

Flash Fiction contest winners inspired by frogs

ELENA CLIMENT WINS PAST PRESIDENT'S AWARD FOR 'THE FROG'

By **STAFF**

The fall Flash Fiction contest, with the theme "Frogs" was held on Sept. 28. Over the next few weeks, this paper will run the winning entries. Below is the Past President's award winner. To read all the winners, go to: fremontculturalartscouncil.org.

The Frog

It was about midmorning when the group of friends met at the golf course over Pine Mountain Lake. It was a dream made real for the retired men living up there.

The seniors took their sense of humor along with the heavy golf clubs hanging on their backs. They had a great time joking and teasing each other: They knew the curative power of "laughter;" they used it as a therapy.

Greg was one of the golfers, but because of his resemblance to a frog, his dear friends called him Kermit for the Sesame Stree puppet frog. "Kermit" and my in-law John had been very close friends for years.

On one of those mornings when the group of happy friends was about to strike the first ball, something dramatic changed their mood forever; the witty and funny Kermit collapsed on the green, just in front of his friends.

A massive heart attack: He died on the way to the hospital. John was destroyed; he was not able to come back to the golf course for a long time, with depression.

A few weeks after the incident was John Baker's birthday. He was resting on his back porch in front of the golf course, playing with his memories, when a tiny green frog jumped over the porch's hand rail in front of him. They never had a visit of this kind of amphibian on the porch before! How could

this frog jump up there? John and wife Jaquie tried to push it down several times, but the stubborn jumper was coming back to the spot.

holiday jokes and riddles. Send

them to a friend and ask them to

send back 10 of their favorites!

John was perplexed; he became quiet and serious, and in a soft voice he started talking to the frog. What was he doing? Could John accept and recognize his dear friend Kermit's "spirit" inside of that shiny little frog? The words of affection from the friend seemed to work in controlling the jumper. He carefully put it down that time. The strange frog went away and disappeared under the bushes.

When Jaquie came out to offer him a drink, she looked for the frog, wondering.

John did not answer, but sipped his drink, smiling.

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No "magic" was involved in the story, but whatever kind of communication happened between the man and the frog nobody knows. After the frog episode, John was a new man: He was relaxed, and free of anxiety.

I wonder: Do we have our own frog hiding somewhere? Could it be around us, but we don't recognize it? Let us think about that...

One man's backyard turned into a decades-long community tradition

The upcoming holiday festivities for Crippsmas Place will span from Dec. 7 to 25 with events and special performances. "It's something to draw people from all over to the Tri-City area for them to enjoy the festivities," Sharp said. There will be special appearances from Santa Claus from 6pm to 8pm, nightly from Dec. 8 to 10 and

to 10 and
December 15 to 17,
accompanied by Mrs. Claus
from 6:30pm to 8:30pm
on Dec. 23. Visitors can
also enjoy carolers from
choirs, Girl Scout troops and
other vocal assemblies from
6:00pm to 9:30pm from
Dec.7 to 25 at the end of
Wellington Place's cul-desac. The Tapestry band will
perform live music at 6pm
on Dec. 22.

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People from across the
Bay Area visit Crippsmas
Place to see their festive
decorations and wooden
displays that feature
popular characters such as
Mickey Mouse,
Donald Duck, Ninja Turtles,
Superman, Batman and

Spider-Man. With the help of their sponsors Fremont Bank and other local businesses that fund the materials for decorations, they create new displays to keep up with the latest pop culture trends—such as Barbie, a major hit in 2023. "We're always trying to stay relevant with the latest of what young people would enjoy," Sharp said.

In anticipation of this year's Crippsmas Place event, Sharp said, "We hope to continue with the tradition of being relevant to the community, seeing people coming out, enjoying what we do and helping our charities with them."

Crippsmas Place Nightly, Saturday, Dec. 7 -Saturday, Dec. 28 Nicolet Ave. from Asquith Place to Perkins St. www.crippsmasplace.org/ media SANTA & MUSIC SCHEDULE

Girl scouts handing out ornament kits by Santa Sun, Dec. 8: 6pm - 8pm

Santa Claus

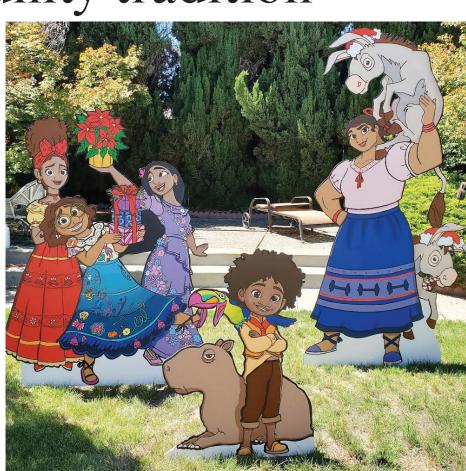
Mon, Dec. 9: 6pm - 8pm Tue, Dec. 10: 6pm - 8pm Fri, Dec. 13: 6:30pm

Oliveira Glee Club and Families (30 to 40 performers) Sun, Dec. 15: 6pm - 8pm

Santa Claus Mon, Dec. 16: 6pm - 8pm Tue, Dec. 17: 6pm - 8pm Tue, Dec. 17: 6:30pm

Oliveira Glee Club and Families (30 to 40 performers) Fri, Dec. 20: 7pm

Alta Performing Arts (~15 to 20 performers) Sun, Dec. 22: 6pm Tapestry (4 performers) Sun, Dec. 22: Santa Claus 6pm - 8pm Mon, Dec. 23: Santa & Mrs Claus 6:30pm -8:30pm



Some familiar characters take on a Christmas twist. Photo courtesy of Thomas Sharp