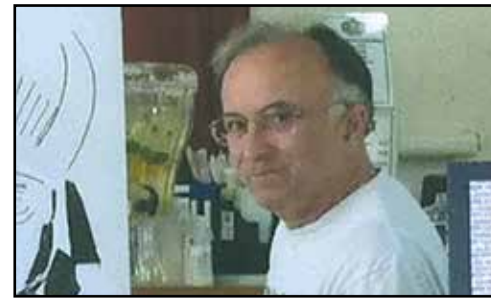


**Grant Awarded
By SAFE to Program
Dedicated to
Preventing Falls**

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**Call to
Local
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Gold River Messenger

VOLUME 12 • ISSUE 4

Serving Gold River and Sacramento County

APRIL 2024

**SEE
INSIDE**

**FIX
PROP 47**



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**RESTORING
SAFETY TO OUR
NEIGHBORHOODS**



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**SACRAMENTO
NATIVE SERVES IN
THE SOUTH**



PAGE 2

Leave No Trace

Real Environmentalism in Action



Myrna Gonzales shows off the day's work.

**Story and photo
by Kristina Rogers**

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On a chilly winter morning, I joined a crew of grassroots eco-activists from the River City Waterway Alliance (a.k.a. RCWA) at Cal Expo entrance 12. Dressed in sturdy gear, friends chatted over coffee and donuts. We gathered to hear team lead David Ingram give an overview of the day's work and then trekked the pathway to the riverbank with carts of buckets, grabbers, and trash bags.

Wayne Watts, a longtime

Sacramento resident, told me he's been cleaning up this part of the American River Parkway since 1985. "I've got grandkids and great-grandkids and want them to have a place to go." Watts explained, "We've had these camps for generations, but COVID made it worse. Pandemic health restrictions allowed illegal campers to be left alone, and camps grew. We are working to get where Mother Nature can heal itself again."

Off the path, we were greeted with muddy rubbish hanging from brush due to seasonal rains and flooding. Margarita Chavez stepped into

a thorny bush to pull out discarded blankets and clothing. Chavez is a well-known trash dash warrior. Her twin sister Myrna Gonzales was there to help, too. The twins proudly shared they'll celebrate a 70th birthday soon, yet you'd never know from their energy level. The sisters say this volunteer work keeps them young.

Meanwhile, Watts found a small propane canister: "These are used to cook and other things. People toss 'em when empty. If there's a fire, they burn hot and explode like

Continued on page 5

SMUD's Shine Program Invests \$580,000 in Local Projects

SMUD News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Twenty-nine local nonprofit organizations will benefit from more than \$580,000 in funding from SMUD's annual Shine program. The Shine program, now in its 7th year, is supporting nonprofit programs that engage communities across SMUD's service area in an equitable transition to a clean energy future.

This year's projects will increase access to clean energy/STEM education and support environmental justice and equity, zero carbon workforce development, habitat restoration and increased tree canopy, energy efficiency and electrification for nonprofits, inclusive economic development, youth entrepreneurship and job readiness programs and trainings for under-resourced community members.

"SMUD's vision for a clean energy future is about much more than transforming our power plants, it's about equitably transforming the communities we serve," said SMUD CEO and General Manager Paul Lau. "The Clean PowerCity movement empowers our region's households, businesses and diverse communities to help us reach and deliver our ambitious 2030 Zero Carbon Plan. From clean energy outreach and STEM lessons in classrooms, to neighborhood revitalization projects, workforce training in under-resourced communities and new apprentices, SMUD's Shine program harnesses the determination and vision of local nonprofits, regional partners and the communities we serve and supports them in making meaningful change that will benefit the entire region for generations to come."

This year, 112 community members participated in program education sessions, 148 community members participated in technical assistance sessions and 84 organizations moved forward and submitted applications in the competitive award process. Per Shine requirements, SMUD's investments are matched by the recipient for maximum impact.

The 29 selected nonprofits include American River Parkway Foundation; Asian Resources, Inc.; Associated General Contractors Construction Education Foundation (AGC CEF); Carmichael Improvement District; Center for Land-Based Learning; City of Trees Foundation; CLEANSTART,

Continued on page 5

Champion of the Community

**By Shelby Golden,
Cordova Recreation
& Park District**

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - On March 13, 2024, Cordova Recreation & Park District (CRPD) joined the California Park & Recreation Society (CPRS) District 2 at their Awards & Installation Banquet where local park and recreation agencies came together to recognize outstanding agencies and professionals and install the 2024-2025 District 2 board members.

Nominated by CRPD, Gianni Chauppette was the recipient of this year's Champion of the Community Award. Chauppette is an aspiring environmentalist and nature enthusiast from Troop 363 who recognized the potential for wildlife observation at Heron Landing Community Park. Combining his passion for nature and dedication to scouting, Chauppette proposed a unique project that



CRPD board of directors and staff with Champion of the Community Gianni Chauppette and his family. Photo courtesy of CRPD

would enhance visitors' connection with the surrounding environment. As part of his project, he was able to raise nearly \$11,000 thanks to contributions from 60 generous community members and CRPD.

In June of 2023, Gianni worked closely with CRPD to research and install an ADA-accessible binocular post overlooking the neighboring wetland preserve at Heron Landing Community

Park. Nature enthusiasts can now easily get a close look at the local wildlife that call our region home. Visit the Heron Landing Community Park at 11750 Justinian Drive, Rancho Cordova, to check it out! To learn more about this project, visit bit.ly/CRPDbinoculars.

During the installment of the new CPRS District 2 board members, CRPD Recreation Supervisor Nicole Lowery was appointed as treasurer and CRPD Recreation Supervisor Heather Schelske was appointed as the aging section representative.

CRPD was proud to be a part of the CPRS District 2 awards banquet where park and recreation professionals came together to celebrate one another and the outstanding work throughout the previous year. ★



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Sacramento County's Inspector General Selected



Kevin Gardner, Sacramento's new inspector general. Courtesy photo

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously on March 26 to approve the selection of Kevin Gardner as the County's new Inspector General and authorizes the County Executive to sign a contract with Gardner for that position, effective April 2, 2024.

The nationwide search commenced with two collaborative interview panels that were convened for the Inspector General search. One panel was comprised of members appointed by the Community Review Commission, as well as representatives from both the Law Enforcement Management Association (LEMA) and the Sacramento County Deputy Sheriff's

Association (SCDSA). The second panel included the Chair of the Board of Supervisors, the Sheriff, and representatives from LEMA and SCDSA.

All panel representatives expressed their support of moving forward with recommending Gardner's appointment.

Gardner has 31 years of sworn law enforcement experience, including service with the City of Vacaville and City of Sacramento police departments. During his time with the City of Sacramento, Gardner rose through the ranks, ultimately becoming an Acting Deputy Chief.

Beginning in 2017, Gardner served two years as the Chief of the Division of Law Enforcement for the California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General. Most recently, he served as the Interim Director for the City of Sacramento's Office of Public Safety Accountability.

Gardner has a bachelor's degree in administration of justice from Union Institute and University and a master's degree in leadership from Saint Mary's College.

The Office of the Inspector General was created to facilitate the Board of Supervisors'

responsibility to oversee without interfering with the Sheriff's investigation of personnel deployment functions.

The Inspector General ensures the integrity of the citizen complaint process and the thoroughness and fairness of related Sheriff's Office investigations, while fostering positive relations with the community. The Community Review Commission acts in a supporting role to the Office of Inspector General and acts as a conduit between the community and the Office of Inspector General.

Sign up to receive email or mobile text messages when new Community Review Commission meeting information is available.

The Inspector General works independently on items detailed in the scope of services. The Inspector General will present recommendations relating to these examinations to the Board of Supervisors, County Executive, and the Sheriff.

The Office of the Inspector General is a contract position. The contract, once executed, will be effective beginning April 2, 2024, through March 31, 2026, with the option to renew the contract for one additional two-year term. ★

SAFE Grants \$15,000 to Program Dedicated to Preventing Falls



Collage at Rebuilding Together Sacramento's Tahoe Park offices and workshop displays work done to help prevent falls. Photo courtesy of SAFE Credit Union



Rebuilding Together Sacramento Executive Director Bonnie Patterson. Photo courtesy of SAFE Credit Union

SAFE Credit Union News Release

FOLSOM, CA (MPG) - A \$15,000 community grant awarded by SAFE Credit Union is aiding many residents in the Sacramento region to live safer and fuller lives.

The credit union recently awarded the funds to Rebuilding Together Sacramento's Safe at Home program dedicated to preventing seniors and those with disabilities from experiencing falls at home. The program's volunteers and staff build and install free safety improvements to the homes of qualifying area residents including ramps, railings and grab bars.

"We have an aging population in the Sacramento area that are finding it harder and harder to do the things they love. Much of that is because they can't get in and out of their homes safely," says Rebuilding Together Sacramento Executive Director Bonnie Patterson. "Donors like SAFE Credit Union allow us to help more and more people. We are very, very thankful to have received this grant."

In 2023, Safe at Home

volunteers and staff helped 623 area individuals in 400 homes in El Dorado, Sacramento, San Joaquin counties and in West Sacramento.

According to the Centers for Disease Control, one in four older adults over 65 experienced a fall in 2020 - equating to an average of 3 million subsequent visits to emergency rooms each year. The CDC also reports that at least one out of five falls can cause serious injuries resulting in adverse quality of life situations for patients, including difficulty getting around, doing everyday activities, and living independently.

"SAFE Credit Union has a long history of helping improve the health of residents through philanthropy in the communities we serve," says SAFE Credit Union Vice President of Community Relations and Financial Education Rebecca Delmundo. "This grant exemplifies that, and we are so glad to have been able to support such a time-tested nonprofit."

Founded in 1991, Rebuilding Together Sacramento works to fill the need and enhance affordable housing for older adults and those with disabilities. Along with its Safe at Home program, the nonprofit works with partners to revitalize neighborhoods and reduce energy costs for seniors, as well as works individually with families and children through their programs in addition to seniors and those with disabilities.

"If you go in and install a handrail or a grab bar, a lot

of times the folks are just so grateful and so thankful and are just delightful people," says Safe at Home volunteer Dan Ward of Carmichael. "It's good just helping folks out."

Volunteer Stan Jones of the Greenhaven-Pocket area says he has put in hundreds of grab bars in the 12 years he's worked as a volunteer. "The clients are very grateful for the help that they receive, and our work prevents falls," Jones says.

Rebuilding Together Sacramento's grant was one of two grants selected by a public vote to receive \$15,000. Foster Youth Education Fund also received a \$15,000 grant for its program supporting former foster youth in the Sacramento region with financial scholarships, as well as laptops for students enrolling or attending a college, university or trade school.

SAFE provides grant funding in four cycles each year, including financial literacy. For more information on the latest cycle's focus and application click here or visit: <https://www.safecu.org/community/community-impact/funding>.

To find out more about Rebuilding Together Sacramento or to volunteer, visit: <https://www.rebuildingtogethersacramento.org/>. For media information about the nonprofit, contact Rebuilding Together Sacramento Resource Development and Marketing Manager Liz Godfrey at (916) 455-1880 ext. 9, or lgodfrey@rebuildingtogethersacramento.org. ★

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Sacramento Native Serves in The South China Sea Aboard USS Theodore Roosevelt



Navy Office of Community Outreach News Release

SOUTH CHINA SEA (MPG) - U.S. Navy Quartermaster 3rd Class Krosavanh Phongphet, left, from Sacramento, Calif., and Quartermaster Seaman Apprentice Saraya Phillips, from Newark, N.J., pull down signal flags aboard the Nimitz-class aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt (CVN 71), March 12, 2024. Theodore Roosevelt, flagship of Carrier Strike Group Nine, is underway conducting routine operations in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations. U.S. 7th Fleet is the U.S. Navy's largest forward-deployed numbered fleet, and routinely interacts and operates with allies and partners in preserving a free and open Indo-Pacific region. Photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Richard Tinker

Ben Ali Shrine Band to Present Free Concert

Ben Ali Shrine Band News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Ben Ali Shrine Band will perform a free, family-friendly, open to the public concert at 7 p.m. Friday, April 19, at the California Automobile Museum at 2200 Front Street in Sacramento.

Under the baton of Director Jerry Lopes, the band will perform a variety of popular tunes, including a sprinkling of automotive-themed favorites.

Donation envelopes in support of the extraordinary work done by doctors and staff of the Shriners Hospitals for Children -- Northern California, 2425 Stockton Blvd. in Sacramento, will be available on-site. Donations are strictly voluntary.

Ben Ali's history dates back to 1922, highlighted by positive community outreach and support of the Shriners

Hospitals for Children. The Ben Ali Shrine Temple is located at 3262 Marysville Blvd., in Sacramento.

Shriners Hospitals for Children -- Northern California treats children with complex medical conditions, providing care to families throughout Northern California, the western United States and portions of Mexico and Canada. The free care provided by the local hospital -- and Shriners hospitals throughout the United States -- promotes healing that otherwise would represent an enormous economic burden to affected families.

The California Automobile Museum houses one of the nation's most diverse collections of motor vehicles produced over many decades. Its extensive docent program is nationally recognized. For more information on the museum or to become a member, call 916-442-6802 or visit www.calautomuseum.org. ★

Call to Local Artists

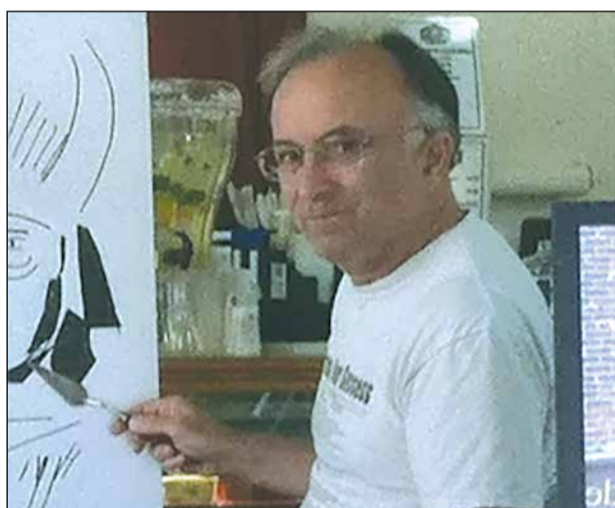
Northern California Arts Inc. News Release

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - If you or somebody you know has an artistic gift, Bold Expressions 2024, Northern California Arts, Inc. is set to have their (NCA) 69th International Open Juried Art Exhibit this coming October.

This is open to fine artists everywhere. Northern California Arts, Inc. is located in the Sacramento Area and invites you to submit your original artwork. Photography, giclees, video, computer generated art, or crafts are not accepted for this show.

The Juror will be Tom Matousek, whose work can be found at <https://disneyfineart.com/collections/tom-matousek>.

The Online application deadline is August 11, 2024. The exhibit



Paul Dessau, NCA Artist Standing Chair. Photo courtesy of Paul Dessau Fine Arts

dates will be October 1, 2024, to October 26th, 2024. The Best of Show will be awarded \$1,000, plus other awards will be given out.

Applicants can enter at <https://www.entrythingy.com/d=norcalartsinc.org?start=list>.

For a detailed Artist's Prospectus, visit

[norcalartsinc.org](http://www.norcalartsinc.org) and click on "call to artists".

For more Bold Expressions 2024 information, email paul@nccn.net or call 530-346-6078. Paul Dessau is the NCA Artist Standing Chair.

For more information about Paul, visit his website at <http://www.pauldessaufineart.com/> ★

CRPD to Host Free Senior Resource Fair

CRPD News Release

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - Cordova Recreation & Park District (CRPD) invites community members to our Senior Resource Fair. This annual, family-friendly event will be held from 1 to 3 p.m. on April 24 at the Lincoln Village Community Park located at 3480 Routed Road in Sacramento. Admission is free.

There will be more than 30 vendors offering free resources and Bradshaw Animal Shelter will be onsite offering free microchipping to anyone in the community who comes out to the event with a

pet! The first 100 people to pre-register for the event will receive a free barbecue lunch with the completion of an event passport. Passports can be found at the CRPD booth on the day of the event.

To learn more about this event and register, please visit <https://bit.ly/2024SRF> or call 916-366-3133.

The district thanks its sponsors Alignment Health Care, Summerset Senior Living, Rancho Cordova Fiber City, Well Care Health Net, Your Elder Care, Anthem, and Camellia Memorial Lawn for supporting this community event. ★



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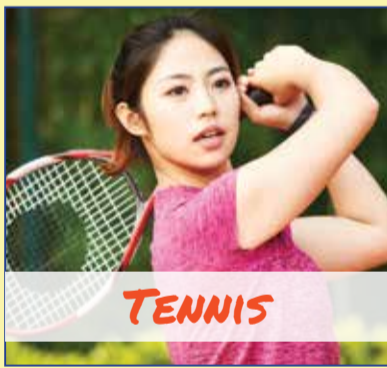
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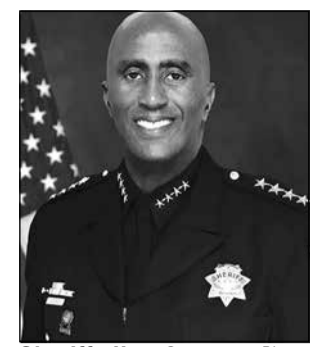
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Cooper Supports Initiative to Restore Safety to Our Neighborhoods and Communities



Sheriff Jim Cooper. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County Sheriff's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - In 2014, the voters passed Proposition 47 (Prop 47). Those who wrote the initiative deceived the public by naming it the "Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act." I actively opposed Prop 47 because it was clear to me that this initiative would severely hurt our communities and eliminate much-needed programs to ensure the public's safety. The proposition nearly decriminalized narcotic possession for personal use, including fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, and methamphetamine.

It also made retail theft very lucrative for serial thieves by reducing penalties to virtually the same as receiving a traffic ticket. It also prohibited adding the dollar amounts from multiple thefts, resulting in an illegal industry in which career thieves could repeatedly steal with minor consequences.

However, the most damage caused by Prop 47 was the decimation of mandated drug and alcohol courts that were used to get people help in lieu of jail time. Just in Sacramento alone, drug court participation dropped over 70% because of the so-called "Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act."

After its passage, I spent eight years in the California Legislature attempting to correct the reckless impacts of Prop 47. After many attempts to amend the proposition, California courts and

Legislative legal counsel deemed that Prop 47 could not be fixed by the Legislature and had to be returned to the voters for any meaningful amendments. In 2020, because the only way to return to common sense and restore public safety was through the action of the voters, I was one of the proponents of Proposition 20 (Prop 20), which would have fixed the problems we are all witnessing today.

Once again, the advocates for criminal lawlessness lied to the voters, claiming that Prop 20 would result in "mass prison incarceration." Sadly, that measure failed, and the problem of rampant retail theft, homelessness, and drug addiction has only gotten worse.

As Sacramento County Sheriff, I have witnessed first-hand the horrific problems brought about by Prop 47 in our community. It continues to devastate businesses of all sizes and types. Many small community-based businesses have been driven to the brink of closure. Additionally, the catastrophic impacts of Prop 47 on drug addiction left untreated cannot be denied in Sacramento. Without the ability of the courts to mandate drug treatment, many people's lives continue to be ravaged by addiction, leading to homelessness and death.

As Sheriff, I have tried to address the homeless and theft crisis. Through our intervention efforts, data has been collected and analyzed, which shows in Sacramento County alone, 66% of our homeless population has a drug or alcohol addiction. I have also conducted major retail theft operations. One operation named "Operation Bad Elf" netted over 300 misdemeanor arrests for retail theft in just a 7-day period. This is nothing short of unabated lawlessness caused by Prop 47's misguided provisions promoting criminal behavior

with no accountability.

I conducted these operations because I refuse to have the citizens of Sacramento County be victims of the unjust laws created by Prop 47. However, those arrests are still misdemeanors and operations that size are costly to the taxpayer and unsustainable. Furthermore, those addicted to drugs and alcohol will continue to have their lives caught in substance abuse turmoil until we have the courage to mandate their treatment. I will continue doing what the law allows me to keep you safe and increase your quality of life, but it will not be enough.

This is why I am endorsing the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act Initiative, which is in the qualification phase and if qualified, it will give the voters an opportunity to amend the dangerous and failed aspects of Prop 47.

This initiative will classify repeated retail thefts as a felony if they have two or more theft convictions. It allows for stolen property values to be combined so serial thieves can be charged with a felony if that amount exceeds \$950.

Also, it adds fentanyl to the list of hard drugs that are illegal to possess with a firearm, enacts the "treatment mandated felony" that would give drug addicts the option to get treatment instead of going to jail, and allows drug-addicted offenders who successfully complete drug and mental health treatment to avoid jail time.

This initiative does not repeal Prop 47, does not lead to "mass incarceration," and is necessary because the California Legislature cannot, by statute, fix the chaos created by Prop 47. It must be fixed by the voters.

I urge you to join me in this effort to return our neighborhoods and schools to safer places that have been devastated by Prop 47. ★

- Sheriff Jim Cooper

Social Worker Saves Child's Life

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - For social workers with Sacramento County Child Protective Services, quick actions can sometimes be the difference between life and death. That was the case during a recent emergency call for Renee, a Sacramento County social worker. When a mother told Renee that her one-year-old child was not breathing, Renee jumped into action and called 911. In the emergency, Renee realized she had to take immediate steps. She pushed on the child's stomach to clear their airway, restoring the child's breathing.

Renee's dedication to helping the family in need did not stop there. She stayed by the child's side until medical professionals arrived. She also provided support to the mother, arranging transportation to the hospital, and followed up to make sure they arrived safely.

While her actions had a life-changing impact on the family, Renee says she was just doing her job. She says her coworkers would have done the same thing if they were in the situation. She is humbled to be recognized for her actions because she doesn't do the work for the recognition, but to



Renee, the social worker who saved a child's life. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

help make a difference in her community.

"What brings me the most joy in my career is when a family reaches out and shares how my work has helped to improve their lives and their children's lives or a client makes an effort to thank me for my work years later," says Renee.

Renee is an Emergency Response Social Worker for the Department of Child, Family, and Adult Services (DCFAS) and she has worked for the department for about 17 years. In her role, she focuses on improving child safety and reducing

risks in the communities she serves. Beyond her heroic actions during emergencies, Renee's daily work involves advocating for families, conducting thorough assessments, and collaborating with various agencies to ensure comprehensive support for children and caregivers.

Renee's hard work and dedication to DCFAS are just one shining example of how social workers make a positive difference in families' lives. DCFAS leadership thanks Renee for her compassion and continued work in keeping kids safe. ★

Rep. Ami Bera Holds Roundtable, Tours EV Manufacturing Facility



Office of Rep. Ami Bera News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - On March 18, Representative Ami Bera, M.D. (CA-06) hosted Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 9 Administrator Martha Guzman for a roundtable discussion with regional stakeholders and toured Lion Electric's all-electric truck, bus, and minibus manufacturing facility in Sacramento County.

They were joined by Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg, Sacramento County District 2 Supervisor Patrick Kennedy, Sacramento City Councilman Eric Guerra, Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (AQMD) Executive Director and Air Pollution Control Officer Alberto Ayala,

and other local leaders to highlight Sacramento's climate successes, showcase EPA investments in the Sacramento community, and discuss potential avenues for continued EPA regional support.

"From the Inflation Reduction Act to the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, I am pleased to see President Biden's Investing in America agenda at work right here in Sacramento County," said Congressman Ami Bera. "I extend my thanks to Administrator Guzman and her team at the EPA for their continued partnership in supporting critical investments in our region's infrastructure, including electric vehicle manufacturing, that will create job opportunities and pave the way for cleaner and greener transportation options."

"The Sacramento region's innovative and ambitious plans for utilizing the full range of historic federal investments supported by President Biden's Investing in America agenda — from soil health to electric vehicle charging in disadvantaged communities — constitute a national model," said EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha

Guzman. "I applaud local leaders for their commitment to collaboration, and to moving the ball forward on the most difficult environmental justice and climate change challenges."

"Thank you to Congressman Bera, and to the EPA, for supporting critical investments in air quality improvement, monitoring and infrastructure projects in neighborhoods most impacted by pollution," said Sac Metro Air District Air Pollution Control Officer Dr. Alberto Ayala. "We are thrilled to highlight the electric, hydrogen, and biomass projects already underway in our region focused on advancing environmental justice and reducing negative climate impacts in our region. Through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grants program, made possible by the Inflation Reduction Act and the Investing in America Agenda, our region has a comprehensive plan ready to address these challenges through innovative and cutting-edge projects. We look forward to advancing our collaborative efforts and driving positive climate action in the Sacramento region for years to come." ★

Welcome Spring at Sutter Creek's Knight Foundry

Knight Foundry News Release

SUTTER CREEK, CA (MPG) - Historic Knight Foundry in Sutter Creek welcomes Spring at its monthly 2nd Saturday Public Tour Day on Saturday, April 13, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The crew is firing up the antique blacksmithing forge, pouring and crafting hot metal, and demonstrating the magnificent and still-intact machinery. Visitors can tour at their own pace, meeting and talking with expert docents throughout the complex. Pieces made by Foundry artisans are on sale at the Gift Shop.

Tickets are sold at the door: \$15 for adults 18 and older, \$5 for students ages 5 to 17, free for children under 5 and Knight Foundry Alliance members. All demonstrations are included in the ticket price.

Knight Foundry, 81 Eureka Street, Sutter Creek CA 95685. Learn more: #visit-knightfoundry, info@knightfoundry ★



Robin Peters makes star ornaments to be sold in the Knight Foundry gift shop. Photo courtesy of Knight Foundry



Featured here are Knight Foundry items made on site through the ancient art of sand casting. Photo courtesy of Knight Foundry

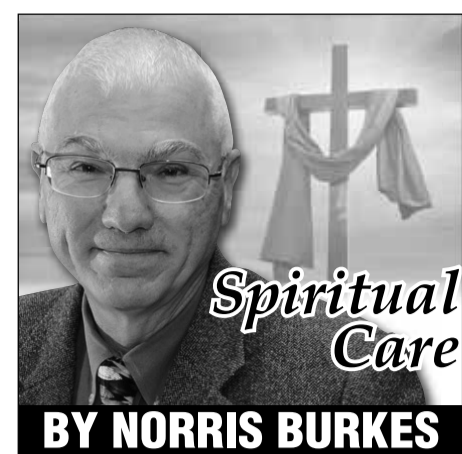
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Don't Gamble with Faith



hoping to come up with a win. Still others rely on some lucky combination that their grandfather passed along to them. "My granddaddy prayed for my grandmother inside that church, and she was healed, so I guess it's a winner."

Yet, still others rely on the big-spin approach and take the one they land on. Others see faith like picking the right card out of a newly shuffled deck.

And some play faith the way they play a bluffing poker hand, refusing to let anyone see the cards of doubt they hold.

The problem with these approaches is they produce a routine of losing, much like those who return each night to the same casino only to lose again.

The faith choice made with these methods usually ends up discarded, much like a Lotto ticket on a gas-station driveway.

Faith has little to do with winning or losing. Faith is too important to treat with the same glibness we use to choose our winning numbers. Perhaps it's more about investing in who we are, not about gambling on what we never had.

Maybe faith comes about when we invest in the search. We find it inspired by the conversations, the discussions, the questions, and the debates that we have with others. In fact, I believe God prefers honest "searchers" or "questioners," even when they challenge him directly, even when they are unflattering.

Jesus suggested faith might well be something compared to a mustard seed. A mustard seed is the tiniest of seeds, yet in ratio, it grows into one of the biggest plants. Faith starts from the smallest beginnings in the hearts of people and produces not a personal profit, but a powerful and personal transformation.

Well, all this talk about winning the lottery made me wonder what might happen if I actually bought a ticket. I mean, if I ever bought just one, what might happen?

I may never know.

But if you do happen to win with my divine numbers, please remember my favorite charity – Chispa Project. I think it's fair to say that any gift can be an investment in faith. ★

SMUD's Shine Program Invests \$580,000 in Local Projects



Local nonprofit leaders gather to celebrate SMUD's 7th Annual Shine Awards. Photo courtesy of SMUD

Continued from page 1

Inc.; Folsom Historic Society; Franklin Blvd Business Association; Freedom Through Education; Fulton El Camino Recreation and Park District; Futures Explored; Health Education Council; HumanBulb; Interns2Pro; Iranian American Culture & Education; Kiwanis Club of Rancho Cordova Foundation; Lion's Roar Dharma Center; National Academic Youth Council DBA Sojourner Truth African Heritage Museum; NeighborWorks Sacramento; ReImagine Mack Road Partnership; Sacramento Children's Museum; Sacramento Food Bank

& Family Services; ShopClass; Soil Born Farms; Square Root Academy; Sunshine Food Pantry and Resource Center; The Salvation Army; Voices of Youth.

SMUD will take an active role in monitoring performance and progress of each project.

Shine awards range from \$5,000 to \$100,000. Any nonprofit organization within SMUD's service area is eligible to apply. Shine awards are available at three funding levels: Spark (up to \$10,000), Amplifier (up to \$50,000) and Transformer (up to \$100,000).

For more information about the SMUD Shine program, visit smud.org/Shine. ★

Leave No Trace

Continued from page 1

shrapnel. They are dangerous to firefighters, so we try to pull them out as fast as possible."

Discarded illegal camping items harm the environment and animals. Heavy layers of tarps, tents, and blankets choke streams. Plastic containers, bike parts, and broken glass disrupt wildlife's nesting spots. Needles, batteries, abandoned prescription drugs, and used wipes taint the soil. It should concern every Sierra Club member and climate change activist who understand when exiting a natural space, you are to leave no trace.

To naysayers who ask why clean up when it will get trashed again, Ingram and his friends have an answer. "Why brush your teeth or take a shower when you will just get dirty again? Every piece of trash removed will never return to that waterway. If we do nothing, it will get worse."

In 2023, the River City Waterway Alliance removed 1,134,313 pounds of trash from our natural spaces. This includes 441 shopping carts, 23,819 batteries, and 9,485 needles. In addition, when they deep clean an area, it becomes "RCWA Clean" and is maintained by volunteers and parks. Now, that's sustainability.

Clean up events are frequent at Arcade Creek, American River, Steelhead Creek, Bannon Island, and the Sacramento River. The group has over 223 videos on their YouTube channel. It's fascinating to see the creativity they use to get to the garbage along difficult riverbanks.

David Ingram, along with RCWA co-founders, Kathleen Ford, Lisa Sanchez, and Mark Baker, are active leaders collaborating with the county. Sacramento County Parks Department helps haul the garbage out once it's in a pile. They've

also advocated for more funding. Sanchez assisted in getting county parks a budget increase, paying for new equipment and a few new maintenance workers. City council members are starting to step up too. Lisa Kaplan (District 1) and Karina Talamantes (District 2) have been hosting RCWA events in their areas.

Back at the clean-up site, my arms were tiring, and the "almost 70" twins were running circles around me. I'm thinking about attending more RCWA events and giving up my gym pass! Meanwhile, a volunteer hit the jackpot and found a "landfill" left by campers. It's a deep garbage hole hidden under the dirt and contains years of garbage. Another volunteer is putting discarded needles and batteries in a special bucket. I asked Kathleen Ford about the more unusual items they stumbled upon. "We find all manner of things. Old vintage Coke bottles, beer cans with pull tabs, and blow-up dolls. We see a surprising amount of fake money, like movie prop money. And believe it or not, lots of vacuum cleaners and lawnmowers." Once, they even found a 1960s salon-style hair dryer.

Incredibly, this spot is right next to the bustling Arden shopping area. Most folks don't know how close they are to a beautiful outdoor space. I certainly didn't. That may be why it's a haven for illegal campers. Close to society, yet so far away. But for the wildlife, it's their haven too. And the natural world needs our help.

The River City Waterway Alliance challenges Sacramento's local groups, climate change activists and environmentalists to join them and make a sustainable difference!

People can visit the Facebook page for River City Waterway Alliance to find clean-up events and extra information. ★

DNA is a Match in Fatal Mountain Lion Attack in El Dorado County

California Department of Fish and Wildlife News Release


EL DORADO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has confirmed that the mountain lion euthanized in a remote area near Georgetown on March 23 was the same animal involved in a fatal attack earlier in the day. CDFW's Wildlife Forensics Laboratory determined today that DNA samples collected from the scene match samples taken from the lion carcass. The male mountain lion weighed approximately 90 pounds and appeared to be in healthy condition.

On March 23, 2024, CDFW wildlife officers responded to a reported mountain lion attack involving 18 and 21-year-old brothers. The men had been antler shed hunting in a remote area near Georgetown in El Dorado County when they were attacked. The younger brother sustained injuries but was able to call 911; the older brother was pronounced dead at the scene


by emergency responders. In the interest of public safety, CDFW authorized a professional trapper, who was able to locate and euthanize the mountain lion within a few hours of the incident.

"First and foremost, our hearts go out to the families and loved ones affected by this tragic incident. Our thoughts are with them during this difficult time," said CDFW Director Charlton H. Bonham.

Mountain lion encounters are uncommon in California but do occasionally occur. Most of the state is suitable mountain lion habitat. However, this is the first confirmed fatality from a mountain lion attack in California since 2004. CDFW will remain in close coordination with the El Dorado County Sheriff's Office as standard pathology and other assessments of the lion are completed. Forensic scientists will continue analyzing necropsy results to determine whether there were underlying health conditions related to this particular animal. ★



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**Publisher,
Paul V. Scholl**


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Get Weller Sooner

You are feeling under the weather. You just know you are going to get sick. Can you really talk yourself out of being sick? **Stan Munslow** says you can, and he has twelve powerful ways you can enhance professional care and feel better faster. And here's an even better result. You can do it with less pain and less time with less time in the hospital. It can lower your costs and so much more. That's why he authored "Get Weller Sooner" to help make things better in your life. And what I loved when I interviewed Stan is that it starts with you and ends with you, with tools that are not out of your reach. Here is the abbreviated version of what you will learn in **Stan's** book. It doesn't seem too difficult. What do you think?

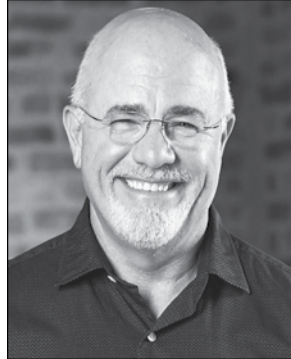
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 - 9. NUTRITION.** You are what you eat. Every cell in your body is something you ate within the past seven years. Eat only healthy food while recovering.
 - 10. MEDICINE.** Like placebos, real medicines work to the extent that you believe in them Expect the best from your medication.
 - 11. PRAYER.** Prayer works and has been proven to work in over 1200 scientific studies. Embrace it. Put together a prayer group to pray for your healing every day.
 - 12. LOVE.** Love is everything. Love is all powerful. A loving spirit is a healing spirit. To love much is to live well and be well.
- So keep these tools at your fingertips, but I do hope you won't need them and you will stay healthy. Dream on, right? "Get Weller Sooner" could make a BIG difference in your life. ★

KEEP ON KEEPIN' ON!

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You're Playing with Fire

Dave Ramsey Says

you're playing with fire if you take him up on the offer.

I assume your father-in-law is doing pretty well financially, since he can afford to make this offer. But the downside is just too risky. If I were him, I might offer to pay off the mortgage as a gift to my daughter and son-in-law. But a loan? No way. There are no strings attached to a gift that comes from the heart.

Don't get me wrong, Seth. I'm not bad-mouthing your father-in-law. What he's making is a very generous offer, and it's an incredibly nice thing to do. But in my mind, a very important consideration is being left out of the equation, and it's a spiritual issue. The borrower is always slave to the lender. Always. And sadly enough, nowhere is that more true than within a family.

Accepting this offer could bring instant discomfort into the relationship for you and your wife. This money situation is likely to hang over things like a dark cloud. Thanksgiving, Christmas and other special occasions will feel different—and kind of weird—when you're suddenly celebrating with your mortgage lender instead of just good, old dad.

Even if you come from a reasonable, stable family, and it sounds to me like your in-laws are very good-hearted folks, this debt will always be in the back of your mind. But if you're involved with a dysfunctional or controlling family, that tension is going to be right there—constantly.

I'd thank your father-in-law for his generosity and for the offer. But in my mind, it's just not worth the risk.

— Dave

Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national bestselling 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 ★

Dear Dave,

My wife and I owe about \$40,000 on our mortgage. My father-in-law, who is a very nice and generous man, said he wants to pay off the house for us, then let us pay him back over time. We've borrowed much smaller amounts of money from him in the past, and we were always able to repay it with no issues and no pressure. How do you feel about us taking him up on his offer?

— Seth

Dear Seth,

I understand you and your wife have been fortunate in these kinds of situations over the years. And I know your father-in-law would probably be a lot easier to work with than a mortgage company when it comes to the size and frequency of payments. But I still think

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CLUES

ACROSS

- Rhymes with, and similar in meaning, to blob
- Refrigerator sound
- Action word
- Left, in Russia
- Departed
- Locomotive hair
- As opposed to St. in a city, pl.
- French cordial
- Type of lily, pl.
- "Voyageurs National Park location
- Like Andersen's duckling
- Poacher's ware
- Unit of pressure
- "Volcanoes National Park location
- Dionysus' female followers
- U.N. labor agency
- Camels' relatives
- Pelvic bones
- Smears
- _____ of the land"
- Gertrude Stein's reception room
- Sicilian rumbler
- Strong influence
- To sum
- Blushes
- *Utah national park
- What blanket and landing have in common
- State before birth
- Eastern European
- *Yosemite's famous monolith (2 words)
- Cockamamie
- Effect of pain?
- First weekly news magazine in U.S.
- South African currency, pl.
- Tolstoy's Karenina
- The 15th of March
- King Kong and Koko, e.g.
- Hot one in a bun
- Copper coin

DOWN

- Type of shot
- Strauss of jeans fame
- Often found under a range
- Herzegovina's partner
- Kind of roll, in school
- Togetherness
- *_____ Verde National Park
- *Shenandoah National Park location
- Twelfth month of Jewish civil year
- Frost-covered
- Like certain relief
- _____ is a byproduct of _____ (23-letter words)
- _____ for alarm"
- See nor hear this? pl.
- Faux _____
- Opposite of seeker
- Winged
- One of Florence Nightingale's concerns
- American Indians of Yucatan
- Islam's Supreme Being
- D in LED
- *White _____ National Park in New Mexico
- Financial help
- *Need one to navigate

CROSSWORD

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Fix Prop 47

By John McGinness

On the general election ballot in 2014 California voters were given the opportunity to vote for Proposition 47, the so-called Safe Neighborhoods and Schools Act.

For those of us who took the time to read the text of the proposition, it was clear that nothing in this law would make schools or neighborhoods safer. On the contrary, the proposition was fraught with damaging ideas. Crimes such as possession and use of dangerous drugs would be reduced from felonies to misdemeanors. Possession of the so-called date rape drug would be an offense that would warrant no jail time whatsoever. Possession of methamphetamine would also be reduced to a mere misdemeanor, those possessing it could claim it was for personal use, regardless of the quantity, and no time in custody would follow. In recent history, very few people had been forced to serious time in custody for mere possession of illicit drugs. However, the threat of incarceration would often be the impetus for defendants to go to drug court, where they would stipulate to their guilt and be forced into treatment to put them on a path to a much better life. The success of drug court was very impressive. We did not see droves of people occupying the streets, parks and sidewalks of our communities looking like

the walking dead, while discarding human waste and dirty hypodermic needles on the playgrounds and streets of cities and towns throughout the state.

The loss of the ability to file felony charges in these cases would foreseeably evaporate the participation in drug court, because the incentive to do so would be lost by removing the criminal justice-imposed consequences for such offenses.

Similarly, changes that would eliminate real consequences for serial theft were a part of this horribly ill-conceived proposition. Previously, repeat thieves would be subject to jail time felony consequences. The criminal element generally knew of the consequences of California Penal Code Section 666 that would make even petty theft with a prior a potential felony that could result in time in-custody for repeat cases of theft, reducing the incidents of repeat theft. All the penalty enhancements for repeat theft cases would be eliminated by the passage of this proposition.

It was abundantly foreseeable – if this proposition passed it would incentivize chronic dangerous drug abuse, and serial theft. Retailers would have a difficult time staying in business, their incentive to cooperate with the criminal justice system would go by the wayside, because liability risks of stopping thieves would simply become greater than the benefit



John McGinness. Courtesy photo

to be realized from a system that would not punish offenders.

Similarly, drug addiction as the result of chronic drug abuse would skyrocket. The quality of life would be profoundly diminished in urban, suburban, and even rural parts of California.

All of this would be abundantly clear to those who took the time and effort to read the proposition, and realize the predictability of the devastating consequences that would follow if this concept became law.

Regrettably, the good people of California had faith in those they had elected to represent their best interest in state government. Voters were

very people who had been entrusted with their vote.

Consider the ubiquitous tents in public places; the sickly pathetic souls wandering about in a daze; and the areas lost for use by law abiding, tax paying citizens because of fear for their safety and concerns for their health posed by those who have ravaged their own bodies by chronic drug abuse. Consider relentless images of smash and grab retail thefts that have forced long-time successful businesses to flee the state, because they cannot endure the current conditions.

Retail and cargo theft have exploded in California. Drug addiction and homelessness have become a humanitarian crisis. The consequences are impacting public safety and the quality of life of all Californians.

Members of the California legislature have promised to fix the problem, as have members of the state's executive branch. Do not be fooled into believing these false promises. This mess was created by well-intended voters who were lied to. Proposition 47 is a law that was created by the voters, ONLY the voters can amend it.

There is good news, the Homelessness, Drug Addiction, and Theft Reduction Act is very likely to qualify for the November ballot and will give the voters an opportunity to ameliorate the adverse consequences of

Proposition 47. There is still an opportunity to sign the petition to ensure the voters have a legitimate choice this year.

This effort will reclassify theft with two or more prior convictions as jail-eligible felonies, add new laws to address "smash and grab" thefts, add Fentanyl to the list of hard drugs resulting in felony prison time, and provide addiction and mental health services for treatment-mandated felony charges.

Some have asserted that enforcing laws and imposing consequences on offenders represents a lack of compassion. Who do you love that you want to see sleeping on a cold Sacramento sidewalk on a January night with temperatures in the teens, or conversely baking in the summer sun in triple digit heat? Who honestly believes that a young offender who begins to steal, and is not persuaded away from that behavior by predictable consequences for their actions will live a richer, fuller life?

Compassion demands providing the resources and impetus for change. To sign the petition, or learn more, visit <https://casafecommunities.com>.

John McGinness, MS is the retired sheriff of Sacramento County, an adjunct professor of Criminal Justice and Leadership Studies and the host of the John McGinness Show on KFBK. He can be reached at 916-924-3901. ★

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