspects of yourself with no reciprocity in mind. Over time, if you continue to respect your child's boundaries, most children and young adults will appreciate your efforts and be willing to be more communicative with you.



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'Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat' opens Aug. 3 at Woodminster

Submitted by Kathy Kahn



Romar DeClaro plays Joseph in this year's production. Photo provided

Producers Associates continues the 52nd season of the Woodminster Summer Musicals with "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat." The Biblical saga of Joseph and his coat of many colors comes to life Aug. 3-12 at Woodminster Amphitheater in Oakland's Joaquin Miller Park, located on Joaquin Miller Road at upper Sanborn Drive. Told entirely through song, the musical follows Joseph, favorite son of Jacob, as he overcomes many challenges through his honesty and good character.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2018, "Joseph" continues

to be one of the most enduring shows of all time. The musical follows Joseph after he's been sold into slavery by his brothers and is full of catchy songs in a variety of styles from French ballad, "Those Canaan Days," to country, "One More Angel in Heaven," along with the unforgettable classics "Any Dream Will Do" and "Close Every Door."

"Joseph" was the first Lloyd Webber and Rice musical to be performed publicly, first as a choir school concert piece in 1968, and then as a full-fledged production in 1970, and it won the Tony Award for best musical

and best original score in 1982.

Says director Joel Schlader, "This show is ... fun and fast and lively, a perfect show for families, and our Kids Come Free program and K75 (discounted kids ticket) pricing make an evening at the theater affordable for parents who want to bring their kids and their kids' friends."

Music direction is by Mark Dietrich and choreography by Marissa Joy Ganz. Woodminster shows are performed with live orchestras, and musicians are members of Musicians Local No. 6.

Tickets are available by phone, at (510) 531-9597, online at www.woodminster.com, or in person at Woodminster Amphitheater 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. weekends, or at the box office two hours before any performance. Performances are Aug. 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11, and 12, all at 8 p.m. in this open-air performance facility.

Closing out the 52nd season of Woodminster Summer Musicals, Lin-Manuel Miranda and Quiara Alegria Hudes' "In The Heights" will be performed Aug. 31-Sept. 9.

For more information about the 2018 season or the history of the organization, visit www.woodminster.com.