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Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller
Oildorado Grand Parade Grand Marshal Virgie Beard in her office at GPS with executive board member Eric Cooper.



Photo by Doug Keeler/Midway Driller
Virgie Beard in front of photo of General Production's first rig.

Virgie Beard named grand marshal for Oildorado Parade

One of the longest traditions of Taft Oildorado is the Grand Parade, which will be held on Saturday, October 16, 2021. A key feature of the parade is selection of the Grand Marshal.

"Our Executive Board unanimously selected Virgie Beard of General Production Service to serve as the Grand Marshal of the 2021 Oildorado Parade," Shannon Miller, Oildorado President said. "Our community has benefitted greatly from GPS, and the involvement of Virgie and Charlie Beard and their employees to Oildorado throughout the years made the selection an easy one."

Virgie moved to Taft from Washington state at the age of five with her parents and four siblings, as her father sought an opportunity to work in the oilfields. She has been a member of Soroptimist International of Taft and the Assembly Dance Club. Virgie was involved in organizing and hosting the inaugural Taft Gala supporting the Taft District Chamber of Commerce. Over the years, she has hosted many other fundraising events benefitting the

community of Taft and its residents. GPS, which founded by her late husband, Charlie, in 1967, started with one rig and three employees. Virgie is the CEO and the company has grown to more than 600 employees providing well servicing, construction, and special services to the petroleum industry. Virgie and Charlie were married 42 years until his passing in 2016. Together, they have 4 daughters, 12 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Virgie's contributions to our com-

munity have not gone unnoticed and Oildorado is excited to have her as our 2021 Oildorado Parade Grand Marshal. Entries are now being accepted. There is no cost to participate and entries may be submitted online at taftoildorado.com/registration. Deadline to submit a parade entry is October 1, 2021. Parade chairpersons are Chuck and Kristy Brown. For more information on entries, please contact them at oildoradoparade@gmail.com.

Teachers, students at TUHS impacted by COVID

By Doug Keeler
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Taft Union High School has been impacted by COVID-19-19 in the opening days of the school year. The school has had to cancel a football game and postpone Back to School Night. Supt. Jason Hodgson said "a small number of students and staff" have tested positive for COVID-19-19 since school started on Aug. 18.

He said TUHS had 95 percent attendance on Monday. But enough varsity football players were exposed that TUHS had to cancel the season-opening game against Kern Valley High just a few hours before kickoff. The school has also postponed a back-to-school night that was scheduled for Monday. And enough teachers have been impacted that some classes have been told to meet in the school auditorium where classes are supervised by administrators.

Late Sunday, the school announced on its Facebook page that the back-to-school night had been postponed until Sept. 20. Hodgson didn't want to release the number of students and teachers who have tested positive or been exposed. Most, he said, were still at school in modified quarantine. The California Department of Public Health has guidelines that allow some people exposed to COVID-19 to

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Energy industry upgrades TC's STEM classrooms

Students entering or returning to the Taft College campus this fall will be pleased to find newly revitalized STEM classrooms, and an upgraded STEM lab, thanks to the support of Chevron and Aera Energy. While the campus was empty due to COVID-19, the Taft College team decided it was the perfect time to renovate all the STEM classrooms and G-building classrooms. With the financial support of both Chevron and Aera Energy, Taft College was

also able to significantly upgrade its STEM lab's audiovisual equipment and integrated room control system. "Chevron is a long-time member of the Taft community, with many of our employees and their families residing in the community," says Patty Canessa, Corporate Affairs Manager for Chevron's San Joaquin Valley Business Unit. "As a leader in the energy industry, we are focused on supporting the STEM education of the next generation of inno-

vators. Chevron is proud to join with Aera Energy and the Taft College Foundation in making this investment. We are glad to be able to give back to a community that is a great neighbor, partner, and friend to us and our industry." "Like our energy, we believe that education helps power great to-days and better tomorrows," said Jamie Swetalla, Public Affairs Coordinator for Aera Energy. "Aera believes we

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McKittrick school hit by COVID

A student, staff member or someone else close to the McKittrick School has been infected with COVID-19, and the school has contacted people, including students, who came in contact with the infected person. Superintendent Barry Koerner advised parents of the COVID-19 case in

a letter Tuesday afternoon. "We want to make you aware that we were notified at an individual in our school community has tested positive for COVID-19," Koerner wrote. He told parent that staff and students who may have come in contact with the infected

person have already been notified and given quarantine instructions. Koerner said the district worked with the Kern County Health Department for contact tracing to determine who had been exposed. He said there was little else he could reveal due to privacy policies.

Driller to produce Oildorado program

The Taft Midway Driller will be producing the commemorative program for the 2021 Taft Oildorado Program. The Driller will work with the Oildorado executive board to produce the 64-page souvenir

containing photos and bios of the queen candidates, a history and fun facts about the Oildorado celebration, a schedule of events and more. To reserve your advertising spot in the pro-

gram, contact Alicia Bishop at abishop@taftmidwaydriller.com, Meghan Clark at driller-sales@taftmidwaydriller.com, or John Watkins at jwsales1003@gmail.com.



STARTING THURSDAY, JULY 1, 2021
West Side Family Health Care will open at
7:00 am Monday - Friday
Holiday and weekend hours will remain 10:00 am - 9:00 pm
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For information regarding classes, prices, registration deadlines, ages etc. please call 661.765.6677

