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AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

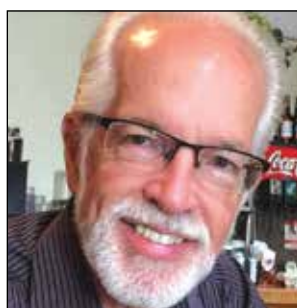
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JULY 17, 2020

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By Dot Boyd



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The Parkway Needs You!



Above: The American River Parkway's scenic environment provides rich opportunities for Sacramento area wildlife and residents. Right: Sacramento County is seeking input from visitors to plan parkway enhancements. Photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

By Ken Casparis,
Sacramento County

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Department of Regional Parks is in the process of creating a Natural Resources Management Plan (NRMP) for the American River Parkway, and they want your input!

Regional Parks is hosting four online public outreach workshops throughout the month of July to seek public comment on this project. In addition, an online survey will be available to the public until Aug. 15 to provide feedback and input.

"If you use our parkway, we want to hear from you," said Liz Bellas, Director of Regional Parks. "The more

comments we get the better since this document really guides our strategic planning for the American River Parkway."

The goal of the NRMP is to provide relevant and defensible information to the Parkway Manager so that they can make informed decisions for managing, maintaining and enhancing parkway resources. In general, the NRMP provides a clear understanding of existing Parkway resources, the effects of disturbances such as flood, fire, invasive species and human impacts, as well as opportunities for protections and enhancements.

After the public outreach workshops

have been held, comments will be reviewed and a final NRMP will be completed. Additional public workshops on the final document will be held in November, and the NRMP will be brought to the Board of Supervisors for approval and adoption after the environmental review is completed.

For more information on the history and background of the NRMP, visit the Regional Parks website at regionalparks.saccounty.net/



Newsom Is Out Of Control

By Nghia Nguyen

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Governor Gavin Newsom ordered small businesses across the state to close indoor operations including restaurants, wineries, movie theaters, family entertainment centers, zoos, museums, cardrooms and bars. The Governor also shutdown indoor operations in counties on "County Monitoring List for 3 Days" such as salons, barbershops, gyms/fitness centers and malls. In their continuing effort to advocate for employers and workers, Northstate lawmakers Rep. Doug LaMalfa (R-Richvale), Senator Jim Nielsen (R-Tehama), Senator Brian Dahle (R-Bieber), Assemblyman James Gallagher (R-Yuba City) and Assemblywoman Megan Dahle (R-Bieber) issued the following statement:

"Let's be clear: It is imperative that we all do our part by practicing social distancing and acting responsibly in order to suppress this virus and protect our community.

"But these efforts are undermined when the Governor is single handedly and arbitrarily crushing people's livelihoods - their ability to put food on the table, to pay rent and to pay their bills.

"There is no justification for this approach. There is no evidence that any of these activities are causing an increase in Covid-19 cases.

"Restaurants and churches are not the source of our increase in cases. Small businesses are hanging by a thread and this action puts all the burden of this crisis back upon them. Main Street is struggling for its very life, while Lowe's and Home Depot are packed with people and having record years. No one can make any sense of these confusing orders.

"Businesses have NOT been the direct cause, they've done everything they've been asked to do successfully. These shutdown orders punish them, their customers and it completely misses the target, especially in our rural towns.

"It's painful to watch the Governor constantly change his mind if counties can govern themselves or not during

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Masks for Sacramento Seniors is a Grassroots Effort

By Patrick Larenas

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - As California attempts to reopen to its more normal economic, recreational and occupational activities, Seniors should keep in mind that those who are 65 years and older are still the most vulnerable to COVID-19. Arising to the task of protecting those most at risk, Cindy Rose of Rose Senior Placement organized Masks for Sacramento Seniors, a collaborative effort to donate and produce masks for those in need.

Rose was inspired by the great enthusiasm demonstrated by some 300 members who joined the mask-making effort. Seamstresses who regularly create Christmas stockings, Halloween costumes, sports outfits and a number of other hobbies all converged to make "a dynamic workforce".

"My mom taught me to sew when I was young, but people don't sew anymore," Rose said, "so it's been fun to have the opportunity to connect with different personalities who

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A positive and enthusiastic ethos overtook some 300 members, including Jennifer Maurer, who joined the mask-making effort. Photo provided by Cindy Rose



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Committee Oversees Bike Park Opening and Considers Future of Old Library

Submitted by Gary Juels, Chair, Bond Oversight Committee

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - The July 2020 Bond Oversight Committee meeting was held via teleconference with Mike Aho, Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District Administrator, giving updates to the committee members.

The new Fair Oaks Bike Park located at Phoenix Park is completed and had a soft opening last Monday, July 6, 2020. A tentative virtual ribbon cutting will be on July 17, 2020 at 4:30 pm. Designed by American Ramp Company, the bike park is set up as a pump track geared towards riders aged 3-12 that build and challenge their skills through ramps, banked turns, tunnels, and more. The bike park is open seven (7) days a week from dawn to dusk and is free of charge. All riders must wear a helmet. Balance bikes and bikes with training wheels are welcome. The public is encouraged to promote social distancing and follow all CDC guidelines when using the bike park. Updated information pertaining to the virtual ribbon cutting will be posted on the Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District webpage.

Aho said the biggest project to fall under Measure J funding is the redesign and updating of Village Park and Plaza Park, the Community Clubhouse/Village Hall, and the Theatre. The estimated budget of Village/Plaza Park is \$7.4 million, Theatre is at \$5.9 million and the Clubhouse/Village Hall is at \$1.3 million for a total of \$14.6 million. Construction is estimated to begin in spring 2021. A big concern brought up at past Community Outreach meetings and mentioned again at the meeting by Amy Larsen, Committee Vice Chair, was the parking impact for the businesses in the Village. Aho said that parking will be kept open as much and as long as possible around the construction site.

The next project under Measure J Bond jurisdiction, Swallow Way Park, has construction starting in October 2020. It is budgeted at \$833,736. Funding of Swallow Way Park is divided among various



The Fair Oaks Bike Park at Phoenix Park is open 7 days a week from dawn to dusk. Don't forget your helmet! Photo: FORPD

sources: \$200,000 from Measure J funds, \$250,000 from Prop 68 and \$383,736 or the balance of project will be pulled from impact fees and the FORPD Board approval.

Aho provided an update on Proposition 68 the 2018 State of California Park and Water Bond. The Park District will be receiving \$177,952 from the Per Capita program and an additional \$21,490 from the Urban County fund. These funds will be used to fund a portion of the new Swallow Way Park. The additional funds needed to develop Swallow Way Park will come from Measure J funds and the Districts Impact Fees. Impact fees can only be used to expand facilities or build new parks.

Decisions need to be made regarding the Old Library building which is located across the street from Village Park. Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District Board is considering numerous options such as renovating the building, tearing it down for additional parking, or selling the property. Additionally, Aho said that an operational plan for arts and entertainment needs to be devised since the arts will be the focus of the updated Village/Plaza Park area. The Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District Board approved and went into contract with AMS Planning and Research to work with the District on moving forward to create an operating model and plan. It will take AMS approximately 5

months after the initial meeting to provide data and guidance on options. The Bond Oversight Committee members that were present at the meeting recommended waiting on input from AMS before any definitive decision is made on the Old Library building and Aho takes this recommendation to the District Board at the Board meeting on Wednesday, July 15.

The last item discussed at the committee meeting was the status of the organ in the Community Clubhouse. Discussions have come up within the Board on whether it is in the best interest to keep the organ and the stage it sits on or to remove both to have more table and seating space in the Clubhouse. Gary Juels, Committee Chair, said he supports keeping the organ as it is an asset to the community. Aho said that it is costly to not only move the stage that the organ sits on but to reconfigure all the electrical within the Clubhouse and most of the electrical is underneath the stage. Juels suggested finding more ways to capitalize on the organ such as having cocktail and music events with the organ being a focal point. There is a lot of potential in having such a unique item in Fair Oaks. The Bond Oversight Committee members agreed that keeping the organ was in the best interest of the community and Aho takes their recommendation to the District Board at the next Board meeting. ★

Scammers Exploit California's COVID-19 Contact Tracing Program

Governor's Office of Emergency Services Press Release

MATHER, CA (MPG) - During the COVID-19 pandemic fraudsters are using this opportunity to create fear amongst residents across California.

Many traditional financial crimes and schemes are now orchestrated through electronics. Now, more than ever people of all ages, including the elderly can be victimized by these criminals.

The newest plot line in these online crimes, include California contact tracers.

What Is A Contact Tracer?

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, Governor Gavin Newsom launched "California Connected," the state's comprehensive contact tracing program and public awareness campaign. A contact tracer from the local health department might call if you've been exposed to COVID-19. Under this program, public health representatives will telephonically interact with those who have tested positive, alert anyone that may have been exposed, and keep personally identifiable information (PII) confidential.

How To Spot A Scammer?

Real contact tracers won't ask you for money - Only scammers insist on payment by gift card, money transfer, or cryptocurrency; Contact tracing doesn't require your bank account or credit card number - Never Share account information with anybody who contacts you asking for it- Legitimate contact tracers will never ask for your Social Security number. Never give any part of your Social Security number to anyone who contacts you; Your immigration status doesn't matter for contact tracing, so real tracers won't ask - If they do, you can bet it's a scam; Do not click on a link in a text or email - Doing so can download malware onto your device.

Be wary of suspicious emails, phone calls, and text messages. Contact your local health department to verify that the call or messages are valid, think before clicking on any links, and be aware of suspicious attachments.

For additional information regarding California Connected or COVID-19 visit CDPH Contact Tracing, CDPH COVID-19.

Cal OES' mission is to protect lives and property, build capabilities, and support our communities for a resilient California. Get the latest news directly to your inbox by subscribing to the Cal OES Newsroom at OESNews.com. ★

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Theater Organ and Stage to be Removed?



The American Theater Organ Society, Sierra Branch, owns and maintains the wind-driven instrument initially built for a theater to accompany silent films. Photo: FORPD

Commentary by Ralph Carhart

At the June Zoom meeting of the Board of Directors of the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District, during discussion of the planned renovation of the Community Clubhouse, it was requested by the Board that the District Administrator investigate the potential removal of the stage in the upstairs room and the theater pipe organ installed within the stage in order to enlarge the size and capacity of the room. The project to renovate the Clubhouse, using Measure J funds, is currently under design and is projected for construction beginning in December 2020 and continuing for approximately 18 months.

Consideration of the stage and organ-removal proposal and the findings of the District staff have been placed on the agenda for discussion and public comment during the July 15 Board meeting. That meeting will be conducted virtually on Zoom, beginning at 6:00 p.m. Members of the public who want to participate online in that meeting should contact the District at 916-966-1036.

in our region, is a unique instrument that can contribute to the District's vision of branding the Village as a venue for the visual and performing arts. I do feel that the organ is currently underutilized and should be better publicized and used for more concerts, silent movies and weddings in the Clubhouse. I will advocate for that direction.

Most residents have never heard this remarkable wind-driven instrument and its



The committee seeks to enlarge the Community Clubhouse and remove the complex instrument with its array of pipes, bells, whistles and percussion. Photo: FORPD

array of pipes, bells, whistles and percussion. The organ was initially built for a theater in San Leandro where it accompanied silent films. Later it was moved to Cal Expo for a number of years until its thousand-hours restoration and installation in our Clubhouse.

If you have interest in this item, please register to participate in the July 15 Zoom meeting, drop off your written comments at the District office or send an email to the District Administrator in advance of the meeting so your input can be included in the Administrator's report to the Board.

And feel free to share this message with anyone else you think may be interested in this item. ★

Masks for Sacramento Seniors



Senior support groups are a very collaborative workforce. In the photo: Jennifer Davis (left) and Evelyn McGrath (right). Photo provided by Cindy Rose

Continued from page 1
enjoy contributing their own unique work."

Masks for Sacramento Seniors contributor Dot Boyd, a Senior Safety Specialist for Electronic Caregiver for the Sacramento area, said, "Because we are all working individually from home, we have a cadre of fabric cutters, seamstresses, delivery drivers, and donations. We're a tight-knit community filled with big hearts and busy hands."

So as governors and public officials remain under great economic and

political pressure to reopen their respective states, counties and cities, adding uncertainty about COVID-19, make sure that you are protected.

The masks at Masks for Sacramento Seniors are free of cost according to its Facebook page: "We are all volunteers and run off donations and people's charity. The masks that are donated are donated for free. No community will ever pay for the masks from this group."

For more information call (916) 582-1654 or visit roseseniplacement.com ★

One Tick Bite Can Change Your Life Forever

Lyme Fight Foundation Press Release

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - Melissa Moya, Lyme disease survivor and fighter, launched Lyme Fight Foundation in an effort to provide support and advocacy for Lyme disease patients. The foundation's goal is to develop and strengthen partnerships so that we can work together and establish a strong support system for those suffering from Lyme disease. Our mission is to provide support to those diagnosed with Lyme disease, provide education to the community, prevention education, and make much needed

change in medical coverage and government research funding. We are dedicated to Lyme patient advocacy through awareness, education, and support. Lyme Fight Foundation is fully funded by generous donors and partners vested in finding a cure for this pervasive, yet under researched disease. Ultimately, we will save lives, change ways of thinking, and find a cure.

We hope you will consider joining us in spreading the word about the foundation.

Contact Melissa Moya, Executive Director and Founder at info@lymefightfoundation.org call (916) 628-6692 or www.lymefightfoundation.org ★

Fair Oaks Chamber Corner July 2020



By Dot Boyd, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - It's amazing to realize that 2020 is half over. It will be a year to remember for many reasons. I choose to focus on the positive, and in our Fair Oaks community, it's easy to spot generosity and kindness at every turn.

First off, to step up to run for Honorary Mayor in a normal year represents an act of generosity and courage. It takes having a passion for Fair Oaks and for a chosen cause or charity to keep a candidate and her/his team in the game for the five month campaign. Candidates have been

stepping up since 1979, raising over \$460,000 for our community! We're a very generous Chamber with 50% of the proceeds going to the causes and 50% funding FOCC programs, which are hard-hit right now. In a normal year, our candidates have a variety of in-person events hosted by fellow FOCC members, plus running the hot dog & pizza booth at Concerts in the Park. Our candidates for the title of 42nd Honorary Mayor, Chrysti Tovani and Penny Howard, have until August 31st to raise funds for the Del Campo HS Visual & Performing Arts Program and for Fair Oaks Theatre Festival, respectively. You're invited to participate in their creative, virtual events and a few in-person events with appropriate social distancing protocols. Please visit www.fairoakschamber.com, email info@fairoakschamber.com or call 916-967-2903 for details on how you can support them. Follow the candidates on Facebook,

too. Do you own a business? How about sponsoring the candidates for some good PR? Second, I'd like to shine a spotlight on our oldest community service organization, the Woman's Thursday Club of Fair Oaks, established in 1902! The club's annual Fashion Show (cancelled this year), helps fund scholarships for graduating seniors at Bella Vista, Casa Roble, Del Campo, and San Juan high schools. In May, WTC awarded eight, \$1500 scholarships to outstanding seniors. You can find WTC online at www.fairoakshistory.org along with Fair Oaks Historical Society. You'll love visiting their website. Full disclosure: I'm a member of WTC and was a very grateful recipient of a \$500 scholarship when I graduated from BV, back in the days when I walked through Gum Ranch to get to school, dodging cows and cow patties! Can I say that in print?! Wink.

Stay kind and generous, Fair Oaks! ★

Newsom Out Of Control

Continued from page 1
this pandemic. It's even more painful being forced to sit on the sidelines as the California Legislature has handed over all authority to one man.

"Keep in mind that 7.5 million Californians are jobless. That EDD has not been able to handle the current unemployment claims. People who filed in March still have not received payments. How in

the world will EDD be able to handle the enormous uptake in cases based on today's one-size-fits-all decision?

"We have said it before: human lives are at stake. People are stressed and filled with anxiety about their livelihoods. The mental health and other side effects of today's decision will be felt for years into the future."

Sources: California State Senate; California State Assembly ★

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Vacationers Arriving at Second Homes Need to Respond to the Census ... Again

By **Marna K Davis,**
U.S. Census Bureau

WASHINGTON, DC (MPG) - Many families will head to their vacation homes and cabins this holiday weekend in the more rural counties in California. They are likely to find a 2020 Census questionnaire packet at their doors even if they already responded from their primary residences.

It's required that homeowners complete a separate census form for every house they own, including seasonal residences. If homeowners have been staying in their seasonal homes during the COVID crisis, they still need to complete a census form for their primary residence. People should count themselves at the residence where they live and sleep most of the time under normal conditions.

Here are instructions on how to self-respond online with information on a cabin,

vacation rental property, or any other home where someone does not live and sleep most of the time:

Visit www.my2020census.gov; Enter the Census ID or address for this secondary property. Owners will find the ID number in the information packet that census takers left on the property or at a mailbox if the home has a regular mailing address; Enter "0" for the number of people living at this property; Hit Next... the survey will not advance, but it will show a second prompt. Hit Next again to advance; Select "No" when asked a confirmation question about how many people live there; Select primary reason - Seasonal (most likely); Complete!

You may also respond to the 2020 Census by calling (844) 330-2020, or returning the paper questionnaire by mail.

For more information go to www.2020Census.gov ★

Anti-Catholicism Spikes In California

Catholic League Press Release

NEW YORK, NY (MPG) - Catholic League president Bill Donohue comments on the status of Catholicism in California:

Anti-Catholicism is sweeping California. Attacks on Catholic statues, public complaints about Catholics attending Mass, the selective enforcement of executive orders on religious gatherings, and politicians seeking to intimidate priests and bishops, are commonplace.

A mob of anti-Catholics celebrated the 4th of July by destroying a statue of St. Junipero Serra in Sacramento, the state's capitol. The statue was set on fire and smashed with sledgehammers. Though Serra did more to defend the rights of Indians in the 18th century against Spanish colonizers than all the protesters have ever done for American Indians today, Serra is a demon. That is why statues of him were previously destroyed in San Francisco and Los Angeles.

What's feeding this frenzy? Citing COVID-19 concerns, restrictive measures on religious gatherings have been mandated throughout the state. The tone has been set by politicians: There is one rule for people of faith and another for protesters. This has not been lost on the anti-Catholics. Protesters by the thousands, many of them violent, have been allowed to march in big cities across California - without a permit - as public health officials and politicians said nary a word.

According to the *New York Times*, 1,300 epidemiologists and health workers from across the nation recently signed a letter saying that those who protested stay-at-home orders were "rooted in white nationalism and run contrary to respect for Black Lives Matter." But when it comes to the protesters, they said, "we do not condemn these

gatherings as risky for Covid-19 transmission. We support them as vital to the national public health."

The mayor of Sacramento, Darrell Steinberg, shares the same position. He said in late May that he supported the Sacramento City Council's refusal to impose a curfew after two nights of violence and looting. He contended that it would be useless to do so because "those who are perpetrating looting and violence would probably ignore the curfew anyway." But in early April he said it may be permissible to have the police disperse church-goers if they assembled in prayer.

Meanwhile, public officials in San Francisco are now doing a headcount of Catholics attending Mass. The San Francisco city attorney, Dennis Herrera, says he has received complaints that more than 12 Catholics have been seen at a Mass. He sent a cease-and-desist letter to the Archdiocese of San Francisco ordering it to stop indoor religious services.

Herrera did not say whether he has done a headcount of Protestants going to church, Jews going to synagogues, or Muslims going to mosques. But we do know that his office is fielding complaints from the public that one Catholic church actually held six Masses in one day! Why Herrera did not send in a SWAT team remains a puzzle.

We know who is contacting Herrera's office, and we know they are not public health fanatics. Moreover, we wouldn't be surprised to learn that some of them were among the 1,300 doctors and health care workers who signed the letter giving the protesters a pass while condemning everyone else who refused to abide by their highly politicized directives.

Contact Herrera: cityattorney@sfcityatt.org ★

Railroad Museum Calls Out for Railroad Stories

By **Traci Rockefeller Cusack,**
T-Rock Communications

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The California State Railroad Museum & Foundation are proud to launch an interactive community building initiative titled "Our Lives Are Made of Railroad Stories" that includes a new 20-page brochure and a call-out for railroad stories and connections. Produced in partnership with Sactown magazine, the new brochure uses compelling stories to highlight how the dedicated museum staff, volunteers, community and valued partners work collaboratively to

connect in ways that extend beyond the walls of the world-class museum.

The new brochure is available as a special pull-out section in the July/August issue of the bi-monthly publication that is available now at all major grocery stores and bookstores in the Sacramento area. Once the museum reopens, the complimentary brochure will also be available at the museum in a total of 10 languages, including Arabic, Chinese, English, French, German, Hindi, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish, while supplies last.

For more see www.californiarailroadmuseum.com. ★

Sac Zoo Remains OPEN after Health Update

By **Leslie Kirrene,**
Sacramento Zoo

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Zoo wants to make sure our community is aware that the zoo remains open to the public with reserved tickets.

Based on updated guidelines from the California Department of Public Health,

the zoo remains open to guests, with the exception of indoor facilities. Given the updated guidance, released on July 1, the zoo's gift shop and indoor dining facilities are now closed however, a wide assortment of gift items, as well as food items will be available for purchase through outdoor kiosks and stands.

The Sacramento Zoo remains open with enhanced protocols and

procedures in place to ensure the health and safety of zoo guests, staff and animals including:

All tickets must be purchased and reserved in advance online. Timed tickets will be available for specific dates to ensure that appropriate visitor capacities and physical distancing are maintained throughout the day;

Zoo members must reserve tickets in advance online as well. Ticket price included in membership;

Visit the zoo's website at "Plan Your Visit" to reserve timed tickets;

Face coverings are required to enter the zoo for visitors over the age of two;

Guests will be asked to maintain a

six-foot distance between your group and others when visiting. Physical distancing signage will be placed throughout the zoo;

The zoo is instituting a paperless system - both for transactions and zoo maps.

The Sacramento Zoo is home to nearly 500 rare, endangered and native animals. ★

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Measure A: The Next Trojan Horse



Commentary by Bruce Lee

Are you aware of the half-cent sales tax increase proposed for Sacramento County on the November ballot to raise \$8.4 billion over the next forty years for transportation purposes? It would make the county-wide tax a whopping 9.25% - higher than 88 percent of all counties nationally!

(And, if you think this is a bad idea, you can go directly to the bottom of this Op-Ed to learn what you can do about it!)

What's going on? On May 14th, the Board of Directors at the Sacramento Transportation Authority (STA) passed ordinance NO. STA 20-01 (Measure A) with a one vote margin sending it to the County Board of Supervisors on July 14th - the last step before the November ballot.

At the March STA Board meeting, there were 435 comments of opposition compared to about 60 in favor. In May, there were as many as 700 opposition emails running at a ratio of 10:1 to those in favor. However, despite the large outpouring of public opposition to the ordinance, most STA directors first justification of their vote was by casually dismissing the opposition as "organized", and then argued that "voters should decide in November." Three days later, one STA Director who voted against the measure (Citrus Heights Vice Mayor Steve Miller) commented in the Citrus Heights Sentinel, "I got over 700 emails against it ... I don't know how some of the directors on the STA board could ignore that. ... I think it's going to go down in flames, ... I don't think it's the time."

Nobody forced these hundreds of people to take time out of their day to express to their concern publicly. I saw the emails. Many, many of them were well-crafted missives written from a wide variety of community members. If you were one of the more than 600 people who took time to write a letter of opposition to this sales tax, sorry, your opinion does not matter -- it was "organized." It makes you wonder if the Board of Directors, who are also duly elected officials whose primary goals are to serve their constituents, really values the "voters" as much as it does carrying out its predetermined agenda.

And, the second justification used by the STA Board that we should let the voters decide in November is an almost universal "cop-out." (That is avoiding doing something that one ought to do.) It's saying, "don't blame me!" Having served as a local-elected myself, it's just a too easy thing

to say. But this is really a question of how we are going to spend \$1 million of the taxpayer's money and it's a question of good stewardship. (STA polling has clearly shown that the public does not want this tax for the services proposed.)

Apparently the STA board would rather force the public to foot a one million dollar bill, the estimated cost of putting the measure on the ballot, than seriously listen to the public stakeholders.

If that one million dollar figure made you do a double take, it should have! This figure comes directly from the Sacramento County Registrar of Voters. In fact, they put the exact cost of putting the sales tax on the ballot at \$1,027,913.08! (The basic setup fee is \$4,920.00; the sample ballot will cost \$148,382.54, and staff-related costs add up to \$874,610.53 - God knows why it costs that much, but it does! (The cost of the public sector vs. the private sector is another topic.)

Those opposed to the sales tax have real concerns regarding both the timing and nature of the proposed tax. For one, we are in the middle of a pandemic, with over 35 million people nationwide facing unemployment and economic hardship. The April California unemployment rate was 15.5% - higher than the great recession of 2008! The STA's response, "Let's tax everyone more on the things they buy!" How can it possibly be a good idea to increase sales taxes at a time like this? However, the Directors at the STA argued their third justification that "things" will be different in November, but is there any evidence to arrive at that conclusion?

Yes, indeed in five to six months, things will be different. They could be better or they could be worse. We don't know. However, every forecast I have heard is that the recovery from this economic melt-down caused by the pandemic will be very slow and will take many months, if not years to resolve all of its ramifications.

Meanwhile, the tax impacts every resident of the county. And, if smart and you want to purchase a large ticket item, I would take the short drive to Roseville in Placer County to purchase it where the tax rate is only 7.75%. Let's see, on a \$30,000 purchase, maybe something like equipment, a vehicle, or whatever, I would save 1.5% (9.25%-7.75%) which would be \$450. Hell, yeah, many people would drive 20 minutes to save that. Now, I wonder if that type of economic impact was factored into this tax proposal?

And, speaking of economic impact, there's the inconvenient reality that sales taxes disproportionately affect those with the least disposable income: the elderly, those in single income families, the economically disadvantaged, and children. What about them? A sale tax is inherently regressive. That is precisely why social justice

organizations such as the National Action Network and the NAACP are officially opposed to Measure A. And, others are rallying to oppose this including business groups, and many others.

But, as their fourth justification, STA directors pointed out that *the sales tax would be an economic stimulus in this time of global pandemic!* To which you might reply, "Huh? I don't get that." On the morning of May 14th, I sent STA Director Jeff Harris (Sacramento City Councilmember) a current opinion piece in the Sacramento Bee which noted that statewide, people are rejecting tax increases, to which he kindly replied, "It's a good article, but did not cover employment. ... Please watch the meeting today!" His comment mystified me.

Then, at the meeting, several STA directors touted that the sales tax will provide an economic stimulus for Sacramento County by hiring on average 3,300 workers over the next forty years. The logic is that we tax every resident a combined \$8.4 billion (most of which is not being spent on road repairs - which is what residents want), but we will also hire 1,212 construction workers, 1,079 people to support "expanded" transportation services (light rail?), and 1,010 jobs which will be due to indirect suppliers and "induced" consumer spending.

However, *to say the tax is justified as an economic stimulus strikes me as a "Trojan Horse."* It's just saying we'll take the money from taxpayers to pay a relatively few construction workers and others for a limited period of time! Meanwhile, most of the \$8.4 billion is still not being spent on what the taxpayers want - our roads repaired!

It is an economic stimulus for whom? The April unemployment rate in Sacramento County is 14.7% (up 4.8% from March and growing). In the region, there are NOW 148,100 unemployed per the May 22, 2020 EDD report. 3,300 jobs IN THE FUTURE would be a tiny fraction of the currently unemployed. Meanwhile, an \$8.4 billion dollar tax that would have an immediate harmful impact on working-class families. The promise of tiny, theoretical benefits in the future is not very convincing.

Residents are already paying a half-cent sales tax for transportation until 2039, as well as the recent SB 1 (2017) twelve cent per gallon gas tax for transportation, when is enough, enough?

When a government agency ignores public opinion, offers flimsy justifications for their actions, and then just presses through, it seems that the bottom line is that they just want to do what they want to do. And, when all of this flies in the face of logical reason, it leads one to question what is their reason for the rush?

W. Bruce Lee, is President, Sacramento Taxpayers Association and Chair, Sac County Residents Against Measure A. ★



By Marlys Johnsen Norris, Christian Author

Rarely does anyone think about God having a plan for their life when living in the world. It is only after and when someone has made an important decision and accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and Lord they hear these words, "God has a plan for your life!". It is then they begin to realize the One who created them, values their birth and life more than anyone.

They begin to seek more knowledge about God and

The Plan Of God

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recognize a new "Belief and Faith was birthed beyond all expectations."

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Marlys Johnsen Norris
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Board of Equalization Member Ted Gaines Criticizes Gas Tax Increase



Ted Gaines

By Betsey Hodges, California State Board of Equalization

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - State Board of Equalization Member Ted Gaines issued the following statement on the July 1 gas tax increase of three cents per gallon:

"California already had among the highest gas taxes in the country before the state Legislature passed SB 1 and essentially guaranteed increasing gas taxes every year. But we also had some of the worst roads. That's a rotten

combination for taxpayers, who have gotten no value from their government.

"Before raising taxes a single penny, legislators should have reformed labor and environmental rules that make California road building so incredibly expensive compared to other states. They should have redirected the billion dollars a year of diverted weight fees to road maintenance and construction. And they should have prioritized practical road building over high-speed rail service that most drivers will never use but will pay for.

"But instead of reforms or cost savings, they just reached their hands deeper into taxpayers' wallets.

"Three cents a gallon might not break the bank itself, but when you add it to our highest-in-the-nation sales tax, astronomical rents and housing costs, and electricity rates that are 50 percent higher than the national average, it adds

up to a cost-of-living nightmare for California families and businesses.

"With California's unemployment rate at its highest level since the Great Recession in 2010, I can't imagine a more ill-advised time to make daily life even more expensive, when families are simply trying to pay rent and keep food on the table.

"California politicians shouldn't be filling up their own tanks while family budgets are running on empty. Drivers were already paying nearly 80 cents a gallon in combined state and federal taxes before today's increase. We can build better infrastructure and a brighter future for our state with existing revenues and without higher taxes, at the pump or anywhere else."

Ted Gaines represents 10 million people across 30 counties as the Board Member for the First Equalization District. ★

Dignity Health Donates More than \$1 Million to Sacramento-Area Nonprofits

By Yessenia Anderson, Dignity Health

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Dignity Health announced the distribution of more than \$1 Million this year to over 30 community-based organizations in Nevada, Sacramento and Yolo counties in an effort to meet community health needs outside hospital walls. The grants are funding an array of different projects but all have one common goal - to assist those most vulnerable in the region. From low-income, under-insured/uninsured individuals to human trafficking survivors.

"At Dignity Health, we have a long history of partnering with others in the community to improve people's quality of life because we understand health and wellness does not begin within our hospitals," said Laurie Harting, Greater Sacramento Division President of Dignity Health. "These grants continue to be an important extension of the work done in our care facilities and a way to help us care for the whole person through

unique collaborations."

In total, Dignity Health funded 15 projects, but it considers only grant proposals that come from at least three collaborating organizations.

"Our work in community grants is an extension of our mission as an organization," said Dignity Health Community Health and Outreach Manager, Phoua Moua. "Using a holistic approach, innovation and collaboration are used to ultimately increase the continuum of care for our patients and the communities we serve beyond the hospital walls."

Dignity Health conducts a needs assessment every three years in each county to determine priorities for giving. Moua works closely with nonprofits receiving the grants to ensure they are successful and encourages returning organizations to make enhancements to their programs in an effort to continuously challenge themselves and evolve. As was the case with the Food Literacy Center this year who teamed up with the Health Education Council to reach their

students' parents as part of the FEAST program, which inspires students at Sacramento's low-income elementary schools to eat fresh and locally-sourced fruits and vegetables.

"At Food Literacy Center we inspire kids to eat their veggies, which sets them up for a lifetime of healthy habits. All the partners funded by this grant provide our programs for free to the five low-income schools we serve, reaching students at highest risk for diet-related diseases," said Founding Executive Director, Amber K. Stott. "Building partnerships like we have with Health Education Council takes time, and very few grants are large enough to fund all the partners collectively. We're grateful that Dignity Health recognizes existing nonprofit partnerships as valuable."

Grant projects address issues impacting children all the way through the various communities' senior population. For information on 2020 partnerships and projects, view a summary at <https://www.dignityhealth.org/sacramento/about-us/press-center>. ★



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SMUD's Shine Program is Accepting Applications



SMUD Press Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - SMUD announced that the application period for its Shine program is now open. Shine is a community development program designed to improve and revitalize neighborhoods in the Sacramento region.

Shine awards will range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 and are very competitive. Any nonprofit organization – 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(6) – within SMUD's service territory, 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). Applications will be accepted through Monday, July 27.

While SMUD will consider a variety of projects, it is primarily interested in proposals in the following areas:

- (1) Community education related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, health and safety, technology skills, and STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math);
- (2) Neighborhood revitalization or beautification; Environmental, energy efficiency, energy conservation or greenhouse gas reduction;
- (3) Services provided to low-income electricity customers;
- (4) Community and workforce development, particularly for diverse and under-served communities;
- (5) Public transit access and safety, access and safety for walkability

SMUD will be holding informational webinars to help nonprofit organizations

maximize their submissions. RSVP to Shine@smud.org with the workshop you would like to attend.

- Friday, June 5: 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.
- Monday, June 15: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, July 1: 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Monday, July 13: 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.
- Wednesday, July 22: 4 p.m. to 6 p.m.

In 2019, SMUD awarded nearly \$400,000 in Shine sponsorships to 19 local nonprofits. SMUD received a wide range of applications, and the selected projects were able to demonstrate collaboration and broad neighborhood impact.

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As the nation's sixth-largest community-owned, not-for-profit, electric service provider, SMUD has been providing low-cost, reliable electricity for more than 70 years to Sacramento County and small adjoining portions of Placer and Yolo Counties. SMUD is a recognized industry leader and award winner for its innovative energy efficiency programs, renewable power technologies, and for its sustainable solutions for a healthier environment. SMUD's power mix is about 50 percent non-carbon emitting. For more information, about SMUD, visit SMUD.org. ★

Social Security Matters

Should My Wife Claim at 62? Will She Get Widow Benefit?



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor



Dear Rusty: I am almost 64 and still working, and I plan to work until about 66 or 67. My wife is 62. Should she go ahead and file for her Social Security? Is it true that she can draw on my SS after I pass away? **Signed: Inquiring Husband**

Dear Inquiring Husband: The answer to your first question (should your wife claim at 62) isn't simple, because it depends upon a number of things.

Is your wife working? If so, and she claims before her full retirement age, she'll be subject to Social Security's earnings test, which limits how much she can earn before they take back some of her benefits. If your wife starts collecting at age 62 and exceeds the annual earnings limit (\$18,240 for 2020) SS will take back benefits equal to half of what she exceeded the limit by. This is true until she reaches her full retirement age (66 ½ if she was born in 1957), although the earnings limit goes up by about 2.5 times and the penalty is less in the year she reaches her full retirement age (FRA).

Will your wife be eligible for a spousal benefit from you when you start collecting? If so, and she claims at age 62,

her eventual spousal benefit from you will be less than 50% of your full retirement age (FRA) benefit because she took her own benefit early. Whether your wife is eligible for a spousal benefit depends upon whether her own benefit (from her own work record) at her FRA (regardless of when she claims) is smaller than half of your benefit at your FRA (regardless of when you claim). If it's not, she won't get a spousal benefit. If it is, she'll get a spousal boost on top of her own benefit but claiming at age 62 will mean a smaller spousal benefit.

Your wife's age 62 benefit amount will be 27.5% less than her benefit would be at her full retirement age, and that reduction is permanent. And Social Security benefits are taxable if your combined income (married, filing jointly) is more than \$32,000. If your combined income is between \$32,000 and \$44,000 then 50% of your wife's SS benefits will become part of your taxable income, and if more than \$44,000 then up to 85% of your wife's SS benefits will become part of your taxable income. My point is, with you still working, your wife's SS benefits will almost certainly add to your income tax obligation.

I'm not trying to dissuade your wife from applying; rather only making you aware of the potential consequences of her claiming at age 62, or

at any time prior to her full retirement age. If she needs the money now and the above points are not a concern, then applying at 62 could be the prudent choice. But you and your wife should consider the above before deciding if she should claim at age 62.

Regarding your second question, if you should pre-decease your wife, and if the benefit you are receiving at your death is more than your wife is already receiving (or is entitled to receive) on her own, then she will get a survivor benefit from you. If she has already reached her full retirement age when that happens, she'll get 100% of the benefit you were getting. If she hasn't yet reached her FRA, she can still claim the survivor benefit, but it will be permanently reduced by a fraction of a percent for each month earlier than her FRA. However, if she hasn't yet reached her FRA, she can also delay taking her survivor benefit until she reaches FRA to get 100% of your benefit (instead of her own). Remember, she gets her survivor benefit, or her own benefit, whichever is higher (she doesn't get both).

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<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">FRISKIES BUFFET CANNED CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">5.5 Oz All Varieties</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">ON SALE Everyday</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Limit 2 Cases Per Family Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">ARM & HAMMER SUPER SCOOP CLUMPING CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">20 Lb Box •Unscented •Double Duty (Clump n Seal •Regular 19 lb •Light Weight 15 lb)</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">ON SALE</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Limit 2 Boxes Per Family Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">SCIENCE DIET CANINE MAINTENANCE CANNED DOG FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">13 oz can •Selected Varieties (Reg price \$1.79) (Healthy Cuisine 12.5 oz can \$1.89 Reg price \$2.09)</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$1.59</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Limit 2 Cases Per Family Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">SCOOPAWAY CLUMPING CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">42 Lb Bag •Multi-Cat Formula</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$12.99</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Limit 2 Boxes Per Family Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p>

<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">IAMS DRY CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Healthy Adult Chicken •Indoor/Weight Control/Hairball •Salmon & Tuna •Hairball 16 Lb Bag Limit 2 bags per family</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$17.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">PURELY FANCY FEAST CANNED CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">2 oz. All Varieties Limit 1 Case</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$1.09</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">NUTRO PERFECT PORTIONS GRAIN FREE CANNED CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Pate •Cuts In Gravy 2.64 Oz Can Limit 1 Case</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">69¢</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">FUSSIE CAT PREMIUM DRY CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Selected Varieties 2 Lb, 4 Lb, 10 Lb Bag As Marked</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">20% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">NATURE'S MIRACLE PREMIUM ORGANIC CORN COB LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Bio-Enzymatic Formula 10 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$6.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">SCIENCE DIET FELINE MAINTENANCE DRY CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Mature \$33.99 •Light \$34.99 •Sensitive Stomach 15.5 Lb •Urinary 13.5 Lb •Perfect Weight 15 Lb. \$38.99 Adult</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$31.99</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">NATURALLY FRESH CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">100% Natural Walnut-based 14 Lb Bag Pellets \$5.49 10 Lb Bag Pellets \$8.99 Clumping Multi-Cat Clumping \$9.99</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">SUPER BUY \$9.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">9 LIVES DRY CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Grilled Tuna & Egg 12 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags Per Family</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$7.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">SOLID GOLD DRY DOG FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Hund n Flocken •Wolf King Bison (24 Lb Bag) •Holistique •Millennia 28.5 Lb Bag Only Limit 2 Bags As Marked</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">10% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">FRESH STEP CRYSTALS CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">8Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$11.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">GRAVY TRAIN DRY DOG FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">35 Lb Bag Limit 2 Bags</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$14.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">BOXIE CAT CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Probiotic •Gently Scented •Scent Free (Natural & Extra Strength) 16 Lb \$2.00 OFF 28 Lb \$3.00 OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Veterinarian Recommended Limit 2 Bags</p>

<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">ADVANTAGE FLEA CONTROL & TREATMENT</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Dog Small (Green) Dog Extra Large (Blue) Dog Medium (Teal) Cat Small (Orange) Dog Large (Red) Cat Large (Purple) Limit 2 Per Family. Cannot be combined with any other offer.</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$4.00 OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">OUR REGULAR LOW PRICES</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">BOXED GLASS TANK WITH STARTER KIT</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">10 Gal Tetra LED Deluxe . . . \$53.99 29 Gal Tetra LED Deluxe . . . \$112.99 20 Gal Tetra LED Deluxe . . . \$91.99 55 Gal Tetra LED Deluxe . . . \$187.99</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">AQUEON BOXED 10 GALLON TANK With Economy Kit</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">Just add Heater For Tropical Fish Limit 1 Per Family</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$36.99</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">TRUE CHEWS PREMIUM JERKY CUTS</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">All Varieties 100% Natural 10-12 oz pkg (20-22 Oz bag \$13.99)</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$7.99</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">FELINE GREENIES CAT TREATS</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">All Varieties (Including Small Bites)</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$1.99</p>
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">SHERPA PRODUCTS</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">•Original Deluxe (Small, Medium, Large) •Carrier On Wheels</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">20% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">OUR SUPER LOW PRICES</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">VAN NESS CAT PAN</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">All Varieties •Linens •Scoops •Filters</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">20% OFF</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">OUR SUPER LOW PRICES</p>

<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">BONUS COUPON</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">GOURMET CANNED CAT FOOD</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">3 Oz - All Varieties Except Elegant Medley Limit 1 Case Per Family Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">ON SALE Everyday</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">CHM PLU 361</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">BONUS COUPON</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">PARTY MIX CAT TREATS</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">2.1 Oz •Selected Varieties Limit 2 Pkgs with Coupon Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$1.19</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">CHM PLU 573</p>	<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">BONUS COUPON</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">JONNY CAT PREMIUM CAT LITTER</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">20 Lb Bag Limit 1 Bag With Coupon Limit One Coupon Per Family Price Valid Only With Coupon Effective 7/15/20 - 7/21/20</p> <p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em; color: red;">\$37.99</p> <p style="font-size: 0.7em;">CHM PLU 362</p>
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