

MARK CROSSE — THE FRESNO BEE

Tod Garfoot almost looks like he's delivering mail in the Land of Oz while making his rounds Wednesday in Fresno. Actually, his view is of flower beds in a field of ice plant in front of a house near East Thomas and North Thorne avenues. Today's weather forecast offers more spring conditions with a high of 78.

bank accounts to pay all but \$20,384.

Council Member Sam Armentrout said he has asked state officials to help the city out from its tire deluge. He expects to know by Friday if the state can chip in from its estimated \$1 million waste cleanup reserve.

"We talked a little bit about the Crippen fire," Armentrout said.

By collecting the waste tires, Madera probably averted the smoke pollution that settled over Fresno earlier this year, Armentrout said. He referred to the Crippen dump in southwest Fresno, where a smoldering waste pile

Squawk over Squigmund

Woman's lawsuit claims company's product led to the death of her parrot.

BY JERRY BIER
THE FRESNO BEE

Squigmund was a pretty bright guy. He was known for his vocabulary, his singing ability and he was always a bit of a flirt toward women.

At one time, Squigmund was the star of a show in Las Vegas.

Not bad, for a parrot.

But Squigmund died in the prime of his life, felled, his owner says, by a product used to protect her newly purchased couch.

Diana Sehna of Merced filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Fresno for the loss of her Mexican Redhead Parrot.

Sehna's complaint, which seeks a minimum of \$250,000, accuses Hansen's Furniture Store of Winton and Stainsafe Inc., of Palm Beach Gardens, Fla., of product liability and wrongful death in the loss of her longtime pet.

Randy Hansen, the owner of the



Merced's Diana Sehna holds a photo of Squigmund, her pet parrot of 16 years who died after Sehna used a product to protect her new couch. Sehna has sued Hansen's Furniture Store and Stainsafe Inc., for \$250,000 after being told, she says, that the fumes from the couch product were harmless to birds. Sehna said Squigmund's death has been "devastating."

DEBBIE NODA —
MODESTO BEE

store who is also named as a defendant, said "I don't have any comment" when asked about the lawsuit. A lawyer for Stainsafe also declined comment, saying he had not seen a copy of the complaint.

Squigmund's death was "devastating," Sehna said in an interview. "I still mourn him every day."

She had owned the 20-year-old parrot for 16 years, Sehna said, and Please see **PARROT**, Page B2

Fresno after h kills po

By
TH

An unidentified hit by a car Wednesday across a west-reported.

Detective Brian stop after the colutes later to the

Thomas Quev suspicion of vehi and-run driving

Witnesses sai West when he light and hit the

The victim, v had the green l she was hit, wi

She was kno landed in the r was declared d

The accident happened in fi the southeast

Hance said a as it reported the license pl

its dinner fund-raiser for Nuestra Casa Home from 2 to 6 p.m. Sunday at Knights of Columbus Hall, 2540 E. Floradora Ave. in Fresno.

There will be a silent auction from 3 to 5 p.m. Dinner donation is \$5 per person. Details: (559) 268-6480.

Group asks for donations

The Boys2Men-Girls2Women Foundation is seeking donations of vacant facilities, residential property, office space and vehicles.

The foundation is a local nonprofit organization that mentors and tutors "at-risk" children in an effort to decrease teen pregnancy and high school dropout rates.

Due to lack of space and funding, the foundation is unable to admit additional children into the program.

For details, call (559) 225-9300 or (559) 348-9650; or visit the Web site at www.boys2mengirls2women.org.

Parrot: Bird once headlined in Vegas

Continued from Page B1

he was "just fantastic, he was my company, my 'little guy.'"

Mexican Redhead Parrots, also known as a Green Cheek Amazon, have normal life spans of 60 to 100 years, Sehna said, so Squigmund was still a young bird.

At one time, before she owned him, Squigmund headlined a bird show in Las Vegas, Sehna said.

"He could sing 'I Left My Heart in San Francisco,' he could count, he could distinguish a few colors," she said.

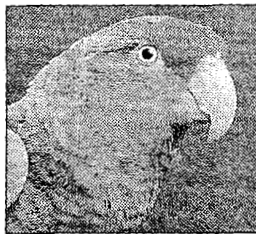
The lawsuit, filed by lawyer Christine L. Garcia of The Animal Law Office in San Francisco, said Sehna asked several times at the furniture store about the safety of the product used to protect her couch and was told it was "completely harmless to birds."

Garcia said that the parrot became violently ill shortly after the couch was delivered to Sehna's home in early April of last year and "had trouble breathing and had diarrhea."

The bird died a few hours after arrival at a veterinarian's office, according to the lawsuit. A necropsy performed by a veterinarian and pathologist concluded the "lungs appeared hemorrhagic" along with other problems "consistent with inhalation toxicity."

Sehna said she hopes that her lawsuit will result in warning labels being placed on products that are potentially harmful to animals, and she wants to set up a foundation in Squigmund's name to help achieve that goal.

► The reporter can be reached at jbier@fresnobee.com or 441-6484.



MODESTO BEE

Squigmund, who could sing, died at the age of 20.

ered some of the the city wants to replace its gas- and diesel-powered fleet with natural gas or electric vehicles.

The city's fleet of 425 cars and trucks has 10 zero- and low-emission vehicles, including a half-ton pickup truck. This week, the City Council approved a plan that will have the city look for the air-friendly vehicles when vehicles need to be replaced.

The fleet changeover won't happen quickly; instead, it will be phased in, and when newer vehicles are purchased, the city will look first to the lower-emissions vehicles.

"We do have poor air quality, and we need to do our part," said Russ Webber, Visalia's public works director.

Webber said trucks that run on compressed natural gas cost about \$20,000 more than their diesel or gas counter-

eral ozone standards.

Other Valley cities and counties, along with other public agencies and private businesses such as Harris Farms, United Parcel Service and Pacific Gas & Electric Co., have converted some fleets to cleaner fuel-burning vehicles.

"People look to cities as leaders," Webber said. "We have to do that. That's part of our job as a city. We need to lead."

Council Member Don Landers asked Webber how much of an impact converting the whole fleet would have on the Valley's air, pointing out that the city is a small part of a nine-county area.

"Probably not much," Webber said. "But we have to start."

Public safety vehicles, such as those used by police and fire departments,

NEWS BRIEFS

GOVERNMENT

Fresno woman appointed to state ag department

Gov. Davis has appointed a Fresno woman to a high-ranking post in the California Department of Food and Agriculture.

The Democratic governor Wednesday announced the appointment of Elaine Trevino as deputy secretary of CDFA, a promotion from her post as an assistant secretary in the agency.

Trevino, 31, previously worked for the Merced County Economic Development Corp., serving as its president and chief executive officer. She also worked for the Fresno County Economic Development Corp. and was a vice president for Wells Fargo Bank in its Central California region.

Trevino will oversee a range of programs run by the agency and will report to CDFA Secretary Bill Lyons. Her salary will be \$98,412.

POLICE

Police search for five girls suspected of stabbing teen

Police are looking for five teenage girls who they said stabbed another girl earlier this week in southeast Porterville.

Officers said that at 3:30 p.m. Monday, five girls attacked a 13-year-old girl on the 400 block of South E Street. During the attack, one of the girls used a knife to stab the victim, whose name was not made public because she is a juvenile.

The teen was taken to Sierra View

District Hospital, where she was treated for minor injuries and released.

Anyone with information about the case is asked to call Detective Powers at (559) 782-7411 or (559) 782-7400.

3 children taken from home in which police find drugs

Tulare County Child Protective Services took three Woodlake children into custody after police said they were found in a drug-infested home.

Officers said they received a tip that led them to check on the welfare of three children in an apartment at 386 Crestwood Pl.

Police went to the apartment Monday and reported finding the tenant, Anna Garcia, 30, and her three children under the influence of drugs. The 1-year-old boy, 8-year-old girl and 13-year-old girl were also in the apartment.

Police said they seized drug paraphernalia and a small amount of methamphetamine. Among those arrested were Garcia; Rafael, 25; and Miguel Lopez, 35.

Garcia was arrested on suspicion of maintaining a residence for use of controlled substances, possession of drug paraphernalia being under the influence of Mazon and Lopez were arrested on drug-related charges.

7 injured in vehicle crash

Five adults and two children injured Wednesday in a two-car accident at Road 140 and A near Tulare.