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# Citrus Heights Messenger

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## The End of an Era

*Council Honors Retiring Members Jeannie Bruins and Steve Miller*



The Citrus Heights City Council honored the long-time service of retiring Councilmembers Jeannie Bruins, who served for 20 years, and Steve Miller, who served for 17 years. Left to right: New Mayor Tim Schaefer, Councilmember Porsche Middleton, retiring Councilmember Jeannie Bruins, retiring Councilmember Steve Miller, new Vice Mayor Bret Daniels, and City Manager Ashley Feeney. Photo courtesy of the City of Citrus Heights

**Story by Shaunna Boyd**

**CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG)** - It was an emotional scene at the December 8 City Council meeting as they honored retiring Councilmembers Jeannie Bruins and Steve Miller.

Councilmember Bruins is the longest serving councilmember, first

joining the Council on December 11, 2002. She served as mayor in 2006, 2011, 2016, and 2019. Prior to serving on the Council, Bruins was a member of the Citrus Heights Incorporation Project and was instrumental in the fight for cityhood. Major projects approved during her 20 years on the Council include

construction of the Citrus Heights Children and Youth Center, the new City Hall, and the Citrus Heights Community Center; rehabilitation of Sayonara Drive; the formation of the Citrus Heights Police Department; development of the Citrus Heights Community Garden; revitalization of

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## RSV, Flu and COVID-19 Rates Are Rising

**Sacramento County News Release**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - This winter, there is growing concern about the convergence of respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), flu and COVID-19, a phenomenon some have termed a “triple threat” or “triple-demic.” All three viruses cause respiratory illness with the potential to lead to serious illness or death. Local hospitals are already feeling the impacts of these illnesses, but there are actions we can all take to decrease the likelihood of getting or spreading these viruses.

RSV and flu normally surge each winter. This year, California has experienced more cases earlier in the season and more severe illness, especially among younger (under 5 years old) and older (65+ years old) residents. After several months of declining COVID-19 rates, Sacramento County’s rates have increased steadily over the last month. The county’s CDC COVID-19 Community Level has increased from Low to Medium, which means that everyone should consider wearing a mask in indoor public places, according to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) Guidance for Face Coverings. Masks are also recommended in crowded indoor public places for vulnerable people or those with household or social contact with vulnerable people.

The increase in cases also activates mask requirements in certain settings, as set by CDPH. Homeless shelters, emergency shelters, cooling and heating centers, and state and local correctional facilities and detention centers are required by CDPH to reinstate universal masking requirements for staff and residents. Masks remain required in healthcare settings, long-term care settings and adult and senior care facilities.

Dr. Olivia Kasirye, Sacramento County Public Health Officer, reminds residents, “As we gather this winter with family and friends, it is important to remember the tools we have to stay healthy and safe. Updated COVID-19 boosters and flu shots help provide essential protection. Consider wearing a mask in indoor public places and wash your hands frequently. If you’re sick, whether it’s with COVID-19 or something else, stay home so you don’t spread it to others.” ★

## A Soldier Comes Home for Christmas



Army Reservist and Citrus Heights police officer Patrick McCoy (center) surprised daughters Maddy (14) and Olivia with his return from a two-year Saudi deployment. Wife Kelly and friends organized the homecoming, hosted by St John the Evangelist Catholic School in Carmichael. Photo by Susan Maxwell Skinner

**By Patrick Larenas and Susan Maxwell Skinner**

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Amid children’s Christmas songs and cheering supporters, a father came home for Christmas last week in Carmichael.

St John the Evangelist Catholic School was the scene of Reservist Major

Patrick McCoy’s reunion with his daughters, after a two-year deployment in Saudi Arabia. In preparation, staff ushered hundreds of students to the school frontage and got them singing while they awaited “a special visitor.” Santa Claus was rumored to be on his way, but student sisters Maddy and Olivia McCoy twiggled to

the VIP’s identity when police vehicles arrived, lights flashing.

“I saw Citrus Heights Police motorcycles leading police cars,” said Maddy (14). “I just knew it was my dad.” (Major McCoy is a 20-year law enforcement veteran, serving CHPD as a motorcycle officer.) Maddy considers his dedication to service

and leadership an inspiration. “My whole life, I’ve looked up to my dad,” she explained.

As their 6ft 5in hero stepped from a CHPD squad car, the sisters screamed and rushed for hard, tearful hugs. Their mom, Kelly, soon joined the huddle. Citrus Heights and Folsom City cops

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**Read More at [www.CitrusHeightsMessenger.com](http://www.CitrusHeightsMessenger.com)**

# Another Covid Winter?

By Katy Grimes,  
California Globe

It appears some politicians and members of the media are trying to foist another Covid winter on America. In California the pandemic never really ended. California Gov. Gavin Newsom still clings to his autocratic emergency powers under his March 4, 2020 Covid State of Emergency order, so why not perpetrate another crisis?

Hysterical and misleading headlines from mainstream media tell the story:

SacBee: California hospital ICU's see 20% jump in COVID-19 patients since last week, state data show. "As of Wednesday, there were 346 patients in hospital intensive care units, accounting for roughly 13% of available beds," the Sac Bee health care writer reports, but she omits what the 346 ICU patients are hospitalized for.

A quick look at Sacramento County Public health Covid statistics (below) shows about 12-13 Covid "cases" a day are reported, 13 Covid patients in the ICU and 13 recent deaths. It took 3 minutes to look this up.

Here is another headline from the SacBee health reporter: California's 'triple-demic' of viruses is on the rise. Here's how to care for a sick loved one.

The advice in this 605 word article is useful to anyone who hasn't ever had the flu: drink plenty of fluids, take Acetaminophen and Ibuprofen for the fever, and get plenty of rest.

What is this "triple-demic" of viruses? COVID-19, the flu and respiratory syncytial virus.

"According to CDC data, the hospitalization rate in all kids for the week of Nov. 12 was twice as high as any other flu season on record," ABC 7 reported. "The American Academy of Pediatrics



Politicians and Media are Trying to Foist Another Covid Winter on America. Photo courtesy of Yuri Arcurs Dreamstime.com

and the Children's Hospital Association say cases of the flu, COVID-19, and RSV are overwhelming the health system."

However a look at the CDC Covid dashboard shows hospitalizations are static. Of the 331.9 million Americans, there are 19,480 hospitalizations:

Here's part of the motive: "Declaration of a national emergency would give providers additional funding as well as more flexibility from regulations to deal with what they call a 'crisis.'"

The COVID-19 pandemic is over and has been over except for political motivations – and government funding.

Taking a page from Dr. Anthony Fauci who warned families to get Covid tested ahead of Thanksgiving gatherings, California Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said, "I think there's ways that we can really improve how we do it, rather than spend our time talking about whether we should or shouldn't," referring to family gatherings.

The Los Angeles Times reporters took the hysteria one step further:

"In California, however, coronavirus-positive hospitalizations have been increasing. As of Wednesday, there were 2,782 coronavirus-positive patients in hospitals, up 84% from the autumn low of 1,514 on Oct. 24."

There are 40 million residents in California, and 2,782 are Covid-positive in the hospital?

"Nationally, hundreds of Americans are still dying every day of COVID-19, which remains a leading cause of death. And there are signs that transmission is once again on the upswing," the LAT reports.

But the CDC reports, COVID-19 was the third leading cause of death after heart disease and cancer.

For perspective, on any given day, approximately 740 Californians die of all causes, totaling about 270,000 California deaths annually.

According to the California Department of Public Health, as of

November 21, 2022, there are zero deaths from Covid.

But at the top of their chart, the CDPH shows 96,701 total Covid deaths. This is the cumulative total since February 1, 2020, through November 22, 2022, according to the CDPH's data.

The state of California wants people to believe that Covid patients are dropping like flies at 12 per day. But that is the average over the entire almost 3-year Covid pandemic since February 2020.

It's feeling like Groundhog Day with public health officials and media breathlessly talking about Covid "cases," rather than focusing on the vulnerable groups of people.

Throughout the pandemic, there was too heavy of a focus on an uptick in cases, as Stanford's Dr. Scott Atlas reported, "especially in places where governors either have reinstated or have further enforced restrictions. When we see this focus on more cases, it doesn't really matter how many cases – it only matters who gets the cases. We know that the infection-fatality rate for people under 70 is 0.04

percent – that's less than or equal to the seasonal flu," he said.

A physician told the Globe that because doctors even can have a difficult time getting good data through their hospitals, trends are far more important numbers than raw numbers to study, as it gives more context.

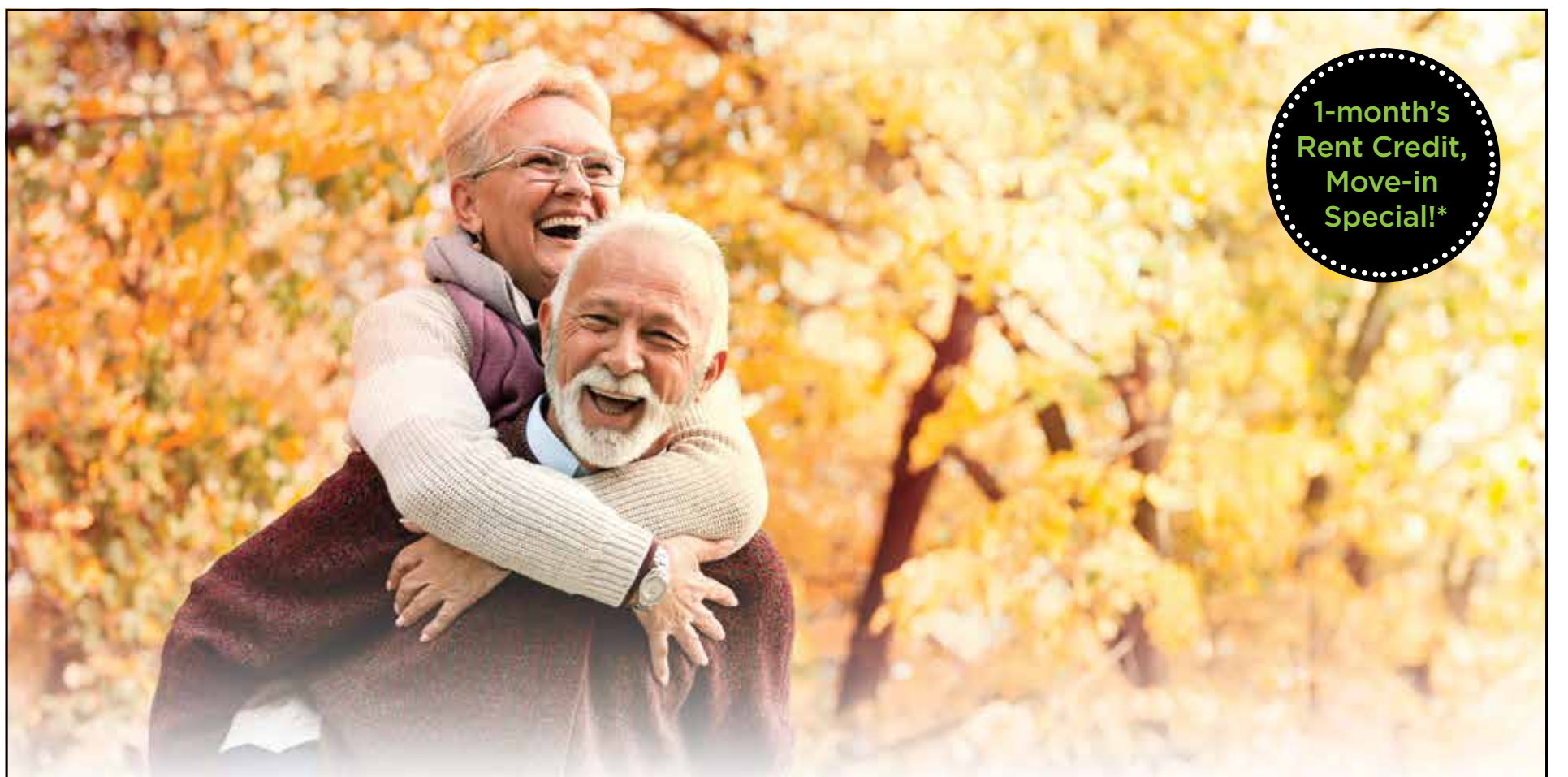
For the average American, faith in government authority was significantly eroded because of how Covid was handled, managed and grossly mismanaged. It's still going on with politicians and the State of California inundating the people with advertisements pushing Covid vaccines and masks by the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). These ads are everywhere – radio, television, online ads, social media, iHeart radio, Sirius radio – even radio hosts are being paid to read the CDPH ads... it's difficult to escape the commercials.

The governor and Legislature are also seeking to punish physicians and surgeons for "unprofessional conduct" for advocating for the potential benefits of early treatment with off-label drugs, or those who dare to ask questions about COVID vaccine safety. Under AB 2098 doctors will be subject to disciplinary actions by the Medical Board of California and the Osteopathic Medical Board of California if they do not adhere to the "approved COVID treatment consensus."

Fortunately, a group of California physicians has filed a complaint and motion for a preliminary injunction in *Hoeg, et al. v. Newsom, et al.*, asking the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of California prevent AB 2098 from going into effect.

Will there be another Covid Groundhog Day? The Californians I talk to say "oh, Hell no."

Katy Grimes, the Editor of the California Globe, is a long-time Investigative Journalist covering the California State Capitol. ★



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# Rejoice this Season!

## Annual Christmas Tree Lighting Matches 25th City Anniversary

Story by Elise Speiss

**CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG)** - A full moon, and comfortable temperatures in the mid-50s brought out hundreds of families from Citrus Heights and beyond to enjoy the 25th Citrus Heights tree lighting celebration on December 6, 2022. Traditionally scheduled for the first Wednesday of the month, the date was moved to Tuesday in respect of the commemoration of Pearl Harbor Day on December 7.

As is tradition, the full Citrus Heights Community Marching Band performed a 30-minute concert getting attendees ready for the evening of fun.

According to Meghan Huber, Economic Development and Community Engagement Director, "well over 1,500 attendees" came out to help celebrate this 25th year of cityhood. Children of all ages, parents, grandparents and others descended upon city hall for an evening of family fun.

Emcee Julie Jingle was back leading the evening and the countdown to Santa's flipping the switch to light the 23-foot-tall redwood tree, signaling the official start to the holiday season. Attendees have enjoyed the tree full of multicolored lights and huge ornaments for seven years since it was planted in front of a new city hall in 2016.

In one of her final official duties as mayor, Mayor Porsche Middleton greeted the crowd, introduced City Manager Ash Feeney and Police Chief Alex Turcotte and spoke of the importance of our neighborhoods working together to better our city.

Again, this year there were many community groups on hand to support all the activities and fun. Volunteers from the Resident Empowerment



Innova became a star at last year's tree lighting when his photo, at 20 weeks old, appeared on the front page of the Citrus Heights Messenger. Innova seen here with parents Steve and Jessica, now a lot larger at 18 months old, loving on Santa at his photo shoot. Photo by Elise Speiss

the festivities. Citrus Heights Kiwanis hosted the kids holiday craft table, and Citrus Heights Purple Pageant beauty queens handed out candy canes to attendees. Tamara Barbu-Brown, Miss Citrus Heights Pageant director and The HeartShine Foundation was present with her princesses and ambassadors.

For the third year Citrus Heights Police Activities League (CHPAL) coordinated the return of decorated Christmas trees with this year's theme, "Miracle on Fountain Square Drive Forest." Two adjoining rooms and a patio were filled with over two dozen trees decorated with love by businesses and community organizations along with community partners from Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce, and the City of Citrus Heights. A perfect photo opportunity!

Trees included the Community Marching Band, Sacramento County Health, G&T Truck Repair, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), Women Escaping a Violent Environment (WEAVE), Sunrise Marketplace, and a new, colorful tree by Raising Cane's Restaurant. Once again even the Grinch snuck in to steal a tree!

Kids also wrote Letters to Santa, made buttons of their personal artwork, and had their faces painted all in Santa's workshop.

No one seemed to mind as long lines were once again out the door for the mini train ride, photos with Santa and viewing of the decorated Christmas trees, both inside city hall. Outside more lines formed for free cookies, cocoa and hot cider. New this year was the brand-new Community Block Party Trailer ready to come to your neighborhood to help you enjoy time with your neighbors! ★

Association of Citrus Heights (REACH), Citrus Heights Neighborhood Associations along with Mesa Verde high school Key Club students served cocoa, cider and cookies. Local

Citrus Heights coffee roaster American River Roasters was also on hand serving their signature coffee. Sacramento Metro Fire brought out a fire engine, and a Community Emergency

Response Team (CERT) truck. Sunrise MarketPlace provided the cast of holiday characters bringing cheer, including the two-story tall Rudolph and the toy soldier keeping watch over



McKinley (9) and Carter (7) are loving the evening full of fun with parents Alexx and Micha and dogs Molli and Kerty. Photo by Elise Speiss



The Grinch couldn't help but to sneak into the celebration. Photo by Elise Speiss



Tamara Barbu-Brown, Miss Citrus Heights Pageant Director and current Mrs. HeartShine USA poses with the mouse on a night full of fun and magic. Photo by Elise Speiss

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# The End of an Era

*Continued from page 1*

Auburn and Sunrise Boulevards; and approval of the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan.

Councilmember Steve Miller first joined the Council in 2005, serving as mayor in 2008, 2013, 2018, and 2021. During his tenure, he helped move forward major projects such as construction of the new City Hall and the Community Center; revitalization of Auburn and Sunrise Boulevards; development of the Mitchell Farms project, the Old Auburn Multiuse Trail, and the Arcade-Cripple Creek Trail; approval of the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan; and he helped introduce SmartRide to Citrus Heights.

Both Bruins and Miller were commended by the Council for their distinguished and devoted service, and their tireless efforts to promote fiscal responsibility, safe and secure neighborhoods, and economic growth.

Councilmember Bret Daniels said the city is “extremely lucky” to have two councilmembers who served for so long and “dedicated so much of their lives” to that service.

Vice Mayor Tim Schaefer said he “learned an incredible amount about what this job is about from both Councilmember Bruins and Councilmember Miller. ... Some pretty amazing things have happened under the leadership of these two, and I am very grateful for that.”

Mayor Porsche Middleton described Bruins as a “guiding star” who “helped us understand what it meant to be a part of this

community and to serve selflessly. I will never be able to thank you enough for all of your guidance and your continued mentorship.” To Miller, Mayor Middleton said, “You have been the levity that I needed on the council.” She said he always reminded her “that we’re doing this for the benefit of the community and that’s where the joy comes from.”

Bill Van Duker spoke during Public Comment to thank Bruins and Miller for their time on the Council. He said it was “the end of an era.”

Bruins said, “20 years went very quickly.” Despite describing herself as an “unwilling candidate” initially, she felt “this was a higher calling.” She said she will treasure the relationships she’s built with councilmembers, staff, and residents: “It’s been a joy.”

Miller said it had been “an honor and privilege and true pleasure to serve Citrus Heights.” And he looks forward to serving the city in a new venue—as a newly elected member of the San Juan Unified School District Board, winning the Area 7 seat in the November 2022 election. He reminded everyone, “If you want to be involved, show up. We’ll find a place for you.”

Council then certified the results of the November 8, 2022, election—swearing in new Councilmembers MariJane Lopez-Taff for District 2 and Jayna Karpinski-Costa for District 4, and the re-elected Porsche Middleton for District 5. After the new members took their seats on the Council, selection of

the new mayor and vice mayor commenced—with Tim Schaefer confirmed as mayor and Bret Daniels as vice mayor.

The new Council considered whether to authorize the City Manager to execute service agreements under the amount of \$200,000 for the development of Infrastructure Financing Strategies and any necessary ancillary engineering work for the Sunrise Tomorrow Project—which will guide redevelopment of the 100-acre Sunrise Mall site.

Economic Development and Community Engagement Director Meghan Huber introduced the item, explaining that although infrastructure such as water, sewer, storm drainage, electricity, and other utilities exist along Sunrise Blvd. and Greenback Lane, the Sunrise Mall site still requires project-specific infrastructure and an associated funding plan to facilitate eventual infill redevelopment.

In August 2022, the City issued a Request For Proposals (RFP) from firms to conduct analysis of various public infrastructure financing scenarios of other economic development tools. They received three responses, and Kosmont Companies was identified as the best qualified to complete the scope of work identified in the Infrastructure Financing Strategies RFP.

It is expected that additional engineering work will be needed to inform the analysis and address phasing scenarios, so staff recommended a total funding allocation of \$200,000 to

ensure complete Infrastructure Financing Strategies that can be successfully implemented. This amount includes a total fixed-fee budget of \$52,500 to Kosmont, with \$147,500 remaining for engineering work. The \$200,000 total would be comprised of \$160,000 awarded to the City from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments’ Green Means Go Grant and \$40,000 allocated from the City’s federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding.

Kosmont would need approximately 120 days to complete the Infrastructure Financing Strategies analysis, which will include comprehensive information on the options, fiscal and economic benefits, and advantages and disadvantages to implementing public infrastructure on the site to facilitate redevelopment. The City will use the analysis as a playbook for how to potentially leverage a variety of financing tools and public funding sources to plan and construct the needed infrastructure.

Vice Mayor Bret Daniels said he would not typically support giving the city manager so much oversight control, but he on this occasion he will support it: “I feel confident that it will be done in a proper way.”

Councilmember Porsche Middleton said the City’s award from the Green Means Go Grant shows that people in the region are excited about the work Citrus Heights is doing and that the Sunrise Tomorrow project will benefit both the City and the

region.

The Council voted unanimously to approve the resolution.

Council then considered whether the City should apply for the Higher Impact Transformative (HIT) Grant Program, which is a competitive funding program through the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). The HIT grant program aims to increase the housing supply, reduce vehicle miles traveled, unlock infill development, support multimodal options, and help facilitate local projects that are working toward those goals.

Community Development Director Casey Kempenaar explained that the HIT grant is targeting projects like Sunrise Tomorrow, which will be high impact and significantly transform land use on the site. The City’s scope of work for the requested grant award would be to support infill development of the site through frontage improvement, laying more utilities, intersection improvements, and development of a transit center.

There is \$30 million available statewide through the HIT grant, with a \$10 million maximum grant allowance. Because it is a competitive grant, staff recommended Council allocate \$1 million from ARPA as matching funds (which will be pro-rated if the City is granted less than \$10 million).

The Council voted unanimously to approve the grant application, which is due by December 31, 2022. ★

## All Long Term Services Will Soon be Available

### Cal Healthcare Compare News Release

#### SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- Beginning in 2023, Californians will get easy access to data on over 19,000 long term care services and facilities in California, thanks to a \$1 million grant from the California Department of Aging for the expansion of the Cal Long Term Care Compare website.

Through this funding, Californians will be able to access Cal Long Term Care Compare to compare quality performance and facility information for over 1,000 nursing homes, as well the following services

and facilities in their area: home health agencies, hospices, adult residential care programs, adult day health centers, long term care hospitals, inpatient rehabilitation facilities and more.

The public website will be updated over a two-year period to include comparative information, such as facility location, number of beds, resident information, services, and resident feedback, for these additional long term care options. In addition, the website will be updated to include several tools designed to guide Californians through the decision-making process, from determining their long-term care needs



Californians will be able to access Cal Long Term Care Compare to compare quality performance and facility information. MPG file photo

to selecting the right provider in their area. As part of this effort, overall website accessibility, such as Spanish translation services and ADA compatibility, will be improved so that even more Californians

can access this vital information.

Cal Long Term Care Compare is a free website that offers an unbiased, one-stop snapshot of how local long term care services and facilities compare

to each other and to statewide averages on a variety of quality metrics.

“Searching for long term care services can be a difficult, anxiety-ridden challenge. We know that many individuals and families struggle with just understanding the difference between the various long term care options – such as nursing homes versus hospice,” said Dr. Bruce Spurlock, Executive Director of Cal Healthcare Compare. “We hope that this free site will lessen the apprehension and provide individuals and families with reliable, objective information and educational material so that they

can be more confident in the decisions they make.”

Created by Cal Healthcare Compare, a multi-stakeholder non-profit, the user-friendly website offers a quick reference about some of the most pressing issues consumers need to weigh before choosing the long term care facility best suited to their unique needs. Funded by California health plans, data analysis informing the posted measures are produced by researchers from the UC Davis Center for Healthcare Policy and Research and the Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing. ★



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# Are They Ready for This?

By Grace Gedy,  
CALMatters.org

A cascade of tech layoffs, the strain of inflation and news of potentially recession-inducing decisions from federal bankers could spell tough economic times ahead.

If more people are laid off, more Californians will turn to unemployment benefits to help them afford the basics while they look for a new job.

It's a process that buckled under the pressures of the pandemic. Residents sometimes waited months for benefits from the state's Employment Development Department, dialing the department hundreds of times. On top of that was a string of fraud scandals: Claims came from 'unemployed' infants and children and according to prosecutors, benefits were paid to tens of thousands of inmates in jail and prison, who are ineligible. The vast majority of the fraud was in temporary, federally funded pandemic aid programs.

The situation has since improved. But how will the system hold up if there's a recession?

Thanks to "the level of testing that the pandemic put us through, we are in such a strong position to weather a typical economic contraction," said Gareth Lacy, communications advisor at the department.

But not everyone is convinced. "There have been some major improvements," said Daniela Urban, executive director of the Center for Workers' Rights. "But I think we're not at the point where if a major crisis hit the unemployment system again, the system would be able to function as it should."

A recession would probably look different than the shocking early months of the pandemic, when claims for new benefits jumped tenfold from February to March of 2020, according to department data. One point of comparison: There were 20 million claims for unemployment benefits during the pandemic and just 3.8 million during the Great Recession, according to Lacy. And during the pandemic, the challenge for the department wasn't just dealing with the surge of claims; it also had to implement new federal aid programs.

The incredible wave of people applying in a matter of weeks was "extreme" says Till von Wachter, an economics professor at UCLA. Normal recessions are more gradual, he said, so the number of claims the department has to process per week would likely be lower. "They just went through trial by fire," von Wachter said. He's optimistic that the department would be able to better deal with a recession.

But, if the agency struggles to keep up with the demands of a recession, it wouldn't be the first time. In the wake of the recession that began in 2008, reports emerged that checks were delayed due to outdated computers, and exasperated workers were met with busy phone lines.

In 2021, state lawmakers required the department to come up with a recession plan; the result is a nearly 90-page report. One change, the report explains, is that the department created a new team tasked with forecasting unemployment benefit-related workloads and figuring how many staff will be needed. The report also details how the department will adapt if the unemployment rate reaches specific levels. California's unemployment rate is currently around 4%, but if, for example,



Is California's beleaguered jobless benefits agency ready for a recession? The headquarters of California's Employment Development Department in Sacramento. The agency says it's made improvements that have made it better equipped to issue employment benefits if the economy goes south. Photo by Rahul Lal, CalMatters

it ticks up to 6%, the plan includes authorizing overtime, reducing vacation slots during peak periods, and limiting the approval of part-time requests. If it reaches 8%, the department would hire additional staff and "deploy retired annuitants." If it reaches 12%, it's time to call in the contractors.

The report says pulling all this off is challenging because federal funding for unemployment benefit administration is

one day, or were sick one day – two things that could disqualify you from receiving benefits – the department would stop sending payments until it determined whether you were still eligible, which could require an interview, said Urban.

"At the height of the pandemic, (the department) was so behind the determinations (that) people were waiting 15, 16, or

contractors during the pandemic, but that ended in 2021.

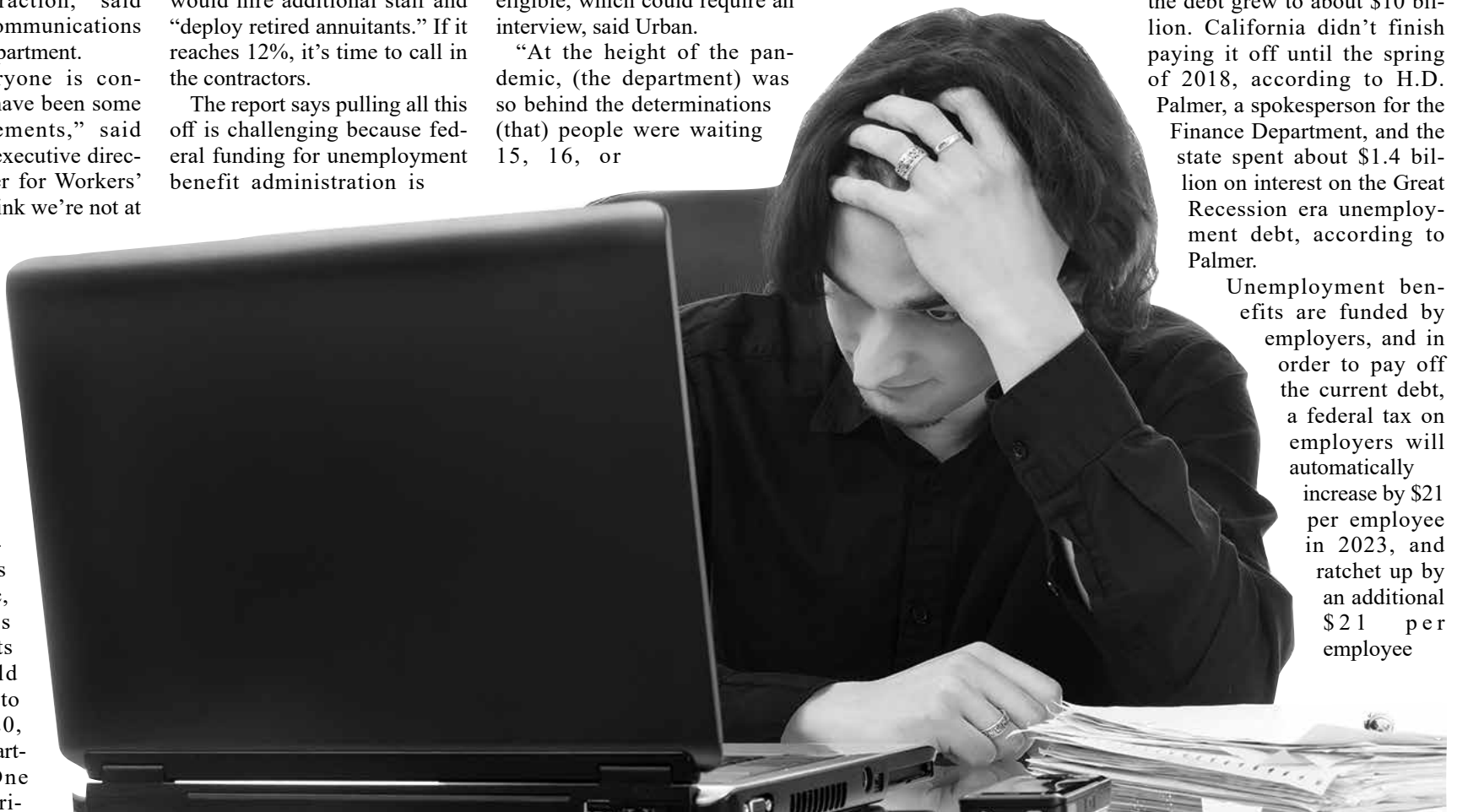
Another large group that will find itself without unemployment benefits if a recession hits is undocumented

California's debt is roughly double the size of the other four combined.

This isn't the first time the system has gone into debt. In the wake of the Great Recession, the debt grew to about \$10 billion. California didn't finish paying it off until the spring of 2018, according to H.D.

Palmer, a spokesperson for the Finance Department, and the state spent about \$1.4 billion on interest on the Great Recession era unemployment debt, according to Palmer.

Unemployment benefits are funded by employers, and in order to pay off the current debt, a federal tax on employers will automatically increase by \$21 per employee in 2023, and ratchet up by an additional \$21 per employee



The incredible wave of people applying in a matter of weeks was "extreme" says Till von Wachter, an economics professor at UCLA. Normal recessions are more gradual, he said, so the number of claims the department has to process per week would likely be lower. "They just went through trial by fire," von Wachter said. Photo courtesy of Florian Schott. Dreamstime.com

tied to an actual — not anticipated — workload.

The agency has made some other changes that could smooth the process of getting benefits.

For Californians whose primary language is not English, expanded multilingual services should make it easier to navigate the system. "Individuals who are not fluent in English face insurmountable barriers to receiving assistance," found a September 2020 'strike team' report. In a February settlement with several advocacy groups, the department agreed to: Provide real-time spoken and signed language services for workers in any language they need; Add dedicated phone lines for Korean, Tagalog and Armenian speakers in addition to existing lines serving Spanish, Mandarin, Cantonese, and Vietnamese speakers; Translate all important unemployment benefits documents in the top 15 non-English languages used in the state by the end of 2022.

A new section of the unemployment benefits website now provides forms and other information translated into eight languages, plus simplified Chinese. The expansion came after a legislative push to add multilingual services for unemployment benefits.

Another recent change addresses what happens if you start getting benefits, and then your eligibility is called into question. In the past if, in the course of filling out forms to prove your ongoing eligibility, you indicate that you worked

more weeks for these determinations," and in the meantime, they weren't receiving any benefits, Urban said. Now, if the agency can't determine whether you're eligible within 14 days, it will keep paying benefits while they sort out the issue, Urban said.

There have been other customer service tweaks over the past couple of years, including adding a call-back feature on call center phone lines so that people don't have to wait on hold, improving the mobile phone version of the website, and enabling claimants to upload documents, rather than physically mail them in, according to the department.

The department has also begun a multi-year modernization effort, dubbed EDDNext, aimed at improving customer service for unemployment benefits, paid family leave, and disability insurance, for which the department received \$136 million this year. So far, the department has begun designing a new online login that will work for unemployment benefits as well as paid family leave and disability insurance, and designing forms that are easier to read and understand.

If there's a recession, some workers can't turn to unemployment benefits. That includes the self-employed, who generally aren't covered by unemployment benefits, said Jenna Gerry, a senior staff attorney at the National Employment Law Project. The federal government created temporary benefits for self-employed workers and

workers — despite a major push from advocates and a bill passed by the Legislature. Under federal law, undocumented workers can't get traditional unemployment benefits, said Gerry.

This year, worker and immigrant advocates pushed for a new pilot program that would have provided unemployment-like benefits to non-citizen workers — an idea Colorado lawmakers embraced this year. But California legislators didn't provide funding for the program in the state budget, said Sasha Feldstein, economic justice policy director for the California Immigrant Policy Center. Curiously, they then passed a bill that laid out how the program would work, but which didn't include funding, and Gov. Gavin Newsom vetoed the bill, citing, in part, the absence of "a dedicated funding source."

Another consequence of a recession could be growing California's already massive unemployment debt.

The state's unemployment insurance trust fund ran out of money during the pandemic, after so many laid-off Californians relied on the benefits. The federal government loaned California billions to keep benefits flowing, and the state still is on the hook to pay back about \$18 billion.

California's debt is uniquely large. While many states had to turn to the feds to pay out benefits during the pandemic, at this point just California, New York, Connecticut, Illinois and the Virgin Islands still have debt.

per year until the loan is repaid. This year state lawmakers also decided to kick in \$250 million in state funds toward the loan principal and \$342.4 million to cover the interest accrued so far.

But if the state goes into a recession, that debt could grow even larger.

"If there is a slowdown in the economy, we are totally and completely unprepared to be able to provide for California workers because of the deficit," said Rob Lapsley, president of the California Business Roundtable, which represents major employers and has advocated for the state to contribute \$10 billion to pay down the loan principal. "There may not be an interest in Congress to bail out California and New York," Lapsley said.

But it would be unprecedented for the federal government to let a state's unemployment system run out of money and stop providing benefits, said Gerry, with the National Employment Law Project. "That has never happened in the history of the unemployment insurance program since it was enacted in 1935."

"I don't think that there's a real threat that no benefits will be available," Gerry said. But having a system that repeatedly goes into debt means that taxpayers get stuck with an avoidable bill. And, Gerry said, "if we had more money in our trust fund, it would be easier to make the case that we could enhance benefits." ★

## Business Wants Voters to Overturn Legislative Decrees



By Dan Walters,  
CALMatters.org

Over the last decade, as Democrats solidified their dominance of the state Capitol, they have repeatedly attempted to change how private businesses operate in California.

Those efforts have taken many specific forms, including mandates on employee benefits, making it easier for unions to organize workers, and regulating — or even prohibiting — products and services offered to customers.

All such efforts were aimed, their legislative and interest group sponsors said, at expanding equity and accountability for the benefit of workers and consumers.

Whatever their motives, as those efforts proliferate, the affected businesses have done what they could to block or at least modify what was happening. Nevertheless, those seeking more governmental regulation of business practices have scored some major victories and in response, affected businesses have increasingly used referenda to erase new laws or initiatives to repeal or modify them.

Those countermeasures have a mixed record of success, to wit:

— In 2014, the Legislature passed and then-Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation to ban single-use plastic bags

for groceries or other consumer goods. An industry referendum to block the new law failed in 2016.

— In 2018, the Legislature eliminated cash bail for criminal defendants. Two years later, the bail bond industry persuaded voters to reject the law.

— In 2019, legislators passed a sweeping law that reduced the ability of businesses to use freelance workers under contract. Rideshare and delivery companies such as Uber and Lyft placed a measure on the 2020 ballot to exempt themselves from the new law. Voters passed it, but it's since been challenged in court.

— In 2020 the Legislature prohibited the sale of flavored tobacco products, saying they encourage young people to smoke. However, the tobacco industry's referendum to block the ban was rejected by voters this year.

Corporate use of the ballot to thwart the Capitol's Democrats is likely to continue.

The fast food industry has submitted signatures for a referendum to overturn the creation of a new agency, dominated by unions and union-friendly appointees, that would set wages and working conditions for fast food employees. If it qualifies, the law would be suspended until voters decide the issue in 2024.

The oil industry is gathering signatures for a referendum to overturn a newly enacted law that would ban new oil wells within 3,200 feet of schools and other public facilities. If it qualifies, it also would go on the 2024 ballot.

Another oil industry

referendum is likely if the Legislature passes Newsom's proposal to impose limits on its profits from gasoline sales and impose financial penalties for exceeding them.

Newsom's original proposal was an excess profits tax, which would not have been subject to referendum because the state constitution declares that tax measures cannot be challenged via referendum.

However, non-tax laws, unless passed with two-thirds margins as "urgency measures," are subject to referendum. If Newsom's limit/penalty law is enacted next year as a non-urgency measure, the industry would have a 90-day window in which to qualify a referendum. The law would be suspended until voters had the final word.

The proliferation of business-sponsored ballot measures to overturn what legislators and the governor decree has angered groups, such as unions and environmental and consumer rights organizations, that support more oversight of business practices. They are pressing the Legislature to make the qualification of ballot measures more difficult.

However, Newsom and his predecessor, Jerry Brown, have opposed such changes for the simple reason that governors sometimes turn to the ballot themselves to enact laws that the Legislature is unwilling to pass.

That's the real scandal.

Dan Walters has been a journalist for nearly 60 years, spending all but a few of those years working for California newspapers. ★

## A Soldier Comes Home for Christmas



US Army Reservist Major Patrick McCoy was rushed and embraced by daughters Olivia (left) and Maddy (center) — and joined by wife Kelly — after a CHPD escort transported him to St John the Evangelist Catholic School on Tuesday, December 6. Photo by Patrick Larena

Continued from page 1

held back tears. Crowds waved flags and cheered the emotional reunion. The soldier/cop appeared shell-shocked. He had asked his wife for no fanfare. "Lo and behold," he laughed as crowds engulfed the schoolyard. "This sure took me by surprise."

It wasn't just any welcome home. As a law enforcement family, the McCoy's have been sorely challenged. Patrick (47) deployed with the US Army Reserves in 2020 but the pandemic delayed his return. Wife Sergeant Kelly McCoy (45) is employed by Suisun Police Department. Their oldest son, Kolton Carter, served the US Navy as a bomb technician.

Family friend Felicia Haecker — a veteran and university professor — helped organize the reunion. "Patrick deserved a hero's welcome," she explained. "His family has endured so much."

In January, Sergeant Kelly attended a DUI accident on Hwy 12. Her squad car

was struck by a speeding vehicle, and she suffered leg and back injuries. After several surgeries, she is yet unable to return to work. "I'm so grateful for St John's School parents," she said. "They volunteered to pick up my kids and take them on school outings. They went out of their way to make sure my daughters didn't miss out on anything while I was working and recovering from my car accident."

The family was hit even harder when eldest son Kolton died in service this summer.

Officer Patrick McCoy thanked fellow police officers and St John's School for supporting his wife and daughters through their difficulties. Soon to resume CHPD duties, he plans to devote much-needed attention to his family. "It's important for me to be here," he explained. "The healing process will begin now." ★

## Social Security Matters

### Will My Wife's Benefit Change My Claiming Decision?



By Russell Gloor,  
AMAC Certified Social  
Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I'll be 69 in April 2023, and my wife will be 59 later this month. I'm still working and am trying to determine whether I should take Social Security at 69 or 70. My main question revolves around my wife's future Social Security benefits and how they will affect my decision on whether to start mine at 69 or 70. I would like to know how to map this all out. Signed: **Waiting but Wondering**

**Dear Waiting:** Since you're now 68 and not yet collecting benefits, you have been (since you were 66) earning Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) which will result in an increased personal Social Security benefit for as long as you delay claiming, up to age 70 when your maximum benefit is reached. If you claim at age 69, your benefit will be 24% more than it would have been at your full retirement age (FRA) of 66; if you wait until age 70 to claim your benefit will be 32% more than it would have been at 66 (8% additional benefit for waiting that extra year).

Your wife's future spousal

benefit while you are both living (if she is entitled to one) will be based on your age 66 amount, not the higher amount you will get because you waited to claim. But your wife's benefit as your surviving widow will be based on the amount you were actually receiving at your death, not on your age 66 amount. So, if your goal is to maximize your younger wife's benefit as your widow, then waiting until you are 70 to claim your benefit will do that. Keep in mind that your wife's surviving spouse benefit will be affected by her own age when she claims. If she has reached her own full retirement age of 67 when she claims, she will get the maximum survivor benefit available to her. Claimed at age 67 while you are both living, her spouse benefit will be 50% of your age 66 benefit amount, if that is more than she is personally entitled to on her own. If you die first and your wife claims her survivor benefit at or after age 67, she will get 100% of the benefit you were receiving at your death instead of her own smaller benefit. But if she claims her survivor benefit before reaching her own FRA of 67, that benefit will be actuarially reduced according to the number of months prior to her FRA it is claimed. Note your wife can wait to claim her survivor benefit until it reaches maximum at her full retirement age.

So, to recap: Your wife's spousal benefit while you are living will be based on your age 66 amount and her age when she claims it, and

your wife's benefit as your widow will be based on 100% of what you are getting when you die and her age when she claims it. The maximum benefit for your wife in either case is attained when she reaches her FRA (67) but claimed earlier will be reduced. And you waiting until age 70 to claim will maximize your wife's benefit as your widow.

Finally, since you are still working, you should know that if your current earnings are among the highest of your lifetime, you will still get credit for those earnings even after you start collecting your Social Security benefits. Your SS benefit when you claim will be based on the highest-earning 35 years over your lifetime (adjusted for inflation), but SS will monitor your earnings each year to see if a benefit increase is warranted because your current earnings are higher than any used in originally computing your benefit amount.

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## Judicial Watch Files Appeal Challenging FBI's Withholding of Communications

### Judicial Watch News Release

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG)** - Judicial Watch announced today it has filed an appeal challenging a U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia decision allowing the FBI to withhold records of communication between the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and several financial institutions about the reported transfer of financial transaction records of people in DC, Maryland and Virginia on January 5 and January 6, 2021 (Judicial Watch, Inc. v. U.S. Department of Justice (No. 22-5209)).

The appeal, filed in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia, comes in the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) lawsuit filed by Judicial Watch after the FBI failed to respond to a February 10, 2021, FOIA request (Judicial Watch v. U.S. Department of Justice (No. 1:21-cv-01216)). Judicial Watch is asking for:

All records of communication between the FBI and any financial institution, including but not limited to Bank of America, Citibank, Chase Manhattan Bank, Discover, and/or American Express, in which the FBI sought transaction data for those financial institutions' debit and credit card account holders who made purchases in Washington, DC, Maryland and/or Virginia on January 5, 2021, and/or January 6, 2021.

In its appellate brief, Judicial Watch argues: This appeal arises from what appears to be an unprecedented abuse of the financial privacy of thousands of Americans. Substantial and compelling evidence demonstrates that the FBI sought and received records from financial institutions of anyone who used a credit card or engaged in other transactions in the Washington, D.C. area on January 5 or 6, 2021. This would include many thousands of persons living in the Washington, DC area, including possibly members of this Court.

In its appeal Judicial Watch points

out that the lower court was mistaken when it upheld the FBI's Glomar response (neither confirming nor denying the existence of records) because the FBI previously acknowledged the existence of the records in multiple ways. For instance, court records filed in support of a criminal case include the FBI's statement of facts that provides the defendant's address, which was obtained through "his Bank of America account and recent Expedia transactions."

In another case, the FBI "confirmed that it obtained records from PNC Bank and discusses in detail the multiple ways that it used the financial data."

Judicial Watch cites two additional cases where the FBI describes in publicly available court records its use of financial records in the January 6 investigation.

Judicial Watch concludes: [Judicial Watch] more than adequately demonstrated that the FBI may have sought and received records from financial institutions of anyone who used a credit card or engaged in other transactions in the Washington, DC area on January 5 or 6. If so, this would be an unprecedented abuse of the financial privacy of thousands of Americans. [Judicial Watch's] FOIA request to investigate this should not be blocked by a meritless Glomar response.

"We want the details on what looks to be an unprecedented abuse of the financial privacy of countless innocent Americans by big banks and the FBI," stated Judicial Watch President Tom Fitton. "The FBI's cover-up should be rejected, and the records made public."

In February 2022, Judicial Watch filed an opposition to the U.S. Capitol Police's (USCP) effort to shut down Judicial Watch's federal lawsuit for January 6 videos and emails. Through its police department, Congress argues that the videos and emails are not public records, there is no public interest in their release, and that "sovereign immunity" prevents citizens from suing for their release. ★

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  13. Star
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  15. Neutral shade
  16. Orderly arrangement
  17. Romanian monetary unit
  18. Button on electrical outlet
  19. \*Frosty's nose
  21. \*Gingerbread Man, e.g.
  23. Drench
  24. What a willow did?
  25. Famous song by The Jackson 5
  28. Cone-shaped quarters
  30. \*Snow mover
  35. A bit of water
  37. Pakistani language
  39. Measured in knots
  40. Tatted fabric
  41. \*\*A Visit from St. Nicholas' poet
  43. Tropical edible root
  44. Paintings in Orthodox church
  46. Not swim or swum
  47. Frozen puddle accident
  48. Small skullcap
  50. Dresden's river
  52. Captain's turf
  53. Drop of sorrow
  55. \*Slippery tree
  57. \*Frozen spike
  60. \*Three-horse sleigh ride
  63. Words to live by
  64. Caviar alternative
  66. On D'Artagnan's hat
  68. Group of wives
  69. Boiling emotion
  70. Furnish with a fund
  71. Travelers' stops
  72. Poetic "even"
  73. Buy second-hand
- DOWN**
1. Agha, alt. sp.
  2. Artist Chagall's first name
  3. Poet Pound's first name
  4. Draws close
  5. Fungus damage (2 words)
  6. Shake's cousin?
  7. \* fishing
  8. Two, in cards
  9. Station finder button
  10. Not final
  11. Curved molding
  12. Kind of nurse
  15. Bouillions
  20. Laudanum ingredient
  22. Saturn's wife
  24. As opposed to widow
  25. Impromptu
  26. Emergency pedal
  27. \*Hot treat
  29. Major-leaguers
  31. Prefers
  32. Butcher shop offering, pl.
  33. Ghostlike
  34. Parkinson's drug
  36. Philadelphia's Ivy League member
  38. Russian mountain chain
  42. \*Fireplace glob
  45. TV offering
  49. Reef fish
  51. Kind of bride
  54. Eagle's home
  56. Hundred Acre Wood creator

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57. A Flock of Seagulls' 1982 hit (2 words)
  58. European Council for Nuclear Research, acr.
  59. Bad day for Caesar
  60. Not quite an adult
  61. Spiral-horned African antelope
  62. Singer-songwriter Tori
  63. Tai's partner
  65. Miner's bounty
  67. Female sheep

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## Chapman's Legacy Plumbing to the Rescue!



Air Force veteran Kermit Chapman (left) of Chapman's Legacy Plumbing is an expert of 50 years in the plumbing industry. He leads a team serving the Greater Sacramento region from Orangevale together with Courtney Peralta (center), and employee Jeremy Whitlatch (right). Photo by MaryAnne Povey

By MaryAnne Povey

**ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG)** - You know the scenario, just when you least expect it, an unforeseen plumbing situation pops up. A sewer line backs up, or your water heater goes out. Things that can't wait to be fixed. When it comes to these situations, it's not a matter of if you'll need a plumber, it's when you'll need a plumber. So having a good one that you rely on is very important! How fortunate to have an expert in our community, who is trustworthy, honest and experienced, who's been in the business for over 50 years, and together with his family are carrying on the tradition of plumbing excellence with Chapman's Legacy Plumbing.

I had the pleasure to sit down and visit with Kermit Chapman, an Air Force veteran, and a 50-year plumbing expert who knows just about everything you need to know when it comes to plumbing! Ironically, he came into the plumbing trade by accident, or you could say it was a "self-fulfilling prophecy" dating all the way back to his senior year in high school.

"The yearbook staff were asking graduating seniors what they wanted to be," Kermit reflected, "I had absolutely no idea, so I asked my friend, what should I put down? He told me to write 'plumber,' so I did. I really never had any interest in plumbing but

wrote it down anyway and now look at me!"

After serving in the Air Force, and doing a variety of jobs in Southern California, Kermit eventually moved the family to Sacramento and landed a job with the well-known, reputable plumbing company, Roto-Rooter. It was there he held various positions and learned every aspect of plumbing including the core values of hard work, customer service and going the extra mile. He stayed with the company for 34 years.

"It wasn't uncommon to work 12 to 16 hour days. The boss was very good to us, but he demanded excellence," Kermit shared, "When he needed you to get a job done, you better get there, or you might not have a job!"

Following in their father's footsteps, Russell and Scott Chapman also cut their teeth working for Roto Rooter, before venturing out on their own individually. Then in 2007, Kermit launched Chapman's Legacy Plumbing with his son Russell and daughter Courtney, who manages the administrative side of the business. In 2021, Scott Chapman also joined the family team. Collectively, they have over 100 years of experience in the plumbing industry handling both new installation and repairs for residential and commercial properties covering Orangevale, surrounding Sacramento areas

and beyond like Placer, Woodland, Dixon, Auburn and Yuba City too. No job is too big, or too small.

Their core values of integrity, customer service, and craftsmanship are the foundation of their business. Those principles along with their use of state-of-the-art equipment and technology, make them the "go to" team to get your job done quickly and efficiently with the highest customer satisfaction.

When asked what sets them apart from the bigger companies, without hesitation, Kermit replied, "Our price, quality of work, and going above and beyond. There were times when I'd help a widow put in a light-bulb or fix something so quickly I wouldn't charge the customer. They would be amazed, but I just asked them to remember me next time they needed a plumber."

That's the kind of service you can expect from Chapman's Legacy Plumbing. Remember to give them a call for any of your plumbing needs. They will give you an honest assessment and not try to "upsell" you. They are a licensed, award-winning company with good ol' fashioned values. Customer satisfaction is guaranteed! Give them a call at 916.869.6606 or visit their website at [www.chapmanslp.com](http://www.chapmanslp.com). Discounts available for seniors and military! ★

## Board Approves New Agreement to Serve Homeless

Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Following months of diligent and deliberate work by elected officials and staff, the Board of Supervisors approved on Tuesday, December 6, a partnership agreement to increase outreach, shelter and services to people experiencing homelessness, particularly within the boundaries of the City of Sacramento.

The five-year agreement identifies the roles and responsibilities of the City and County and demonstrates a shared commitment to reducing unsheltered homelessness through systems-level changes and strategies identified by the recently adopted Local Homeless Action Plan. It includes joint outreach teams, hundreds of additional shelter beds and a commitment to do "whatever it takes" to meet the behavioral health needs of people experiencing homelessness.

As part of the agreement, the City and County will create 10 new "encampment engagement teams" - staffed by workers from both organizations -- to provide intensive outreach, assessment, navigation, service delivery and shelter placements to as many people as possible in encampments within the City limits. Teams will include behavioral health workers from the County who have the ability and qualifications to provide a behavioral health assessment and enroll or link people to an appropriate level of mental health and substance use services. Additional services, including individual needs assessments, shelter referrals, linkages with supportive services, and general navigation support will be provided by the City's Department of Community Response (DCR) and through contracted outreach providers funded by Managed Care Plans as part of the CalAIM initiative. There are currently two teams that have been mobilized within city limits since October.

The City has identified the initial locations to deploy these multi-disciplinary teams based on its assessment of which

camp present the greatest health and safety risk. Services such as solid waste removal, code enforcement and public safety protocol will be provided. The teams will develop an individual plan for each encampment based on the unique circumstances and needs of the camp occupants, and have the ability to spend the necessary time in each camp to find individualized solutions. Best practices suggest that on-going, multiple visits over time are needed to establish trust with camp occupants along with real-time access to services and shelter; these teams are oriented to dedicate this level of effort.

County behavioral health workers will conduct behavioral health assessments in the field and in City shelters and enroll people in services. They will have the ability to write 5150 holds and petition the court to require people to receive outpatient treatment under Laura's Law as appropriate. While it will take six months to ramp up the full 10 teams, City and County teams have already begun working together in top-priority sites in advance of the agreement's adoption.

The County, through the agreement, also will commit to establishing and funding a new Community Outreach Recovery Empowerment (CORE) Behavioral Health Center within City limits and expanding its substance use disorder residential treatment.

In addition, the County will commit to adding 200 shelter beds within 12 months and 200 more shelter beds within 36 months. If the City provides a shovel-ready site, the County will agree to operate 200 additional shelter beds within the City.

The agreement also sets forth provisions for accountability and measuring progress with reports in open session to both the City Council and County Board of Supervisors.

For more information on the Partnership Agreement, read the Fact Sheet.

For more information on what the County is doing to address homelessness, visit the Homeless Initiatives website. ★

## ABC10 and Telemundo 33 Team Up to Stand Against Hunger

T-Rock Communications News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - During a time when prices are increasing rapidly, food insecurity is a top concern for many local families and individuals - especially for single parents, children, and senior citizens already struggling to make ends meet.

In fact, local food banks serve a combined total of more than 700,000 people per month in the Greater Sacramento, Foothill and Valley region. Last year, with the help of generous businesses, organizations, and community members, \$403,364 was raised through this high-profile initiative. All donated funds generated as part of Stand Against Hunger are divided equally among the participating local food bank partners each year.

From November 1 through December 18, 2022 - two weeks longer than in past years - ABC10, Telemundo 33, Wells Fargo, Bayside Community Church, and Cricket Wireless are joining forces and taking a Stand Against Hunger by partnering with seven local food banks in Northern California. The goal is to raise awareness about food insecurity and raise funds to help these food banks provide meals to people in need. Every dollar makes a difference as a donation of \$10 to a local food bank helps to feed a family of four during the holidays and beyond.

The seven local food banks participating in the 2022 Stand Against Hunger include the following: Emergency Food



From November 1 through December 18, 2022 - two weeks longer than in past years - ABC10, Telemundo 33, Wells Fargo, Bayside Community Church, and Cricket Wireless are joining forces and taking a Stand Against Hunger by partnering with seven local food banks in Northern California. Photo courtesy of ABC10

Bank of Stockton (new addition this year), Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano, Placer Food Bank, Sacramento Food Bank & Family Services, Second Harvest Greater Valley, Yolo County Food Bank and Yuba-Sutter Food Bank.

"Sadly, food insecurity affects hundreds of thousands in our community each year and is expected to be more urgent than ever this holiday season," says Risa Omega, President & General Manager of ABC10, "I am honored that ABC10 and our parent company TEGNA are teaming up with other community-minded businesses and organizations to take a Stand Against Hunger to help provide nutritious and much-needed food for our friends and neighbors in need who often suffer in silence."

Stand Against Hunger is a signature community initiative led by ABC10, a TEGNA-owned media

station. Similar to last year and to help kick off the important community effort, the TEGNA Foundation has generously donated \$25,000 to support the cause.

New this year, Cricket Wireless joins returning partners Wells Fargo and Bayside Community Church to support the 3rd Annual Stand Against Hunger campaign. In addition, local radio stations La Ranchera 92.1, 103.9 The Fish (which both serve the Sacramento area) and KAT Country 103.3 in Stockton are providing on-air support for the cause.

Viewers and community members are encouraged to donate online to the food bank of their choice at [www.abc10.com/standagainsthunger](http://www.abc10.com/standagainsthunger). For more information about ABC10 or to watch ABC10 Originals and other award winning stories please visit [www.abc10.com](http://www.abc10.com) or [www.youtube.com/ABC10](http://www.youtube.com/ABC10). In addition, ABC10 can be live streamed via the ABC10+ app on Roku and Amazon Fire. ★



## Dave Ramsey Says

Dear Karla,

*In their later years?* I'm not trying to be mean, but they're already in their later years.

I'm really sorry you're in this situation. Even though you're in your 50s, he's still your dad, and I know this hurts your heart. It's probably even tougher to accept the fact that he's being manipulative. I mean, seriously. What dad calls up his daughter with the idea he's entitled to \$55,000 of her money and starts acting like a travel agent for guilt trips in the process? That's just wrong.

Look, if the relationship and the situation were different, we might have something to talk about. With your net worth, you're not going to miss \$55,000 out of \$2 to 3 million. In a good relationship, I'd help my mom or dad like that in a heartbeat - just to help them out because they're older. But this situation already is what it is. Something tells me this isn't the first time he's behaved in a manipulative way. And if you say yes to this, then I've got a feeling it isn't the first time

you've caved into him. I'm worried you won't be able to live with yourself if you do this, and that it may cause a big rift between you and your husband.

It's wrong of your dad to treat you this way and put you in this situation. If you want to tell him your money's tied up, which it is, or you just don't like the way it feels, that's fine. But my advice is to try to step back from the emotions and come to the realization in your own head that no is a complete answer.

You don't have an ethical or moral obligation to give manipulative people money just because they're related to you.

- Dave

*Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national bestselling author, personal finance expert and host of "The Ramsey Show," heard by more than 18 million listeners. He has appeared on "Good Morning America," "CBS This Morning," "Today," Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, He also serves as CEO of Ramsey Solutions.* ★

### A Travel Agent for Guilt Trips

Dear Dave,

My dad and his wife asked my husband and I for \$55,000. They want the money so they can pay off their debt. We're debt-free and have a net worth of between \$2 to 3 million, but we're also retired. We don't keep that much in the bank, so we'd have to draw from our retirement accounts - which is something we don't want to do. They've already approached other family members about this too. His wife is owed money at some point from a family settlement, but they don't want to wait that long. My dad said we should do this if we want them to get ahead and have anything left in their later years. My dad is 80, and his wife is in her late 70s. My husband and I are both in our 50s. Please tell me how to handle this.

- Karla

# Newsom Provoked, Relents

*Newsom released \$1 billion despite lackluster local homeless plans*

By **Manuela Tobias,**  
CALMatters.org

Two weeks after withholding \$1 billion in homelessness funding over lackluster local plans, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Friday that most cities and counties would get the funds as early as next week anyway — as long as in the next round, they commit to more aggressive plans to reduce street homelessness.

But it's been a whiplash-inducing couple of weeks, triggered by a funding process that frustrated both the governor and the locals. Newsom disdissed local applicants for seeming too complacent about a dire California problem, while the applicants retorted that the Newsom administration sent conflicting signals — and that in any case, state lawmakers had inadvertently given them a financial motive to lowball their goals.

More than 100 local mayors and county officials gathered virtually and in-person in a sleek downtown Sacramento government building Friday afternoon to broadly discuss how to better tackle the state's most pernicious crisis.

"It was nice to hear their progress, and it was nice to hear their recognition that we have to get to another level," Newsom told reporters following the over two hour-long private meeting.

It was a quick reversal some local leaders and advocates saw as a political stunt: The episode gave everyone a chance to air their grievances, but landed on no specific targets, while briefly risking the continuity of services for people experiencing homelessness.

"If you asked me what emerged from the meeting, I don't know. I did not hear any specific policy changes," said Sam Liccardo, mayor of San Jose. But, he added, "Nobody's going to criticize the state or the governor at a time when it's critical to get resources to bring people out of the cold. Lives depend on this."

Other local leaders said they welcomed the prodding.

"Sometimes, you have to provoke," said Darrel Steinberg, mayor of Sacramento. "And then gather around a table like we did today, and actually talk about what it's going to take to provide a further jolt to this problem."

The governor sent shockwaves through the state two weeks ago, just days before Election Day, when he summarily rejected every local homeless action



Gov. Gavin Newsom explains why he withheld, then released, \$1 billion for local governments to reduce California homelessness. The two sides met in Sacramento on Nov. 18, 2022. Photo by Rahul Lal, CalMatters

plan. On the line: nearly \$1 billion in homelessness funding. The plans, altogether, promised to reduce visible street homelessness by 2% between 2020 and 2024, or 2,000 fewer people statewide — which Newsom had called "simply unacceptable."

His move triggered chaos among many of the 13 largest cities, 58 counties and 44 homeless service providers who went through the process. Many of them thought they had been approved after workshopping the plans with Newsom's own homelessness agency, only to learn of their rejection en masse.

But local governments didn't have much of an incentive to shoot for the stars in their plans, either, because of the way the governor and Legislature wrote the grant. In the name of accountability, they tied nearly a fifth of the \$1 billion to local governments meeting their own unsheltered targets. With more people falling into homelessness than they can catch, many felt ambition might set them up for failure.

That criticism came up during the meeting, Newsom told reporters, holding up yellow pages ripped from a notepad.

"We worked with 120 members of the Legislature to put this forward," he chuckled. "And now we're working with 75 jurisdictions on these plans... In fact, literally right here, the recommendations: 'What specifically do you want to change in terms of these metrics and plans?' And that's exactly what this conversation was about going forward."

As soon as applicants sign a pledge to submit more ambitious

unsheltered targets and try harder in their plans for the next \$1 billion grant — the final round of flexible local homelessness funding approved in the 2021 budget — the state will start cutting checks for this round, according to Jason Elliott, Newsom's deputy chief of staff. Those new plans are due Nov. 29. A handful of local governments will have to work with the state to adjust their current plans before seeing the funding, although Elliott declined to name which ones.

During the pandemic, homelessness only spiked, and experts expect to continue to see its fallout on the streets in the coming years as rental assistance and eviction bans end. Between 2019 and 2022, homelessness increased by at least 22,500, to 173,800 people statewide, according to a CalMatters analysis of local point-in-time counts. Nearly 70% of those people were sleeping outdoors or in vehicles, while the rest stayed in shelters and transitional housing. (These biennial visual headcounts on a given night often are criticized for their inaccuracies.)

Yet the state asked cities and counties to calculate their 2024 goals based on their lower pre-pandemic counts of homeless people. At the time the application was due this summer, most localities simply figured they couldn't promise to make homelessness that much better when it had already grown so much worse, and was on track to keep worsening. And being too ambitious risked failure to meet their targets and losing any shot at the bonus money.

Newsom saw what they did

and cried foul. He called out the Sacramento region in particular — though not by name — for its lack of ambition: Instead of promising a reduction, the local governments and service providers foresaw a 71% hike in homelessness in their report. Why? That's exactly how much homelessness had already risen in the capital city this year, and the latest data that would be available by the time communities were evaluated on their progress to qualify for \$180 million in bonus funding statewide.

Comparing the relatively current 2022 numbers with the 2024 goals, communities had really signed up for a 4% or 5,000 person reduction, according to a CalMatters analysis — which if achieved would be better than the state has done in years. Since 2015, homelessness has only increased in California, by an average of 7% a year, or about 8,300 people.

After the turmoil of the past couple of weeks, Steinberg said Sacramento has now put forth a new goal, promising a reduction of 15%, or 1,000 fewer unsheltered people, by 2024. How progress might be measured differently remains unclear.

The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development — which mandates the homeless count — has often advised against tying it to funding because shooting for a certain number could influence its accuracy. Still, the point-in-time count remains the only uniform way to measure the number of

people sleeping on the streets.

"It's imperfect at the moment and over the years... I hope we can evolve and consider different strategies," Newsom said, suggesting the count can miss homeless people who are less visible. "Now what I see is what I see on the streets. And that's a challenge."

The federal department instead advises measuring success using the count in conjunction with other outcomes, like higher placements into permanent housing or fewer returns to homelessness.

"If I see positive trends in those other areas, and either stagnation or maybe just a slight downturn in the (count) that's actually probably a positive thing," a HUD spokesperson who would only speak anonymously told CalMatters.

California, like many other states, has seen a massive jump in homelessness since 2015, "way beyond the great work that many communities are doing to house people," the spokesperson added. The driver: a housing shortage propelling skyrocketing rents.

Newsom himself promised to abate that shortage when he first ran for governor, vowing to oversee the building of 3.5 million homes. He's fallen dramatically short of his goals.

Local service providers felt unfairly stung by Newsom's criticism because they have no control over housing affordability and the other system failures that cause homelessness. And while they are getting more state funds than ever before, their resources don't match demand. Funding the current affordable housing need alone would require nearly \$18 billion a year, according to an analysis from Housing California and California Housing Partnership, two affordable housing policy advocacy groups.

When Newsom withheld the funds earlier this month, service providers were aghast.

"We were all feeling pretty blindsided and you know, sort of reeling," she said.

The state had approved none of the applications before requesting additional information, according to Lourdes Castro Ramirez, secretary of the Business, Consumer Services and Housing Agency, which directly oversees the council. She told CalMatters "there was no conflicting communication" from her agency and the governor's office. ★

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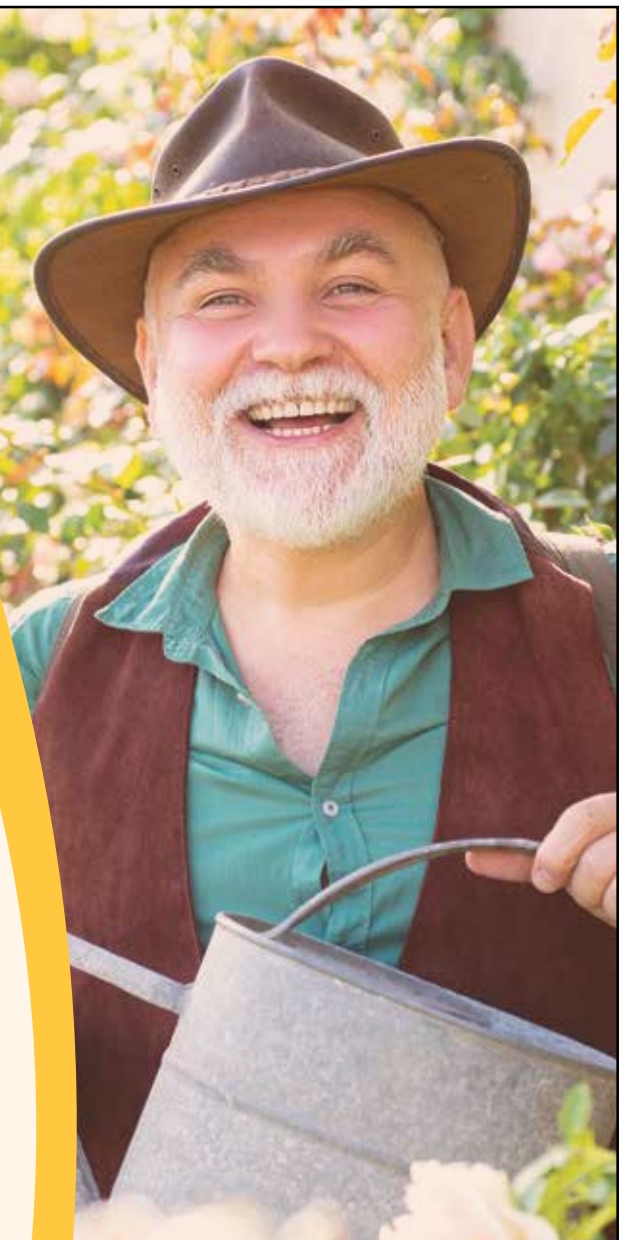
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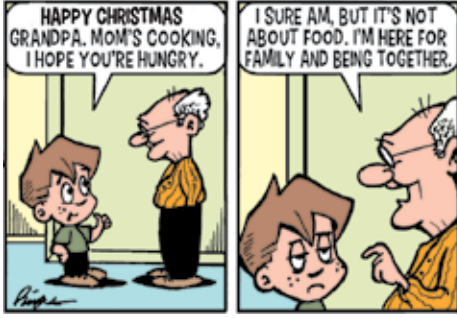


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# WEEKLY COMICS

## Amber Waves



by Dave T. Phipps



## The Spats



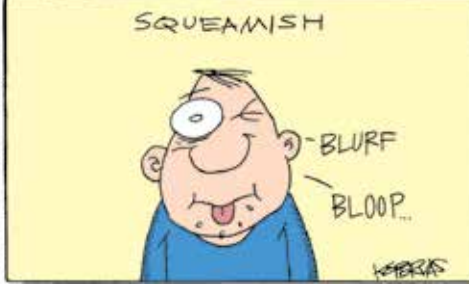
by Jeff Pickering



## Out on a Limb



by Gary Kopervas



## THEY'LL DO IT EVERY TIME



## BY AL SCADUTO



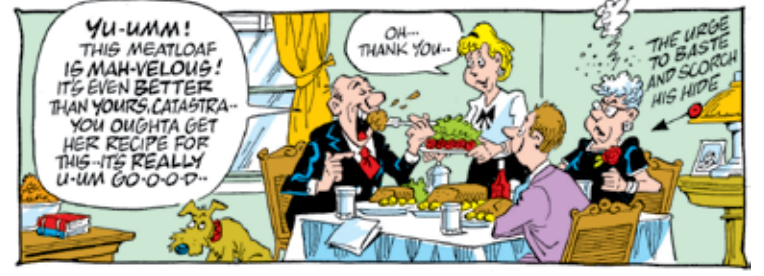
## R.F.D.



by Mike Marland



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## GRIN and BEAR IT



## LAFF-A-DAY



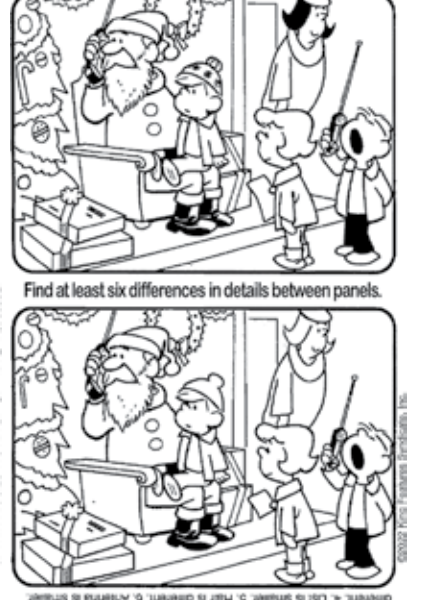
## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



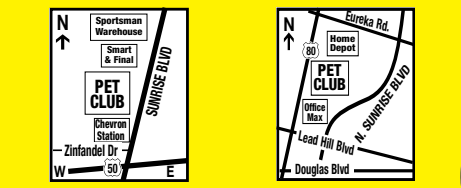
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BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



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•All Varieties 3 Oz.

Limit 2 Pkgs with Coupon

Limit One Coupon Per Family

Price Valid Only With Coupon

Effective 12/14/22 - 12/20/22 **\$1.99**

CHM PLU 569

# Interfaith Day at Giving Machine Celebrates Service and Unity

By Margaret Snider

ROSEVILLE, CA (MPG) - It was a special day for the interfaith community at the Light the World Giving Machines on December 7 at the Westfield Galleria at Roseville.

The Light the World Initiative began in 2016 and the Giving Machines were added in 2017, now a Christmas time holiday tradition, at new locations every year. The event was covered by media including Fox 40 News, and Sacramento Faith TV of Rocklin with government and faith leaders visiting the event. Garrett Gatewood, past mayor and currently city councilman from the City of Rancho Cordova, addressed the group as well, speaking of the diversity of faiths represented in Rancho Cordova.

Sue Ramsden hosted along with Karl Cheney, program manager, both from The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints that sponsors the initiative. Cheney gave background and told of some of the experiences he had in Europe that helped to unite people and communities.

Ramsden introduced the speakers as each stood next to the Giving Machines to deliver his message. The first was Darshan Mundy, public affairs director for the West Sacramento Sikh Gurdwara. Mundy emphasized two words.

"One is called Seva," he said. "Seva is service... the other one is care; we care for each other... caring for humankind is fundamental to the teachings of Sikhism."

Mundy spoke of the meals that are served to everyone free of charge, "regardless of religion, gender, economic status or any other regard." He told of the Sikhs serving hot meals in the Ukraine, how they serve in the forefront of crises like floods, fire, tsunami and wars.

"We are all equals; we are all members of one family. This means we all have the same rights,



Darshan Mundy, director of public affairs at the West Sacramento Sikh Gurdwara, addresses interfaith leaders at the Light the World Giving Machine Interfaith Day, speaking especially about Seva, or service. Photo by Steve Wiggington

responsibilities, opportunities, and duties," Mundy said. "We must rise beyond ego-centered ways and recognize the togetherness of the world... Seva should be the heart of all humankind."

Akram Keval was invited to speak at the interfaith event on behalf of the Interfaith Councils of both Sacramento and Elk Grove.

"I am representing the Muslim community on both the boards," Keval said. "In my opinion, it is every human's responsibility to give back to the community through acts of charity. If we are able to empower those around us through food, clothing, monetary donations, or simple acts of kindness, what is stopping us?"

Islam also teaches the importance of volunteer work.

"In a society that works to make everything easier by having it at the quick click of a button,

we are often disconnected from our communities. We recognize this issue and make it a point to volunteer our time to keep us grounded in our community and to ensure that we are part of them and not forgetting the needs of those that surround us."

Deacon Dennis Gorsuch of the Catholic Diocese of Sacramento and the North State Ecumenical Council Conference spoke next.

"We are gathered today to celebrate the many ways in which our faiths show our unity by giving to those in need," Gorsuch said. "The Roman Catholic Church has a rich tradition of lighting the world by serving people who are needy."

Gorsuch stated that Jesus Christ taught us that we should love our neighbors. Catholics around the world have a priority to follow seven principles called

the corporal, or material, works of mercy: to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, visit the imprisoned, shelter the homeless, visit the sick and to bury the dead.

"We may take great comfort in the reality that by working together, through our respective faiths, we all may help bring harmony, compassion, mercy, warmth and light to our brothers and sisters in need."

Karm Bains is the Sutter County District 4 Supervisor.

The basic tenets in Sikhism, Bains said, are, "to live honest, hardworking lives, be thankful, praise God's name, and share with others. These same principles can be found in nearly every religion. We may worship differently, we may wear different items that are unique in our religion, our culture, but we

have the same good intentions to help our fellow humankind, to spread the message of hope, to be honest and to share with others. Christmas is a holiday that is not exclusive to Christians. It is revered across many religions and is a time for us to come together and to celebrate the things that we have in common. I have found that we have more commonalities than differences."

The group moved to William Jessup University, where they were fed with both food and information, and participated in table discussions.

"Our charge," Cheney said, "is to focus on what brings us together, what connects us, and just be good neighbors. As a president of our church has said, 'Make sure that you are the best neighbor that your neighbors have ever had.'" ★

**KP International MARKET**  
 14151617181920  
 10971 Olson Drive  
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95678  
 916.853.8000  
 Market: 7 Days 8am-9pm  
 Food Court: 7 Days 11am-7:30pm  
 Korean/Mex/Viet: 7:30pm last call  
 Chinese/Japanese 7:00pm last call

**HOLIDAY HOURS WE ARE OPEN**  
 THANKSGIVING (11/24) 8AM~4PM  
 CHRISTMAS (12/25)  
 NEW YEAR (1/1)

**FROZEN & FISH DEPT**

	REG. \$16.99/ea	<b>\$10.99</b> /ea		REG. \$16.99/ea	<b>\$11.99</b> /ea
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**WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS**

	<b>\$3.99</b> /lb		<b>\$5.49</b> /lb		<b>\$5.99</b> /lb
	<b>\$2.99</b> /lb		<b>\$1.59</b> /lb		<b>\$1.99</b> /lb

Advertised items good at KP International Market - Rancho Cordova location ONLY. We reserve the right to LIMIT QUANTITIES. Not responsible for TYPOGRAPHICAL OR PICTORIAL ERRORS. All advertised items are SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. Sorry NO RAINCHECKS. PRICES EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 14 - DECEMBER 20, 2022.

**HAPPY HOURS**  
 Draft Beer **\$2.50** & UP  
 Mon-Thu 4PM-9PM  
 Fri-Sat 2PM-9PM

**KP KARAOKE SPECIAL** Sun-Thu Come before 6pm (Valid Time) Fri-Sat Come before 3pm (Valid Time)

<b>For 6 people \$85.00</b>	<b>For 12 people \$185.00</b>	<b>For 18 people \$275.00</b>	<b>For 24 people \$350.00</b>	<b>For 28 people \$350.00</b>
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**FRESH PRODUCE**

	<b>\$1.99</b> /lb		<b>69¢</b> /lb		<b>\$3.49</b> /ea		<b>\$4.99</b> /bag
	<b>\$1.79</b> /ea		<b>\$2.99</b> /bag		<b>89¢</b> /lb		<b>\$1.79</b> /lb

**AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY**

	<b>\$3.99</b> /ea		<b>\$2.99</b> /ea		<b>\$4.99</b> /ea		<b>\$4.99</b> /ea		<b>\$5.99</b> /ea
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**ASIAN GROCERY**

	<b>\$5.99</b> /ea		<b>\$7.99</b> /ea		<b>\$2.49</b> /ea		<b>2/\$3.00</b>		<b>\$7.49</b> /ea
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**EUROPEAN GROCERY**

	<b>\$9.99</b> /ea		<b>\$1.79</b> /ea		<b>\$10.99</b> /ea		<b>\$2.49</b> /ea		<b>\$1.89</b> /ea
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**KOREAN/JAPANESE GROCERY**

	<b>\$10.99</b> /ea		<b>\$5.99</b> /ea		<b>\$19.99</b> /ea		<b>\$6.99</b> /ea		<b>\$2.99</b> /ea		<b>\$1.49</b> /ea
	<b>\$9.99</b> /ea		<b>\$39.99</b> /ea		<b>\$7.99</b> /ea		<b>\$4.99</b> /ea		<b>\$7.99</b> /ea		<b>99¢</b> /ea

**HOUSEWARES**

	<b>99¢</b> /ea		<b>\$39.99</b>
	<b>\$12.99</b>		<b>\$3.99</b>
	<b>\$3.99</b>		<b>\$4.99</b>

**FROZEN & FISH DEPT**

	<b>\$1.99</b> /ea
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**EUROPEAN DELI**

	<b>\$8.49</b> /ea		<b>\$4.09</b> /ea
	<b>\$9.39</b> /ea		<b>\$4.09</b> /ea

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