



Find your  
**WEEKEND**  
recreation

INSIDE

Birdwatching gaining  
in popularity as  
hunting declines

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49ers rally  
against  
Butte

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# APPEAL-DEMOCRAT

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WORLD AROUND  
**You**

STATE



Arnold, Clinton  
push for fitness

The former Mr. Universe and a former commander in chief joined forces to combat childhood obesity. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and former President Bill Clinton visited a Southern California school recognized for its rigorous physical fitness program. The unlikely couple looked on as students did circuit training.

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NATION

More rest time  
for GIs blocked

Democrats' efforts to challenge President Bush's Iraq policies were dealt a demoralizing blow in the Senate after they failed to scrape together enough support to guarantee troops more time at home. The 56-44 vote – four short of the 60 needed to advance.

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The Appeal-Democrat's latest online poll asks: What's the best part of the fall season? To vote, go to our site, [appealdemocrat.com](http://appealdemocrat.com).

Our previous poll asked: What should be done to provide more Californians with health insurance?

- Tax employers: 1%
- Tax hospitals and doctors: 5%
- Limit profits for health insurance companies: 37%
- All of the above: 16%
- None of the above. More government isn't the answer: 42%

Total Votes: 106



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DAILY Find us on the World Wide Web: [www.appealdemocrat.com](http://www.appealdemocrat.com)

NORTH YUBA EYED FOR EQUESTRIAN-BASED COMMUNITY



Norm Dyer, project manager of the proposed Quail Valley Ranch community, looks over land in the Yuba foothills Wednesday that would be part of the development. The developer is trying to win community support to build an equestrian-centered residential development.

Brian Drake/Appeal-Democrat

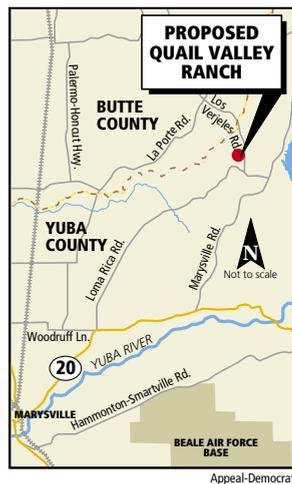
## Hills residences proposed

Project sited on 1,500 acres near Loma Rica

By Andrea Koskey  
Appeal-Democrat

Standing atop an 860-foot-high hill in north Yuba County, just before reaching the foothills, are breathtaking views of the valley to west and the Sierra Nevada to the east. This particular hillside is among 1,500 acres under consideration for a new development – Quail Valley Ranch. Developers want to incorporate 300 clustered homes and a conservation easement of more than 1,000 acres around an equestrian lifestyle. “The goal is to have the community fit into the natural settings,” said Quail Valley Ranch project coordinator Christine

Kohn. “The target group would be empty-nesters looking to buy a second home or retire in a rural setting. They don’t have to own a horse or like horses to live here. The goal is to keep it natural.” With South Honcut Creek and the Butte County line as a northern boundary, the property is west of Los Verjeles Road, northeast of Loma Rica. The 1,500 acres are covered with rolling hills, oak trees and roaming wildlife. Kohn said studies done by the developer, Foster Enterprises of San Francisco, show there is a market for equestrian living, and every effort will be done to preserve open space in conjunction with Yuba County’s



Turn to **QUAIL VALLEY / A6**

## They aren't blowing smoke

Proponents of no-smoking policy at Gauche Park speak at hearing

By John Dickey  
Appeal-Democrat

Supporters of a proposal to clear the air at Gauche Park from tobacco smoke gave plenty of reasons why the city should designate its first nonsmoking park. But no one spoke up for smoking Wednesday at the public hearing in the Yuba City City Council chambers. The Parks and Recreation Commission heard from several people who want the park to become entirely nonsmoking and tobacco-free, extending a state law that bans lighting up near playgrounds. The city will unveil more than \$16 million in improvements at the park and its new aquatic facility on Oct. 4, including a competition pool, amphitheater and two smaller pools at C Street and Wilbur Avenue.

Turn to **GAUCHE / A5**

## Trash fees will drop in Yuba

By Andrea Koskey  
Appeal-Democrat

For the first time since a new rate schedule was implemented six years ago, residential garbage users in unincorporated Yuba County will see a slight drop in their trash bills. The decrease comes as a result of a drop in operating costs at the Yuba-Sutter Disposal Inc. Ponderosa Transfer Station in the foothills as well as an increase in community recycling efforts. “I’m proud to be up here and offer a rate reduction,” YSDI General Manager Dave Vaughn

Turn to **BACKHOE / A6**

Turn to **GARBAGE / A5**

## Backhoe stolen from Robbins farm

By Rob Young  
Appeal-Democrat

It’s big. It’s yellow. It’s worth \$100,000. And it disappeared overnight without a trace. Whoever stole the practically new Caterpillar backhoe Monday night from Robbins-area farmers John and Lance Matteoli is keeping it hidden – or it’s

already in Mexico, the most common destination for large pieces of stolen farm equipment, said Sutter County Undersheriff J. Paul Parker. Lance Matteoli said he and his brother are accustomed to annually losing \$20,000 or more worth of equipment and supplies to

thieves – well motors, copper wire from pumps, irrigation pipes, diesel fuel. Last year, their truck was stolen and found burned in the Sutter Bypass. “But this thing kind of shocked me,” Matteoli said about their most expensive loss yet. The model 430E was one of the biggest backhoes Caterpillar

makes and had all the extras that farmers appreciate, he said. The backhoe was being used to drain rice fields during. Now they’ll have to rent one and pay a large deductible on their insurance claim for the stolen machine. And their premium

## CHP officer returning to work on ‘bionic legs’

After losing limbs in accident, he’s passed all tests for field duty

By Don Thompson  
Associated Press

WEST SACRAMENTO – A California Highway Patrol officer who lost both legs in a traffic accident last year is returning to work on “bionic legs” after proving his fitness with tests such as running the 100-yard dash in 20 seconds. “I probably still could outrun four or five guys in my office, even on these legs,” Officer Mike Rimmel joked Wednesday after demonstrating his new prostheses at the CHP Academy in West Sacramento. Rimmel, 47, is the first double amputee ever to be cleared for field duty after passing the CHP 14 difficult “critical tasks” test using what officers call his “bionic legs,” said CHP spokesman Tom Marshall. Besides sprinting the length of a football field, new cadets and veterans returning from injuries must run 550 meters in two minutes, climb a steep hill, drag a weight, and complete several agility tests.

Rimmel spent more than a year in rehabilitation and training before passing the last test and getting his doctor’s clearance Aug. 10, exactly 19 months after he lost his legs. He quietly returned to work four days later. CHP brass recruited him to give a motivational talk to cadets Wednesday and invited the media. Rimmel was completing a traffic accident investigation just after dusk on Jan. 10, 2006, alongside Highway 49 in the Sierra foothills near his hometown of Sonora. A confused 80-year-old driver struck him at 45 mph, sending him flying 23 feet over a tow truck. He lost his left leg above the knee, his right leg below the knee. Tow truck drivers used tourniquets to keep him alive until he could be flown by helicopter to a hospital. Three days later, Rimmel came out of sedation after a near constant series of surgeries. He almost immediately began telling the CHP officers crowd-



Associated Press

California Highway Patrol Officer Michael Rimmel changes his prostheses after running on the track during a visit to the CHP Academy in West Sacramento on Wednesday. Rimmel, who lost both legs in a traffic accident, is returning to work using what fellow officers call “bionic legs” after proving his fitness in tests like running 100 yards in 20 seconds.

Turn to **OFFICER / A5**