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Truck vs. hydrant; flooding on North St.

By Jessica Szalay
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At 4,500 gallons a minute, the fire hydrant on North Street near Whitson Avenue was shooting water into the air for almost half an hour.

At around 11:30 a.m. on March 21, the Selma Fire Department responded to a call that a Budweiser truck and

trailer ran over the three foot fire hydrant, with water reaching higher than the 50 foot power lines nearby. The entire street was flooded, causing water to rush down a nearby alley and into some businesses such as A-Okay Body Shop and S&J Automotive on West Front Street.

"It was running down here like a river," said Kevin Chadwick, owner of

A-Okay Body Shop, who saw about four inches of water come into his shop, office and bathroom. "I was running around trying to save stuff."

Along with the fire department's engine was an ambulance and the police department. They closed off the street to foot traffic and cars due to the flooding that was causing a hazard.

"The water was a concern because of

the flooding and the businesses, but I was more concerned with the power lines," said Selma Fire Department Division Chief Mike Kain.

While PG&E was not needed since the power lines were not affected, Cal Water was called at the same time as the emergency vehicles to shut off the valves leading up to the hydrant. Because of the pressure and the height

of the water spout, Tim Erickson of Cal Water had to close a couple valves down the street from the damaged hydrant first. This relieved some pressure so he could shut off the damaged hydrant.

"We have unlimited possibilities there," Erickson said of that particular hydrant, since four water lines feed

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Governor's tour includes brief stopover in Selma

By Jessica Szalay
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Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger snuck his way into Selma last Wednesday, meeting with local officials regarding freeze relief, water supply and infrastructure in the Central Valley.

Schwarzenegger was at the Selma City Hall for about an hour discussing local concerns with mayors and city council members. Some of the issues included additional freeze relief aid, above ground water storage through Senate Bill 59 and the impact of Proposition 1B on the Central Valley.

"It's very important to understand what's going on with the local cities," Schwarzenegger said after his meeting. "We had a wonderful meeting."

Among the dignitaries in attendance at the impromptu meeting with the governor were Selma Mayor Don Tow, Selma Mayor Pro-Tem Dennis Lujan, Selma City Manager D-B Heusser, Fresno City Councilmember Henry T. Perea, Orange Cove Mayor Victor Lopez and Parlier Mayor Armando Lopez, among others.

"It was an important opportunity for us to air our concerns," said Perea.

Besides discussing the \$1 billion construction slated for Highway 99, another \$1 billion as been set aside to address state pollution problems as a part of Proposition 1B. However, according to Tow, Southern California cities have already laid claim to the entire \$1 billion.

"They want it all for their ports, and we want our fair share of it," said Tow, who attended a Council of Fresno County Governments (COG) meeting in Sacramento last week where the COG asked for \$250 million of the air quality funds. "The governor said to keep writing letters, sending e-mails and to keep the pressure on."

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Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger visited Selma last Wednesday to talk with local mayors and elected officials such as Selma's Mayor Don Tow and Mayor Pro-Tem Dennis Lujan. The group discussed the future of California's infrastructure in regards to water storage, pollution funds and the continuation of freeze relief aid. "I think it was a terrific meeting," said Schwarzenegger afterwards as he stood outside city hall.

Skate park design wins state award

By Jessica Szalay
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Thanks to the enterprising design efforts of the skaters of Selma, the Selma skate park was just presented an award of achievement by the California Park and Recreation Society.

Honored in the category of facility design for a skate park or bicycle facility, the Selma skate park has been a popular place since its grand opening last June. That's in part due to the large amount of community support it took to have the facility built, especially from the skaters of the city.

City officials and designers from Site Design Inc., who created the park design, consulted with the kids of Selma who offered up ideas for rails, ledges, bowls, banks and ramps, as well as where those elements should be placed. After four blueprints were drawn up, the skaters could go online to vote and make comments on which skate park they wanted in their hometown.

"Probably 99 percent were for this park," said Recreation and Community Services Director Mikal Kirchner of the current design. "This



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The Selma skate park and Berry Park just won an award of achievement by the California Park and Recreation Society for its inventive design. Local skaters had a say in the designing of the skate park.

one was the overwhelming favorite."

And thanks to the skaters' input, this overwhelming choice has become a favorite of the California Park and Recreation Society (CPRS). It received 293 nominations in a variety of cate-

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Local woman dies in two-car traffic crash

The Fresno office of the California Highway Patrol reports that a 63-year-old Selma woman died at the scene of a two-car accident at Dinuba Avenue and Golden State Boulevard on Friday night.

Sylvia C. Marin died after the 11:33 p.m. accident.

Investigators said that Marin was traveling westbound on Dinuba Avenue in a 2000 Toyota, and stopped for the posted stop sign at Golden State Blvd. The other driver, John T. Davis, 61, of Hanford, was traveling northbound on Golden State in a 1999 Volvo, approaching the intersection of Dinuba Avenue at approximately 45

miles per hour.

Marin apparently failed to see Davis's vehicle and entered the intersection directly in front of his vehicle. The front of Davis's vehicle hit the driver's side door of Marin's vehicle. Both automobiles traveled off the roadway and into the center divider before coming to rest.

Davis was uninjured.

Selma police officers were the first on the scene.

Two Selma ambulances responded to the accident, but did not transport anyone.

Selma's Volunteers in Policing were used for traffic control.

Sutter going to state DI

By Bettina Adragna
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It's much more than an after-school activity. It's an exercise in imagination.

One of the Sutter Middle School Destination Imagination teams is going on to the state competition in Long Beach, Calif. But the process of making it to state has been just as rewarding as the trip to Southern California will be on March 31.

"I think we'll have good memories in the future of DI stuff," said eighth-grader Michelle Sayaseng.

With the support of each other, their parents and coach Steve Downs, the Fowler team tied for second at the regional competition at Buchanan High School in Fresno.

The group performed a play and built a structure made of glue and playing cards that weighed 72.4 grams and held 53 pounds.

"DI is an excellent program for

teaching problem-solving skills and teaching teamwork," said Downs. "The problem-solving thing is probably one of the best things about the program."

Destination Imagination is unique because team members create solutions to their "challenges" entirely on their own. They even sign a "Declaration of Independence" stating that they received no outside help.

"It's all student-driven," said Downs. "It's not the adults."

The students see DI as a chance to not only apply their analytical skills to technical problems, but to express themselves creatively.

"Being in DI is like... being an Imagineer," said eighth-grader Conlan Corona. "The name really explains it, doing a challenge to express ourselves."

The students also grow closer to each other and to their teacher, and

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Dozens of SUSD students headed to National History Day

By Bettina Adragna
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More than a dozen students from Selma Unified School District are going on to the state National History Day competition, to be held in Long Beach from April 26-29.

They qualifying students are: Anna Ridgway from Roosevelt Elementary School; Noah Sa, Conley Scott and Cameron Hinton from Jackson Elementary School; Breanne Curwick, Rana Salama and Steven Darling from Selma High School; and Christian Garcia and Alex Harrington from Lincoln Middle School.

Trent Viau, Celeste Mendoza and Colton Pierce from Jackson Elementary are runners-up and could serve as alternates at the state compe-

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Pictured are the National History Day winners and some of the alternates from Selma Unified School District. Back row, left to right: Beth Taylor, Christian Garcia, Alex Harrington, Celeste Mendoza, Rana Salama, Steven Darling and Breanne Curwick. Front row, left to right: Trent Viau, Noah Sa, Conley Scott, Colton Pierce, Cameron Hinton and Anna Ridgway.



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