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# Gold River Messenger

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Serving Gold River and Sacramento County

FEBRUARY 2024

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## New Airshow Format with Flair



Frece Tricolori takes a colorful flight. Photo courtesy of Frece Tricolori, Pattuglia Acrobatica Nazionale, Aeronautica Militare, Rivolto Air Base, Italy

By Tamara M. Warta

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The California Capital Airshow, which typically roars through Sacramento Mather Airport each September, is returning again for 2024 - but with a new date and a distinct European flair.

This year, the 18th annual California Capital Airshow will feature Frece Tricolori, the Italian Air Force's military jet demonstration

team. It will also be primarily an evening event, happening July 13 and 14. The changes may be surprising to airshow regulars, but excitement truly is in the air for the switch to summer and the international celebration it's bound to bring.

"Every year we want to do something fresh, we want to do something new. We want to bring our community something different," said Darcy Brewer, Executive Director of the California Capital Airshow. "We

survey the insiders every single year. We heard a couple of different things from people. They wanted to see something they've never seen before, and they wanted us to bring back the night show we did in 2018."

The "insiders" Brewer refers to are the approximately 60,000 Air Show Insider® members of the California Capital Airshow community. Becoming an Insider is free and provides early access to tickets, helpful

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## Dignity Health Donates to Sacramento Area Nonprofits

Dignity Health News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Dignity Health announced the distribution of \$1,060,274 to 15 community-based organizations in Sacramento and Yolo counties. The goal of this contribution is to improve the health and well-being of vulnerable and underserved populations and bring about real and lasting improvements to the region.

"A core element of our mission is giving back and we take pride in sustaining our support for organizations that go the extra mile to address the diverse needs of our community," said Dignity Health Community Health and Outreach Manager, Phoua Moua. "These collaborations empower us to take on the intricate health and human challenges faced by our community."

"I find ongoing inspiration in the inventive and unique solutions crafted by our community partners to address the expanding needs of our community," said Michael Korpel, Greater Sacramento Market President of Dignity Health. "Through our investments in these organizations, we aim to cultivate a sense of belonging and comprehensiveness. Our objective is to provide the community with the necessary resources and support essential for leading healthy, prosperous lives while also minimizing the likelihood of significant future health interventions."

Every three years, Dignity Health and health system partners conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment in each county to determine the most pressing health priorities. The 2022 community assessment indicated that having access to mental and behavioral health and substance-use services are key priorities, as well as having access to basic needs such as housing, jobs, and food. With this in mind, Dignity Health and its grant committee selected several organizations to help address this need, including Arrive Alive California, Inc. Arrive Alive California, Inc.'s community focused educational programs are designed to stop dangerous and destructive behaviors through unique, holistic, and multi-faceted approaches led by subject

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## New Year, New CRPD Park!

By Patrick Owen, Cordova Recreation & Park District

**RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG)** - In celebration of community and nature, the Cordova Recreation & Park District (CRPD) gathered in the neighborhood of Anatolia on January 8, 2024, for the grand opening of Hummingbird Park, the latest addition to the community's green spaces. The ribbon-cutting ceremony was a celebratory occasion marked by the presence of local dignitaries and speeches from dedicated CRPD staff.

Located at 11990 Cobble Brook Drive in Rancho Cordova, Hummingbird Park stands in the newest housing developments near the intersection of Sunrise Boulevard and Douglas Road. This neighborhood park packs a punch with its thoughtful design and commitment to celebrating the beauty of nature. From the hummingbird tiles in the seating areas to flowers



CRPD Board of Directors with District Director Mark Cullum with Assemblyman Josh Hoover's office recognizing Hummingbird Park. Photo: Courtesy CRPD

in the play surfacing, every aspect was carefully selected to create a sense of place within the neighborhood. Hummingbird Park features a delightful playground, grassy areas, basketball court and a shaded picnic pavilion with multiple barbecue grills.

Hummingbird Park marks the 45th park to be

owned and operated by CRPD, and as there continues to be rapid growth and development, one of CRPD's priorities is to ensure access to recreation spaces for residents within its boundaries.

"As CRPD moves forward into a new era of park building, we will work hard to bring our residents public spaces that are unique to each

community. CRPD sets high standards. We believe it is important to create spaces that not only provide park necessities, but also include memorable, creative opportunities," says Patrick Larkin, CRPD General Manager.

Readers can learn more about new developments, stay informed on updates and more at CRPD's website at [www.crpdc.com](http://www.crpdc.com). ★



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# Captain Joseph House Foundation Holds Fundraiser at El Camino High

# Local Soroptimists Keeping Girls in School



This photo of Special Forces Army CPT. Joseph Schultz and his proud mother, Betsy Schultz, was taken in 2010 when the El Camino High graduate earned his Green Beret in North Carolina. Photo courtesy of Betsy Schultz

## Captain Joseph House Foundation News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Captain Joseph House Foundation, which opened in 2022, will share information about the development, growth and status of the Gold Star Family program on Feb. 17.

This is the first such presentation in a community with a donor-rich base of support, according to Captain Joseph House Foundation founder Betsy Schultz. The foundation is in memory of Special Forces Army CPT. Joseph Schultz, her son and an El Camino High School graduate. Joseph Schultz was killed in Afghanistan on Memorial Day weekend, May 29, 2011.

The nonprofit foundation's mission is to honor Fallen Heroes through remembering and caring for their Gold Star Families left behind, according to Schultz, a Gold Star mother.

Within days of her son's death, Schultz recognized that something was missing in the continuum of care for Families of our Fallen Heroes: the opportunity to bond with others experiencing a similar loss.

Forming the nonprofit Captain Joseph House Foundation, Schultz donated her large "bed and breakfast" to the organization and began converting it into a respite home for Gold Star Families.

Gold Star Families from every military branch and from every state in the U.S. may qualify for the Family-to-Family

respite program. A respite week, with up to three families meeting together, provides an opportunity for sharing a common love and loss, Schultz said. It is also a time to celebrate the life of one's hero and build new relationships that can last beyond the week at Captain Joseph House, located in Port Angeles, Washington.

There are no fees for the families, which includes roundtrip airfare, daily transportation, lodging, all meals and recreational activities. Volunteers, in-kind, discounted services and financial donations to the foundation made it possible to open the doors of the house to welcome Gold Star Families in 2022, Schultz said.

"Your donations have been sincerely appreciated," Schultz said. "Fundraising will continue to ensure this opportunity will be available for Gold Star Families to participate in future years."

The Captain Joseph House Foundation's State of the Foundation is from 7 to 9 p.m. Feb. 17 at El Camino High School Center for the Arts, 4300 El Camino Ave., Sacramento. Doors open at 6 p.m.

Admission is \$25 per ticket and free for anyone 19 years old and younger. Tickets are available at <https://www.brownpaper-tickets.com/event/6232423> or

<https://m.bpt.me/event/6232423> or at the door.

or more information, call 360-460-7848 or go online to [www.CaptainJosephHouseFoundation.org](http://www.CaptainJosephHouseFoundation.org) or [Facebook.com/CPTJosephHouse](https://www.facebook.com/CPTJosephHouse). ★

# Dignity Health Donates to Sacramento Area Nonprofits

*Continued from page 1*

matter experts and specialists.

"At Arrive Alive California, Inc., we are committed to developing, promoting, and facilitating evidence-based education to raise awareness on possible life altering decisions, thereby saving lives," said Angela Y. Webb CEO/Executive Director at Arrive Alive California, Inc. "With the

support of Dignity Health, we can take a big step towards building a community of responsible and empowered individuals who prioritize safety and well-being."

The Greater Sacramento Market has awarded community grants to fifteen collaborative projects across Sacramento and Yolo counties for CY 2024. ★



The Sunbeam heating pad. Photo courtesy of SIRCGR

## Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova and Gold River News Release

**RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG)** - The Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova & Gold River club recently donated a brand-new heating pad to the health office of Cordova High School, Kinney High School, Walnutwood High School, Mitchell Middle School,

and Mills Middle School. "The Soroptimist organization is about removing barriers so that women and girls can receive an education to achieve economic empowerment," said club president Sheryl Longworth. "Girls suffering with menstrual cramps are sent home for the day if their parents/guardian haven't authorized medication. This doesn't keep girls in school. If they can sit with a heating pad for 20-30 mins, usually they will feel

well enough to return to class," said Longworth.

Cordova High's nurse said, "This heating pad arrived just in time! The one we had just disappeared," and Mitchell Middle School's nurse said, "This is the best gift we could receive! We just threw away what we were using before."

Soroptimist is an international 501(c)3 non-profit organization who seeks to improve the lives of women and girls through programs leading to social and economic empowerment. The name, Soroptimist, means "best for women," and that's what the organization strives to achieve. Soroptimists are people at their best, working to help other women and girls be their best. Please email [siranchocordova@soroptimist.net](mailto:siranchocordova@soroptimist.net) to receive more information about Soroptimist International of Rancho Cordova & Gold River's nearly 15-year history of service to Rancho Cordova, how to become a member, or just learn how you can volunteer. ★

# Manage County Utility Payments and Accounts Online

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Sacramento County Consolidated Utilities Billing & Service (CUBS) is making it easier for customers to view and manage their utilities accounts online with MyUtilities.

Tired of receiving your county utilities bills in the mail? MyUtilities also allows residents to go paperless, freeing up space in crowded mailboxes.

MyUtilities rolled out in 2020, and so far, 44.9% of customers are utilizing it.

- Using MyUtilities, residents can:
- Manage your bank account details
  - Manage one-time or recurring payments
  - Manage payment reminders
  - Change your mailing address
  - Set up paperless billing
  - View bills and payments (up to two years)
  - View Frequently Asked Questions that will enhance your user experience.

If you are a landlord or property management company, MyUtilities can be

your one-stop shop for managing the utilities accounts for all of your properties.

In 2023, CUBS added even more ways for customers to receive digital eBills and set up online Bill Pay. Customers can now access their utility bills and schedule online payments directly through their bank's online banking portal. As of today, 4.4% of customers are utilizing this new service.

Here are some reasons residents choose eBills:

- Convenience – paying bills online is easy and saves time. For even more convenience, use your phone or tablet.
- Control – you can choose when and how much to pay.
- Security – your financial information and records are protected with bank-grade security.

To learn more and get started, visit the CUBS website. If you need assistance setting up your MyUtilities portal, please contact CUBS online or by phone at (916) 875-5555. To find out if your bank offers eBill and Bill Pay services, contact your bank directly. ★



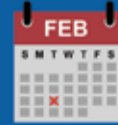
# Election Information

## March 5, 2024 – Presidential Primary Election

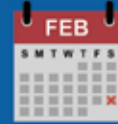
Vote Early and Vote by Mail.



**Feb 5** Ballots begin to arrive by mail. Ballot Drop Boxes are now open.



**Feb 20** Close of registration. Register today!



**Feb 24** 11-Day Vote Centers open through Election Day.



**Mar 2** All Vote Centers open through Election Day.



**Mar 5** Election Day! Last day to turn in your ballot.

## Vote Early! Don't wait for Election Day

Take advantage of early voting and avoid the lines! You can return your ballot in the mail, at any Ballot Drop Box, or at any Vote Center. No postage is necessary.

## Track your Ballot

Sign up for "Where's My Ballot?" with Ballottrax, a free ballot tracking and alert system. It is available to all voters who wish to track the status of their Vote by Mail ballot - from printed to accepted. This provides additional transparency to voters on the status of their ballot.



Vote Early! Vote by Mail.

Visit [www.elections.saccounty.gov](http://www.elections.saccounty.gov) or Call Toll Free (800) 762-8019



# The Sun is Rising on Public Safety in Sacramento County

*A Commitment to Protecting, Connecting, and Preserving Public Safety*



Thien Ho and Sacramento Police Chief Kathy Lester. Photo courtesy of District Attorney's Office

Story by Kristina Rogers

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - On January 31st, Sacramento District Attorney Thien Ho gave a public safety address to a packed room at Clunie Community Center in McKinley Park. Guests included Police Chief Kathy Lester, elected officials, colleagues, community leaders, crime victims, and friends. D.A. Ho laid out his department's mission and here are a few important highlights.

To begin, since January 2021, more than 600 people have died in Sacramento County of Fentanyl. D.A. Ho explained those numbers are expected to rise. Most parents don't know social media is the leading platform for drug dealers. Counterfeit pills mixed with fentanyl are marketed online as "prescription pills."

Laura Didier was there to share her story about how her own son got access to one such counterfeit pill. It was Christmas break in 2020. Her son Zack was a straight-A student, athlete, and musician. He was a good kid, and parents didn't seem to have any reason to worry. Unfortunately, Zack went online and bought a pill marketed as a prescription Percocet, but it wasn't. He tried it once, and his father found him dead in his bedroom. It was a somber reminder deadly drugs are now easily accessible to anyone, anywhere. With tears, Laura said, "He'll always be 17."

Heartbroken, she wanted to make something good from this tragedy. Didier partnered with the District Attorney's office to promote "one pill can kill." Now she joins Thien Ho and Angela Webb to speak at educational school forums about fentanyl awareness. They plan on expanding their youth-focused program in 2024. To learn more about One Pill Can Kill and watch Zack's story, go to: [ipillcankillsac.com](http://ipillcankillsac.com).

Awareness is vital to helping protect our communities, but accountability is equally essential. Thien Ho is working with other District Attorneys to provide harsher sentences for drug dealers. The loss of even one life is too much to allow a dealer to walk away without real consequences.

He noted January was Human Trafficking Awareness Month. According to the California Department of Justice, California is the #1 state for human trafficking. (<https://oag.ca.gov/human-trafficking/what-is>). The Human Trafficking Unit in the District Attorney's office partners with the Sacramento Child Exploitation Task Force (CETF), which includes the Sacramento County Sheriff, FB, and Sacramento Police Department. And while they aggressively pursue and prosecute human traffickers, child

predators, and domestic abusers, there is a new outreach arm. Victims of these crimes can go to [GetHelpSac.org](http://GetHelpSac.org) for answers. There, they can access organizations like My Sisters House, Weave, and the Community Against Sexual Harm (CASH).

The discussion moved to the fear and crime our local businesses and property owners are experiencing. It's no secret that retail theft has skyrocketed in California. The D.A.'s office is taking aim with a new organized retail theft unit. Not only are they focused on fighting the crimes that shutter our local businesses, but D.A. Ho is advocating for answers to nearby encampments as well. He noted that these homeless camps "put people between compassion and chaos."

To help people on the street get back on their feet, Thien Ho supports the development of a shelter model called Hope for Sacramento. This model allows anyone on the streets to get shelter and move toward sobriety and housing at a reasonable pace ([hopeforsacramento.org](http://hopeforsacramento.org)).

District Attorney Ho knows Incarceration isn't the only solution to crime. This is why his office has another answer. Non-violent offenders will receive an opportunity at redemption with the new Changing Courses program. Instead of prison, those accused of a crime can choose to enter an apprenticeship program in the trades. If they complete the program, they can move toward a lucrative job, and a real future. D.A. Ho explained, "This allows them to change their course from a life of crime to a life of construction."

Still, there is another hurdle that our law enforcement professionals can't handle alone. Current legislation in California is one of the biggest obstacles to public safety. That is why Thien Ho and District Attorneys across California are advocating for a measure to be added to the fall ballot called The Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act. Many law enforcement professionals point to Prop 47 as a contributor to the rise in crime across California. It's been ten years since the proposition passed, and they believe it is time to change things. Interested folks can review the petition details and how to get involved go to; [casafecommunities.com](http://casafecommunities.com).

The presentation ended on a hopeful note. D.A. Ho believes Sacramento has been sleeping, and although it's a slow process, she is waking up. The sunrise is coming, and our Thien Ho is welcoming us with coffee.

To review the entire presentation and learn more about the Sacramento District Attorney's office, go to: [sacda.org](http://sacda.org). ★

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**Session 2:** April 20 - May 18

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## Let's Talk Heart to Heart

Valentine's Day is just around the corner, a day we celebrate love and caring. So why not celebrate your caring heart with some good tips on to keep it strong and healthy. Let's talk about your heart and high blood pressure, also known as hypertension, which affects one in three Americans. Risk factors include physical inactivity, obesity, tobacco use, stress and poor diet. That's the bad news, but **Dr. Susan Smith-Jones** has some good news for us with some natural ways with nature's most effective anti-hypertension foods. **Dr. Jones** is a Behavioral and Transformational Expert who travels throughout the U.S. and internationally working with Fortune 500 companies and individual clients on how to live successfully and create your best body, mind and spirit. She has authored some 33 books including "Choose to Thrive," "The Curative Kitchen and Lifestyle," "Uplifted" and so many more. How about these natural ways to a healthy heart.

Tasty too.  
**1. CASHEWS AND ALMONDS.** Both of these tree nuts are packed with magnesium, an essential mineral that plays a key role in supporting healthy blood pressure. Low magnesium levels are associated with high blood pressure, and ramping up magnesium intake can cause blood pressure measurements to be reduced.

**2. BEETROOT.** This vegetable provides nitric oxide which dilates and relaxes blood vessels resulting in lower blood pressure. Studies show that beetroot juice can reduce blood pressure by up to 10 mmHg within hours.

**3. TURMERIC.** Here's a bright yellow cooking spice commonly used in curries and gets its therapeutic powers from a

potent antioxidant and anti-inflammatory compound called curcumin. Taken daily, it can result in blood pressure decreases. Study revealed that 500 mgs of turmeric three times a day caused large drops in blood pressure.

**4. KALE.** This superstar veggie is rich in magnesium and also potassium... both essential minerals for healthy blood pressure. What's more, it is also rich in vitamin C, which boosts the effect of magnesium and potassium even more. Because kale is rich in this triad of beneficial micronutrients, it has earned its place in the pantheon of natural hypertension fighters.

**5. FISH AND FLAX OIL.** Fish oil is rich in omega-3 fatty acids which benefit heart health and a natural treatment for high blood pressure.

**6. GARLIC.** The secret to garlic's blood pressure-lowering ability is its high content of allicin, a Sulphur compound released whenever a garlic clove is chopped, crushed or chewed. It's a boon to heart health and blood pressure.

And how about these tips to increase heart health?

1. Shed extra fat.
2. Find ways to exercise daily.
3. Laughter heals the heart.
4. Rejuvenation in your glass of water.
5. Make fresh fruits and veggies your daily companions.
6. Simplify your life and slow down.
7. Molecular Hydrogen supports heart and cardiovascular health.

Want more details and a ton more great info? Check out her website [www.susansmithjones.com](http://www.susansmithjones.com) and sign up for her FREE Monthly Newsletter. You can get there at her website.

Oh, and  
**HAPPY VALENTINE'S DAY!**

# Sacramento Jewish Film Festival Celebrates 25 Years

*The Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region News Release*

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Since 1997, the Sacramento Jewish Film Festival (SJFF) has presented the best films reflecting the rich cultural diversity of the Jewish experience. In 2024, the festival celebrates its SILVER JUBILEE, with 30 plus feature films over two weekends of live theatre and two weeks of films streaming online. The event will take place March 9 - 24, 2024.

The variety of films include comedies, dramedies, dramas, and documentaries from all over the world, plus Q&As, mini-concerts, special panels, and in-person receptions.

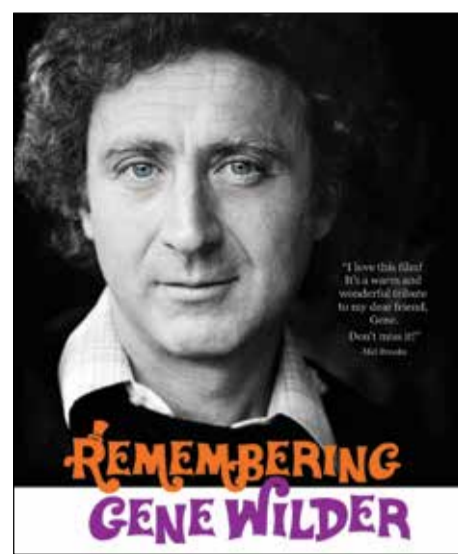
Opening weekend will be live on the big screen at the Veterans Memorial Theatre in Davis on Saturday night, March 9 and Sunday, March 10.

Closing weekend will be live in-theater at The Center at 2300 Sierra Blvd in Sacramento on Saturday night, March 16 and Sunday, March 17.

All-Festival Passes are \$150 and include all in-person films and streaming films, plus receptions and film chats. Weekend passes and individual film tickets will also be sold. The website will go live, and tickets and passes will be on sale on January 22, 2024.

Visit the festival website at <https://sac-jewishfilmfest.org/> for a complete list of feature films, shorts, special events, ticket sales and sponsorship opportunities.

Questions? Call the Jewish



**REMEMBERING GENE WILDER** celebrates the beloved star of classics such as "The Producers," "Blazing Saddles," and "Willy Wonka & the Chocolate Factory." Gene's life is brought to life through never-before-seen home movies and photographs, as well as the intimate insights of friends and colleagues including Mel Brooks, Alan Alda, Carol Kane, Harry Connick Jr., (Saturday night, March 16, at the Veterans Memorial Theatre in Davis.) Photo courtesy of Sacramento Jewish Film Festival

Federation at (916) 486-0906 or email [jbirch@jewishsac.org](mailto:jbirch@jewishsac.org). or see Facebook at: <https://www.facebook.com/SacJewishFilm> or Instagram at: <https://www.instagram.com/sacramentojewisfilmfestival/?hl=en>

SJFF is a program of the Jewish Federation of the Sacramento Region. The mission of SJFF is to showcase thought-provoking, entertaining films that inform, inspire, and celebrate the Jewish story for audiences everywhere. ★



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★★★★★

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# New Airshow Format with Flair

*Continued from page 1*  
discounts, and a chance to view airshow schedules and events prior to the general public.

Famous for their interactive STEM exhibits, large airplane and fighter jet displays, food and family activities, the airshow is well-known as a distinct stand out from the approximately 450 air shows that happen each year across America.

"We are one of the largest," said Brewer. "We want to be different."

With the arrival of Frece Tricolori, which has not performed in North America in 30 years, this year's air show is sure to delight both regular patrons and some new faces.

"We start flying at 6 p.m. and go non-stop until 10 p.m. And that last half hour is going to literally blow you away," says Brewer. The event includes what the organization is referring to as a "choreographed pyrobatic musical," featuring fireworks, daredevil jet maneuvers, music, and more.

"In the air, on the ground and throughout the year – the airshow crew is all about honoring those who serve, and inspiring the next generation --- but this year we'll be doing it all in two different languages --- so if you've ever been to Italy and love it, or dreamed of going to Italy --- we're making it more simple this summer and bringing Italy to you," said Brewer.

This is the only location in the western United States where you will be able to be a part of

Frece Tricolori's full airshow performance, get the chance to see their colorful jets up close, and maybe even meet team members on the ground.

"People in America love the US jet teams, the rest of the world loves the Italian jet force," says Brewer. "Brush up on your Italian and get ready for a once in

a lifetime experience."

The California Capital Airshow has taken to the international skies one time prior - in 2017 they welcomed the French government for a one-day event over Easter weekend. Now, with that experience under their belt, the organization is going big. The Frece Tricolori team includes 75 members, as well as multiple government dignitaries that are expected to be in attendance.

Outside of the stunning displays and huge draw from the world's best pilots, the California Capital Airshow is unique for another reason - its commitment and passion for community past and present. The group is a non-profit that supports other non-profits. Groups are invited to apply to work at the airshow and raise funds for their various causes. \$79,000 went out to non-profit groups through parking lot and concessions volunteerism.

"We're all about STEM education, scholarships, and youth programs," noted Brewer. The group has many interactions with young people, equipping them to grow up to become whatever they dream.

"We try to inspire the next generation to get a job where they wake up in the morning feeling the same way the staff at the California Capital Air Show feels," Brewer says with pride when speaking about the great work environment found within the organization. Her enthusiasm and love of life is contagious, as is her passion to get people excited and involved about the air show and all it signifies.

"We like shining a spotlight on a region that we love. If you like history, aviation, or international flavor - there's something for you and we will make sure it happens before the gates open."

You can find out more about the upcoming airshow by becoming an Insider at [californiacapitalairshow.com](http://californiacapitalairshow.com). ★

# Hoover Introduces Legislation to Stop the Proliferation of Fentanyl in Schools



Josh Hoover

Office of Assemblyman  
Josh Hoover News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- On February 1st, Assemblyman Josh Hoover (R-Folsom) announced the introduction of groundbreaking legislation to address the alarming rise of fentanyl in California schools and communities. Assembly Bill 2045 would increase penalties on fentanyl crimes involving minors and add sentence enhancements for criminals who traffic fentanyl within 1,000 feet of school grounds.

"Our number one job as lawmakers should be protecting our most vulnerable from harm," Assemblyman Hoover said. "We must do more as a Legislature to

create a safe environment where our children can learn, grow, and thrive. This bill sends a clear message that those who endanger minors and bring deadly fentanyl into our schools will face severe consequences."

AB 2045 would classify fentanyl in the same category as other dangerous illicit drugs and would give prosecutors new tools to hold dealers accountable.

Key Provisions of the Proposed Legislation:

1. New penalties on the sale of fentanyl to children: The bill seeks to add an additional 2 years to the sentence of any adult who solicits, induces, encourages, or intimidates a minor with the intent that the minor commits a drug crime. If passed, this felony offense will be punishable by 5, 8, or 11 years in state prison.

2. Sentence enhancement for fentanyl-related offenses on or near school grounds: Brings fentanyl in line with other drugs like heroin or cocaine in cases

where the offense occurs upon or within 1,000 feet of school grounds by adding a 2-year enhancement to the sentence of those who solicit, encourage, or intimidate minors to commit these drug crimes. This enhancement aims to create a safer environment for students attending public or private elementary, vocational, middle, or high schools during school hours or related programs.

3. Additional punishment for trafficking fentanyl on or near school grounds: Adds fentanyl to the list of illicit drugs already covered under state law for drug trafficking offenses on or near school premises. For adults committing specified drug trafficking offenses within 1,000 feet of a school, the legislation adds an additional punishment of 3, 4, or 5 years. Furthermore, if the offense involves a minor who is at least four years younger than the defendant, an extra enhancement of 3, 4, or 5 years applies, subject to realignment. ★

# Bera Releases Statement on Passage of Bipartisan Tax Package



Ami Bera

Office of Representative  
Ami Bera News Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - On the evening of January 31st, Rep. Ami Bera, M.D. (CA-06) released a statement following his vote to pass H.R. 7024 - Tax Relief for American Families and Workers Act of 2024, bipartisan tax legislation that delivers

critical wins to hardworking families and small businesses in Sacramento County. The legislation passed by a vote of 357-70 on the House floor.

"Tonight, I joined a strong majority of members on both sides of the aisle to pass a bipartisan tax package that will make meaningful changes to the tax code to uplift hardworking families, empower small businesses, and bolster American innovation.

"The package includes several pro-growth, pro-family tax priorities I've been fighting to deliver throughout my time in office, including an expansion of the Child Tax Credit and the Low Income Housing Tax Credit,

incentivizing research and development, supporting small businesses, and strengthening our trade relationship with Taiwan.

"This package is an important step in the right direction that will put money back in the pockets of hardworking families. I urge the Senate to take up this bill quickly so we can get this tax relief signed into law soon. It's estimated that 16 million children will benefit from this package in the next year, including 49,000 in my district.

"Despite the dysfunction and chaos that has defined this Congress, this bipartisan bill demonstrates the progress we can make when lawmakers come together to find common ground." ★

# Presidential Primary Election Update

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Voter Registration and Elections (VRE) Office has begun mailing the County Voter Information Guide (CVIG) for the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election to Sacramento County registered voters. Voters will receive their CVIG in English unless a language preference for Spanish, Chinese or Vietnamese was indicated. If you would like to update your language preference, you may contact VRE at (916) 875-6451 or email [voterinfo@sacounty.gov](mailto:voterinfo@sacounty.gov).

Registered voters can expect the CVIGs to begin arriving in their mailboxes this week. It includes Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations, local candidate statements, measures on the voter's ballot, and important dates and information.

For more information about the March 5, 2024, Presidential Primary Election and voting in Sacramento County, visit the VRE website at [elections.sacounty.gov](http://elections.sacounty.gov), contact VRE at (916) 875-6451, email [voterinfo@sacounty.gov](mailto:voterinfo@sacounty.gov), or call the toll-free voter assistance hotline at (800) 762-8019. The

hotline has the ability to connect voters with disabilities with TTY (Text Telephone).

Key Election Dates

Monday, February 5: Mailing of ballots to all registered voters begins

Monday, February 5: Voted ballots may be returned in any of the Ballot Drop Boxes located throughout the County

Tuesday, February 20: Close of voter registration for this election. Voter registration forms must be postmarked by this date or delivered to the VRE Office at 7000 65th Street, Suite A, Sacramento 95823 by 5:00 p.m. Online voter registration must be completed before midnight on this date at [www.registertovote.ca.gov](http://www.registertovote.ca.gov)

Wednesday, February 21: Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) begins

Saturday, February 24: 11 Day Vote Centers open

Tuesday, February 27: Last day a Vote by Mail (VBM) ballot can be mailed to you. After this date, VBM ballots are only available at the VRE Office or at any Vote Center

Saturday, March 2: All Vote Centers open throughout the County

Tuesday, March 5: Election Day. ★

# AARP Community Challenge Grant Applications Open

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County's Department of Child, Family, and Adult Services is encouraging community groups to apply for AARP's Livable Communities Grant Program, known as the AARP Community Challenge. Since launching in 2017, the program has helped invest millions of dollars into communities across the United States.

Grant applications are open until March 6, 2024. Nonprofits and other community organizations are encouraged to apply.

Key Dates for the 2024 application process include:

- March 6: Application window closes
- June 26: Selected grantees announced
- December 15: completion of all projects.

There are three grant opportunities:  
-Flagship Grants are for projects that especially benefit community members who are 50 or older.

-Capacity-Building Microgrants are worth \$2,500 and benefit residents through bike audits, walk audits, and HomeFit Modifications.

-Demonstration Grants support community-based projects in different categories.

Organizations that want to help continue making Sacramento County a great place for people of all ages are encouraged to apply. Visit [www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge](http://www.AARP.org/CommunityChallenge) to fill out the application and for more details on the different types of grants. You can also view a list of past grant winners here: AARP Community Challenge Grantees. ★

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# First Northern Reports Record Year End 2023 Net Income of \$21.6 Million

## First Northern Community Bancorp News Release

**DIXON, CA (MPG)** - First Northern Community Bancorp (the "Company", OTCQX: FNRN), holding company for First Northern Bank ("First Northern" or the "Bank"), today reported 2023 annual net income of \$21.6 million, or \$1.41 per diluted share, increases of 35.7% and 35.6%, respectively, when compared to net income of \$15.9 million, or \$1.04 per diluted share, for 2022. Net income for the year included the bargain purchase gain resulting from our branch acquisition completed in the first quarter of 2023. On an after-tax basis, the bargain purchase gain contributed \$1.0 million to net income for the year ended December 31, 2023.

Net income for the quarter ended December 31, 2023, totaled \$6.9 million, or \$0.45 per diluted share, compared to net income of \$4.7 million, or \$0.31 per diluted share, for the quarter ended December 31, 2022. The increase in net income on a quarter over quarter basis was largely driven by the reversal of provision for credit losses which totaled \$2.0 million for the quarter ended December 31, 2023, compared to no provision for credit losses for the quarter ended December 31, 2022. The reversal of provision for credit losses of \$2.0 million was primarily due to the payoff of a non-performing agricultural loan relationship that resulted in recoveries of previously charged-off principal totaling \$2.6 million, partially offset by provision for credit losses due to loan growth during the quarter.

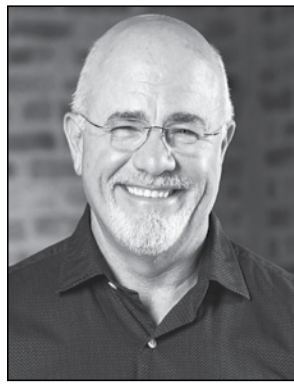
Total assets as of December 31, 2023, were \$1.87 billion, an increase of \$0.5 million, or 0.03%, compared to December 31, 2022. Total deposits as of December 31, 2023, were \$1.69 billion, a decrease of \$34.4 million, or 2.0%, compared to December 31, 2022. Total net loans (including loans held-for-sale) as of December 31, 2023 were \$1.1 billion, an increase of \$82.3 million, or 8.5%,

compared to total net loans (including loans held-for-sale) of \$970.1 million as of December 31, 2022. The increase in net loans was primarily driven by growth in commercial real estate and residential mortgage loans partially offset by net reductions in agricultural loans.

The Company continued to be "well capitalized" under regulatory definitions, exceeding the 10% total risk-based capital ratio threshold as of December 31, 2023.

Commenting on the Company's year-end 2023 financial results, First Northern Bank's President & Chief Executive Officer Jeremiah Smith stated, "We are pleased to report robust financial results for the year 2023. Our success was partially driven by the heightened interest rate environment and subsequent balance sheet repricing. This resulted in record net interest income of \$66.5 million for the year, an increase of \$11.8 million, or 21.7%, compared to the previous year's \$54.7 million. The Company ended the year with a record \$21.6 million of net income, an increase of 35.7% over the \$15.9 million earned in 2022. We believe the success we experienced in 2023 was driven by the significant demand for our approach to relationship banking across the Sacramento region and surrounding communities and reflects the trust our clients and communities have placed in First Northern Bank. Further, we're proud to announce that our trading upgrade from the OTCQB® Venture Market to the OTCQX® Best Market is complete. The OTCQX should provide improved visibility for our stock to investors, brokers, and market makers, with the aim of enhancing shareholder value for FNRN."

The Company also reported that at their regular meeting on January 25, 2024, the Board of Directors approved a 5% stock dividend payable March 25, 2024, to shareholders of record as of February 29, 2024. All income per share amounts in this press release have been adjusted to give retroactive effect to the stock dividend. ★



**It's Worth the Sacrifice and Put The Money in Your Own Pocket**

Dear Dave,

I switched to a debit card so that the money I spend comes directly from my checking account. But I still have a problem some months with overspending and buying things I shouldn't. Do you think I should stop using my debit card?

- Debbie

Dear Debbie,

When I made the decision to get intentional with my money, I just used cash. It's hard to spend it when you don't have any on you. It's a tough thing, I know, but you have to make a conscious decision to start living differently. You've got to get mad at the things that steal your money a dollar or two at a time enough to take action.

Try looking at your life as a whole, not a moment at time. All the moments

## Dave Ramsey Says

you're living right now will have either a positive or negative effect on your future. I decided I wanted the greater, long-term good, so I gave up on the short-term stuff.

Debit cards are great tools. You can't spend money you don't have with them like you can with a credit card. But you've still got to budget very carefully for each month, and give a name and a job to every single penny of your income. Otherwise, you can still overspend.

- Dave

### Put The Money In Your Own Pocket

Dear Dave,

Are home warranties a waste of money if you already have a fully-funded emergency fund containing six months, or even more, of expenses set aside?

- Jodie

Dear Jodie,

I don't do extended warranties, because they're not a good deal. In my mind, you're better off to self-insure against damage or things breaking down. That way, you can put what would have been profit and marketing

dollars for the extended warranty company in your own pocket. I mean, think about it. If you buy something, but can't afford to fix it if something goes wrong, it's not really a smart move to buy it in the first place, is it?

I always recommend an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses to cover the unexpected things that life will throw at you. In most cases, this amount of cash—sitting in a good money market account with check writing privileges—will allow you easy access in the event of unexpected expenses or a financial emergency.

- Dave

*Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Today, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people take control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for Ramsey Solutions* ★



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	C	O	B	A	I	N		C	R	O	S	S	E	D
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E	P	I	L	O	G		L	S	A	T		O	R	T
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B	E	A	T	L	E	S		V	E	R	O	N	A	
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T	I	L	E	D		G	U	N		D	U	G	I	N
E	D	D	Y			N	E	T		E	S	S	A	Y

**STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • LOVE**

**CLUES**

ACROSS  
 1. Zagreb native  
 6. Not St. or Blvd.  
 9. Tucked in  
 13. Whatchamacallit  
 14. Robert Redford's Sundance \_\_\_\_  
 15. In a cold manner  
 16. Tiny island  
 17. Mad King George's number  
 18. Hearing, e.g.  
 19. "Love's late Nirvana husband"  
 21. "Star-\_\_\_\_"  
 23. "Air Supply's "Making Love Out of Nothing at \_\_\_\_"  
 24. Elementary particle  
 25. Tire meas.  
 28. Land of Israel  
 30. "Joe Cocker and Jennifer Warnes: "Love lifts us up where we \_\_\_\_"  
 35. Ladder crosspiece  
 37. Frenzied  
 39. London's Thames, e.g.  
 40. \_\_\_\_-European language  
 41. Call it quits  
 43. Very bright star  
 44. What procedural and epidural have in common  
 46. Crosby's and Still's partner  
 47. Mountain valley  
 48. Final words  
 50. Future J.D.'s hurdle  
 52. Food scrap  
 53. Tax  
 55. Pen point  
 57. "All You Need Is Love" band, with The  
 61. "Letters to Juliet destination"  
 64. Habitue  
 65. NHL surface  
 67. Ancient marketplace  
 69. Like many bathroom floors?  
 70. Blunderbuss, e.g.  
 71. Entrenched (2 words)  
 72. Whirlpool  
 73. Volleyball court center  
 74. English homework assignment

DOWN  
 1. Computer-related imaging acronym  
 2. CISC alternative  
 3. Capital of Norway  
 4. Single-cell protozoan  
 5. Bottom lines  
 6. Similar  
 7. One of the Tudors  
 8. Authoritative proclamation  
 9. Single pip cards  
 10. The Container Store purchase, pl.  
 11. "What \_\_\_\_ can I say?"  
 12. T-shirt, after tied  
 15. Chemical cousin  
 20. Homer's epic  
 22. Actor Lowe  
 24. Deviation from the norm  
 25. "U2's "In the Name of Love" song"  
 26. First light of day  
 27. Lemur from Madagascar  
 29. Damien's prediction  
 31. Ding-a-\_\_\_\_  
 32. Convex molding

33. "Love means \_\_\_\_ having to say you're sorry"  
 34. "Love Actually" star  
 36. Hockey score  
 38. "True Love's \_\_\_\_"  
 42. Feudal lord  
 45. Loafed  
 49. "Holy moly!"  
 51. Rant  
 54. "Peace" with fingers (2 words)  
 56. Phony  
 57. Teeth mark  
 58. Children's writer Blyton  
 59. Old, in Scottish  
 60. Three pointer  
 61. Heater outlet  
 62. Wooden pegs  
 63. Rigoletto's "La donna mobile," e.g.  
 66. Pool tool  
 68. One or some

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# Local Author Calls Up Baseball Fans with New Book

By Tamara Warta

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (MPG)** - The San Francisco Giants baseball team clearly has countless fans across Northern California, and have inspired many young baseball players to dream of going on to the Major Leagues themselves. One of those dreamers was Zak Ford, who grew up in the 1980s and 90s — the heyday of Candlestick Park.

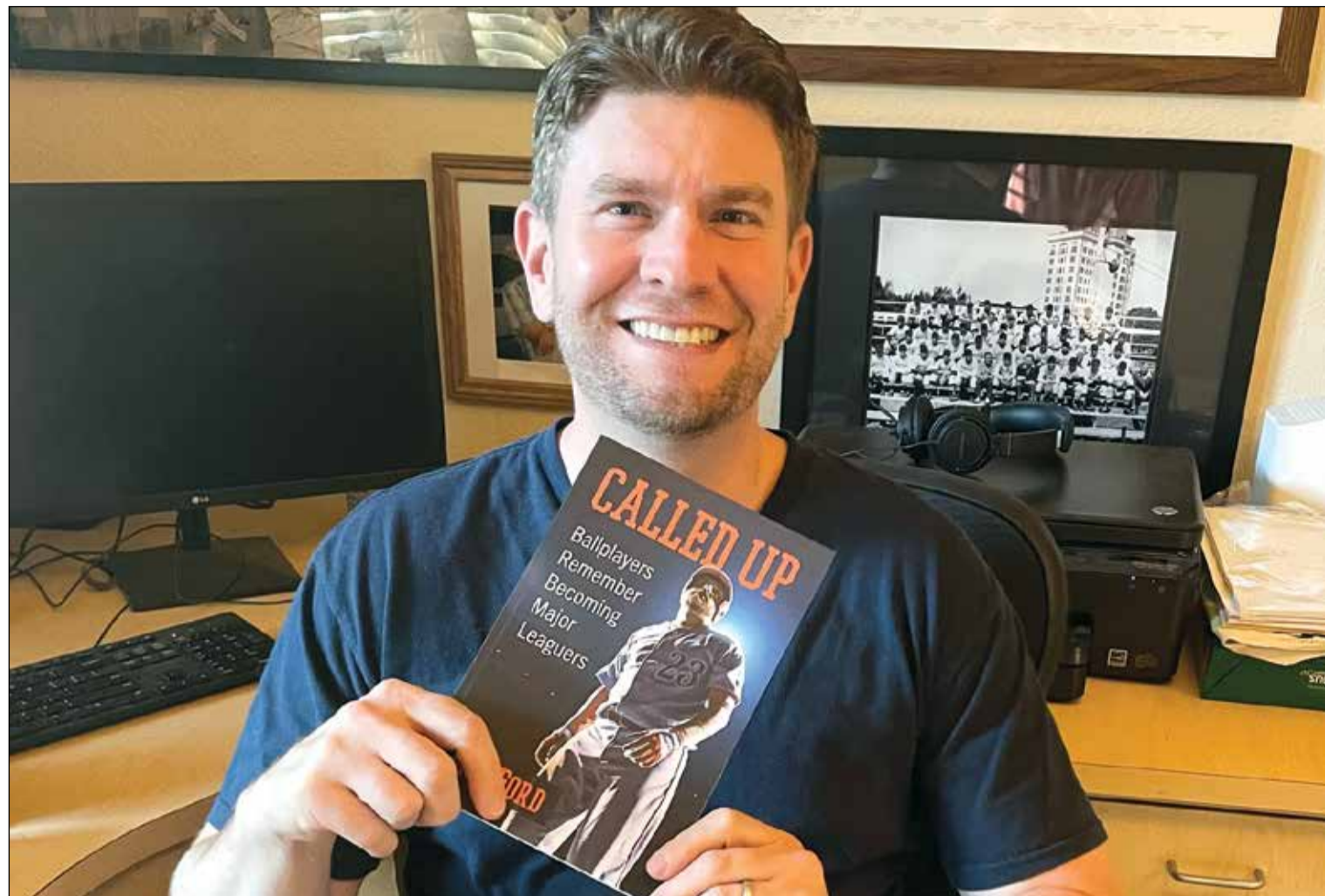
Ford not only enjoyed cheering from the stands at many a Giants game growing up, but he also heralded from some pro-ball genetics. His great-uncle, Larry Powell, pitched in 14 professional seasons in the 1930s through 1950s. He was picked up by the Boston Red Sox out of spring training, but was released two weeks later. Powell was then signed by the Boston Braves, but again was released — this time after only one week. His MLB dreams died without ever stepping into a game.

Ford grew up knowing of Powell's experience, but never asked him how that journey felt. Instead, Powell — who struggled to hit .200 throughout his own Little League years — decided to write about baseball instead.

Ford's book, *Called Up: Ballplayers Remember Becoming Major Leaguers*, may not include Larry Powell's perspective, but it does delight readers with 109 stories of MLB players reflecting upon the moment they were called up to the big leagues. Written in a first-person narrative, it's a human interest book that will obviously be enjoyed by baseball fans, but written with such skill that it will also draw in readers that have limited knowledge of the process and history of the game.

"It really captures the feelings and emotions of becoming a MLB player," says Ford. "To be able to capture 109 stories about the achievement is something I'm very glad of being capable to do."

Out of the 109 featured in the book, about 10 of them are local



Zak Ford, author of *Called Up: Ballplayers Remember Becoming Major Leaguers*. Photo courtesy of Zak Ford

to the Sacramento region — those that either came out of the area, and reside in the Sacramento region now. Ford himself grew up in the Rancho Cordova area and now lives in Cameron Park. He works in workforce development policy, which aims to improve outcomes for people with disabilities. He was also a member of the Folsom-Cordova School Board from 2010-2018.

Ford clearly has a passion and enthusiasm for people and bettering the world around him, but the world of baseball — and later writing about it — has always captured him.

"I've always been a fan of baseball dating back to when I was a 7- or 8-year-old kid," says Ford. "I kind of realized that I was going to have to choose a different avenue

for me to find my niche in the game and decided to pursue writing. I've basically been doing it as a hobby since I was a teenager. One of the goals I've always had was to write a baseball book, and now at 45 [years old] I've achieved it."

To write the book, Ford interviewed former MLB players for about two and a half years. When asked what stories really stuck out to him, Ford took a thoughtful pause to answer.

"All of these players had to exhibit extreme dedication and perseverance to meet the goal of becoming a MLB player," he said. "All of them are great inspirational stories. I grew up a Giants fan, and I was able to capture the stories of some of the guys who came up with the Giants during the

time I was a young baseball fan. Those are the stories that stick out to me."

Sean Estes, who is now active with Giants broadcasts, is one example of a player that shared his story of being a number one pick.

"It took him four or five years to reach the major leagues," Ford recalls. "He was up in the major leagues for the majority of the next 12 or 13 years."

The lesson to be learned? Never give up on your dreams.

"There are many stories that show ups and downs, that show hardship and overcoming adversity. It's an inspirational book about going through that journey and showing dedication and perseverance," said Ford.

Since his book's publication, Ford has done virtual

presentations for baseball groups, as well as a local book signing. He's also working on a second book. Potentially entitled *Next Up*, the new manuscript will focus on MLB players' lives in the normal workforce outside of baseball — perhaps disproving the belief that all MLB players retire wealthy.

"The vast majority of them need to have jobs after their playing careers," says Ford.

"There are players that have had pretty big challenges trying to find what's next, while others have that hustling mentality they picked up in baseball that serve them well after their playing days. That scrappy mentality has paid off."

It has paid off for this successful local author as well. You can keep up with Zak's career by visiting his website, zakford.com. ★

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