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# The Modesto Bee



## County reconsiders sale of tax-delinquent parcels

BY KEN CARLSON  
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Stanislaus County supervisors postponed a decision Tuesday on holding a sale of tax-delinquent properties. The decision came at the urging of Diablo Grande community

leaders who said the auction would dash hopes of resolving a water crisis.

Mark Kovich, president of the Western Hills Water District, said the property sale would eliminate any chances for future development at the resort community on the county's West Side. The district is

in the middle of negotiations to secure an affordable water source for the 600 homes at Diablo Grande, as well as water for developing 1,600 additional homes there.

More than 90 of the 173 parcels scheduled for a county tax sale Feb. 23 are under the name of Western Hills Water

District, which is responsible for water, sewer and other services at Diablo Grande. The total tax debt on the 173 parcels is \$5.1 million.

Western Hills is in negotiations with the Kern County Water Agency, which threat-

**SEE PARCELS, 5A**

## Legal clinic to assist people with clearing criminal records

BY KEN CARLSON  
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A Clean the Slate Clinic for county residents with criminal records will be held Friday in Modesto.

The Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office, Probation Department and Public Defender's Office are teaming with California Rural Legal Assistance (CRLA) to hold the free legal clinic to assist with reducing prior felony convictions, expunging criminal cases and sealing arrest records.

The Clean Slate program will help former inmates to reenter the community by identifying criminal records that are eligible for expungement. The clinic will be Friday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at The Hub, a new resource center operated by the Public Defender's Office at 707 14th St.

The services aim to remove barriers for people who have served

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PHOTO COURTESY OF ANITA CHOWDHARY

The final votes are in, and Modesto Bee readers have crowned Moose Stanislaus County's cutest pup.

## 'Friends with everyone': Meet Stanislaus County's cutest dog

BY ANGELA RODRIGUEZ  
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The final votes are in, and Modesto Bee readers have crowned Stanislaus County's cutest pup.

Moose, a lovable golden retriever-poodle mix from Modesto, wagged his way to the top spot in The Bee's pet photo contest.

He beat out a pack of adorable competitors, earning 53% of more than 9,000 votes.

Owner Anita Chowdhary said

she was "very excited" to hear her beloved Moose had won.

"A big shout-out to Prescott Road Runners, family and friends, who voted for him, especially Esme, Jeanine, Nathan, Nayeli and Alexa," Chowdhary said. "Thank you all for loving and appreciating Moose as much as we do."

Here's what to know about Stanislaus County's cutest dog:

### HOW DID STANISLAUS COUNTY'S CUTEST DOG COME INTO YOUR LIFE?

While on a Christmas trip to

Seattle in 2018, Chowdhary said her family visited her husband's cousin, who had two goldendoodles.

"Our children had been wanting a dog for many years, and their dad kept saying no," she said. "After hanging out with his cousin's fur-babies, he fell in love with them and consented to the kids having a dog."

When they got home, Chowdhary said, her son got right to work researching goldendoodles.

"He researched, emailed

and finally came to his dad with the information," she said.

On March 9, 2019, the family drove three hours to Oroville to meet their new pet. A few weeks later, on March 23, they brought Moose home.

During their trip to Seattle, the family also visited Vancouver, where moose are "very prevalent and endearing," she said.

"My daughter decided to name him Moose," Chowdh-

**SEE DOG, 4A**

## Stanislaus County's cutest cat is 'spunky' and 'friendly': Meet pet contest winner

BY ANGELA RODRIGUEZ  
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The final votes are in, and Modesto Bee readers have chosen Stanislaus County's most purr-fect kitty.

JoJo, a lynx point Siamese from Modesto, claimed the top

spot in The Bee's pet photo contest.

She beat out a litter of adorable competitors, earning 67% of more than 1,000 votes.

Owner Apryl Hughes said she was "so excited" to hear her beloved JoJo had won.

"She is an amazing cat, and I want others to know how in-

credible she is," Hughes said.

Here's what to know about Stanislaus County's cutest cat:

### HOW DID STANISLAUS COUNTY'S CUTEST CAT COME INTO YOUR LIFE?

Hughes adopted JoJo from ASTRO Foundation Inc. in Oakdale in September 2021.

The nonprofit rescues and rehomes cats and dogs from Riverbank, Oakdale and Escalon.

"I looked and applied for multiple cats before being able to adopt JoJo," Hughes said.

After nearly giving up, she decided to try one more time — and that's when she found JoJo.

"She is named after my grandma," Hughes said. "She passed away in 2020, and her

**SEE CAT, 4A**



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