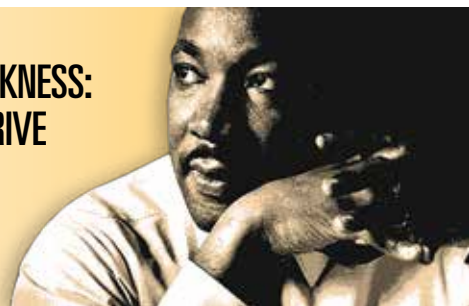


**Sutter's Fort Presents
"Hands on History:
Catch Gold Fever"**

PAGE 2

**"DARKNESS CANNOT DRIVE OUT DARKNESS:
ONLY LIGHT CAN DO THAT. HATE CANNOT DRIVE
OUT HATE: ONLY LOVE CAN DO THAT."**

— MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR., A TESTAMENT OF HOPE:
THE ESSENTIAL WRITINGS AND SPEECHES



AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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VOLUME 13 • ISSUE 01

Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

JANUARY 12, 2018

**CALIFORNIA CAPITAL
AIRSHOW 2018
DATES ANNOUNCED**



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**IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO START OVER**



PAGE 6

**BERA ACCEPTS SMALL
BUSINESS AWARD**



PAGE 3



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You Gotta' Be There

Annual Awards Program by Chamber of Commerce



Many of last year's winners (above) are hoping to repeat as the people's choice in their category. Becky Lund (at right) was one of last year's winners for Best Real Estate Agent. She receives her award from Doug Proctor, Chamber President. Photos courtesy of Ryan Griffith, courtesy Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce.

By MPG Staff

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - The business event of the year is fast approaching. The Best of Fair Oaks was a crowd pleaser last year with great food, fun and surprising winners of the annual awards.

Presented by the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, the event exceeded the expectations of attendees. All the hard work and coordination of the staff and their loyal volunteers really made it a first class program.

This year's event will be held at the North Ridge Country Club in Fair Oaks. The program is scheduled for January 25th, 2018 from 5:30 to 7:30pm, and it is sure to be every bit as exciting.

When speaking about last year's roll out of the red carpet in Fair Oaks, Kimberley Pitillo, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce Executive Director said "Our 1st annual Best of Fair Oaks was a great success! This special evening was all about celebrating our great little town and putting Fair Oaks on the map."

All the votes are now cast and they are being tabulated to verify authenticity. An

impressive 442 different businesses received votes last year.

The rules to become a "Best of Fair Oaks" award winner were simple. A business must be located in the Fair Oaks zip code 95628, or must be a member of the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce to be recognized as "The Best".

Businesses promoted the vote at their stores, through their social media contacts or other means to get people to cast their votes to win. The award winners are voted on by Chamber members, Fair Oaks citizens and readers of the American River Messenger newspaper.

Get your tickets and enjoy the evening



in your favorite cocktail or business attire. Come and enjoy the great food, great fun, and great recognition of the best businesses in the community. To buy tickets contact the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce at 916-967-2903 or go to www.fairoakschamber.com. ★

SMUD Board of Directors Approves 2018 Budget

SMUD special release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The SMUD Board of Directors approved a \$1.74 billion budget. The 2018 budget provides funding for all capital and operations and maintenance (O & M) programs needed to meet the Board's Strategic Directions in the year ahead.

The 2018 budget also positions SMUD for changes coming to the utility industry so SMUD can continue to meet our community's energy needs. The budget sets the stage for operational efficiencies and improvements, as well as expansions of customer offerings in the near future, and opens up SMUD to seek new revenue opportunities.

SMUD is in a strong financial position. SMUD has a robust cash balance and operating cash flow and will fund the majority of capital investment with cash on hand, only planning to borrow \$200 million next year. Recently Fitch and S&P upgraded SMUD's credit ratings to AA, from an already impressive AA-, while Moody's continues to rate SMUD Aa3. This is the strongest SMUD's credit ratings have been in 33 years.

The 2018 budget is \$161 million more than the 2017 budget, due mostly to higher planned capital expenditures. SMUD continues to upgrade electrical infrastructure to maintain safe and reliable service, as well as invest in the technological foundations to meet future challenges. Offsetting these increases is a lower commodity budget due to declining natural gas costs, which SMUD locked in through hedging programs.

As the utility business evolves, SMUD is increasingly reliant on technological solutions in all business areas. As a customer-owned utility, SMUD continues to focus on improving the digital channels its customers use to do business with SMUD.

Continued on page 5

Yep, Pot Goes Legit, Sort of

**Story by
Jacqueline Fox**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - In many cities across California, Sacramento included, the cultivation and sale of recreational cannabis becomes legal Jan. 1, opening the flood gates for an industry widely expected to generate a gold mine for municipalities who have said "yes" to the legitimization of the pot business.

However, Sacramento County, as well as the cities of Citrus Heights, Rancho

Cordova and Folsom, among others in Placer County and points across the map, each have stuck to their guns and have banned what they view as the coming of the wild west of commerce.

Anticipating an uptick in violent crime, robberies, homelessness and headaches, coupled with a complicated process for management of the commercial side of the cannabis industry, these areas have echoed a resounding "NOT" to the cultivation

of cannabis in their towns. There are also too many questions, they say, about how to affectively assess pot farmers on their profits from what is currently a cash-and-carry industry, not to mention the offense of the smell from burning weed wafting over their

Continued on page 5

Because marijuana remains categorized as a controlled substance under federal law, the state has left it up to individual counties and cities to determine if they wanted in on the action or not. MPG graphic



WWW.AMERICANRIVERMESSENGER.COM

Sutter’s Fort Presents “Hands on History: *Catch Gold Fever*”

By Traci Rockefeller Cusack

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California State Parks, Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park (SHP) and Friends of Sutter’s Fort are proud to present an interactive and fun “Hands on History: *Catch Gold Fever*” event on Saturday, January 20, 2018, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Fort visitors will have the unique opportunity to step back in time and explore an era that changed California forever. The gold discovery at Coloma echoed around the world and triggered the largest migration in United States history. Thousands of immigrants gambled and came to early California to try to strike it rich. They left family behind, spent life savings, and borrowed money all in the pursuit of gold. Many miners bought one-way passage on ships bound for California, and abandoned ships clogged the port in San Francisco as miners and sailors took off for the hills. Miners stopped at Sutter’s Fort before they headed for the hills in their quest for gold, and the Fort was often the first place to which they returned for supplies and entertainment. Sadly, the dream of riches was not often the reality and many left the hills with only disappointment in their pockets.

As an event highlight, Fort visitors are invited to spend the day enjoying hands-on activities such as gold panning, parlor and card games (and other games of chance) and “Pioneer dress-up Station” activities where families dress as pioneers (perfect for picture-taking). In addition, there will be a display of guns and weapons from the Gold Rush era and demonstrations of black powder weaponry in action including the crowd-favorite firing of Sutter’s cannon. In addition, Friends of Sutter’s Fort will be sampling out popular gold rush nugget chocolates and featuring gold rush-related items for



As an event highlight, Fort visitors are invited to spend the day enjoying hands-on activities such as gold panning, parlor and card games (and other games of chance) and “Pioneer dress-up Station” activities where families dress as pioneers.

sale in the on-site Store so visitors can bring a bit of gold rush history home with them

All “Hands on History” activities are included in the cost of admission. Sutter’s Fort SHP admission costs are as follows: \$7 per adult (18 and older), \$5 per youth (ages 6 to 17) and free for children 5 and under. For more information, call 916-445-4422 or visit www.suttersfort.org

The Friends of Sutter’s Fort is a nonprofit 501 c 3 organization dedicated to the enhancement, preservation and protection of Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park, and educational and interpretive programs at the park. Friends of Sutter’s Fort is a Cooperating

Association for California State Parks since 2006. Friends of Sutter’s Fort is the major funder of both restoration work and programs at Sutter’s Fort State Historic Park. Through the generosity of our donors, in the past 3 years alone, we have funded several major projects including the painting of the exterior walls, the restoration of the blacksmith shop and the painting of the interior walls (currently underway). In addition, we are proud to provide funding to support the educational programs at the park. For more information, please visit www.suttersfort.org

Source: T-Rock Communications ★

Sexual Misconduct 'Secret Settlements' Will Roil California, D.C. in 2018

Commentary
by Jon Fleischman
Reprinted by permission

No doubt there are many on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC, and in state capitals across the nation that are somehow hoping that the distraction of Christmas and New Year’s Day will somehow change the channel on the intense scrutiny of sexual harassment (or worse) committed by politicians of both political parties.

That’s not going to happen. In fact, I predict that the high profile that this issue has taken over the past few months is just a harbinger of things to come as the holidays come to a close.

We have seen members of the U.S. Senate and House resign, or announce retirements. We have seen state legislators do the same. Here in California we have seen resignations from Assemblymembers Matt Dababneh (D-Los Angeles) and Raul Bocanegra (D-Arleta) already. The resignation of the former has placed a lot of negative scrutiny on U.S. Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA), for whom Dababneh served as district director. A third Assemblymember, Sebastian Ridley Thomas (D-Los Angeles), just this week announced his sudden resignation, citing health reasons - after his name had been whispered as someone else who might end up in the spotlight on this issue. California State Senator Tony Mendoza (D-Artesia) is considered by many to be politically a dead man walking as multiple credible accusers have made serious allegations about him - and he has been suspended from all of his committee assignments as a formal investigation takes place. Another Senator, former Assembly Speaker Bob Hertzberg (D-Reseda), is also the subject of an investigation as well.

The reason the issue is a powder keg that has not really blown up yet is the secret-taxpayer funded settlements. In the U.S. Senate and House, it has been revealed that

millions of dollars have been spent settling sexual harassment issues coming straight out of the offices of federal legislators. In some cases, these secret settlements have taken place using money from individual office budgets; in other cases, payments have been made from funds controlled by the institutions (so presumably, ultimately, leadership).

Similarly, in the California legislature we have learned that significant sums of taxpayer money have been spent on sexual harassment claims made against elected.

No one that I have spoken to regarding secret settlements - and I have spoken with many - thinks that this is okay. In fact, most get downright angry when they hear about it. For two reasons, mainly.

The first: if money is being paid out to someone who filed a claim there is a presumption that the claim was meritorious, and that the public has a right to know when one of their elected officials has been found to be conducting themselves inappropriately, or worse.

The second: these are public dollars and the public has the right to know where their dollars are being spent.

Adding to the considerable cost of these secret settlements themselves is now the fallout from resignations - i.e. special elections, and their significant cost to taxpayers.

It seems that there are two main groups of politicians who are interested in slow-walking or ideally never revealing the truth behind secret settlements.

Of course there are the sleazy politicians who know that if and when the news breaks that they had sexual harassment allegations so credible against them that victims had to be paid off - well, as we have seen, these have been extinction moments for most.

But then there are the enablers: those that have not actually committed and untoward or sleazy actions themselves, but they are covering up for those who have done so. That means those who are in a position to open the books - to

provide transparency. Presumably this is leadership in Washington and in Sacramento - both elected leaders, as well as those legislators heading up key administrative committees with oversight over such matters.

Frankly, every federal and state legislator should be putting out a statement calling for transparency and for making the secret settlements public - as well as stating on the record that they have not had any issues themselves. That would create significant peer pressure.

There are efforts both in the national and state capitols to shine the light on settlements. In D.C. a legislative effort is being spearheaded by Rep. Ron DeSantis (R-FL). In Sacramento, the Senate Republican Leader, Pat Bates (R-Laguna Niguel), has called for more transparency.

Legislators that are not affirmatively trying to open up the books, and shine the light on secret settlements, are in fact part of the problem.

The war drums on this issue are only getting louder and louder - and the new year will bring a new national drive for transparency and accountability.

This entire episode has emerged as a painful stain on our political system (and as an ugly cultural black eye, as stories continue to emerge across the country outside of politics).

But this is not without a considerable upside. Change needs to happen. It’s not alright for people with power to engage in sexual misconduct - period. It’s not appropriate, nor humorous, in any context.

This column originally appeared on Breitbart.com/California. Jon Fleischman has served as Executive Director, CA Republican Party (1999-2001) and Vice Chairman, South - CA Republican Party (2007-2011) ★



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Happy New Year, Fair Oaks!



Dot Boyd. Photo courtesy of Dot Boyd

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - It's hard to believe that a new year is upon us! Last year flew by with so many fun events month after month in Fair Oaks! Good news!! Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce (FOCC) has another great year planned for everyone! Mark your calendars for these FOCC sponsored/co-sponsored events:

2nd Annual Best of Fair Oaks Awards Gala with American

River Messenger: Thursday, Jan. 25th 5:30 pm -7:30 pm at North Ridge Country Club (purchase your tickets now)

69th Annual Fair Oaks Fiesta: Sunday, May 6th all day family fun in Fair Oaks Village!

25th Annual A Taste of Fair Oaks: Friday, June 8th from 6:00 pm – 9:30 pm at North Ridge Country Club (advanced ticket sales only; will sell out)

Free Concerts in the Park with our Community Partners: Every Thursday between June 14th – August 16th 6:30 pm – 9:00 pm in Village Park

35th Annual Christmas in the Village: Saturday, Dec. 1st from 3:00 pm – 7:00 pm in Fair Oaks Village

Who will be our next Dignitaries? Honorary Mayor, Jr. Honorary Mayor and Miss Fair Oaks applications are welcome now! Don't miss the boat! Our youth positions come with a financial scholarship!

Looking to get involved in Fair Oaks this year? We love our volunteers and we have a lot of fun along the way! Students who volunteer get credit toward their required community service hours.

We love our sponsors and members, too! Please consider promoting your business or supporting the community via Fair Oaks Chamber events!

Please visit our website <http://www.fairoakschamber.com> for all of the details, deadlines and on-line registration forms or call 916-967-2903.

Here's to another great year, Fair Oaks!

Dot Boyd, Ambassador Chair Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, est. 1954 Serving, representing, and enhancing business growth and success in the Fair Oaks Community ★

Bera Accepts International Franchise Association's Small Business Award

By Jack Miller

WASHINGTON DC (MPG) - Congressman Ami Bera accepted the International Franchise Association's (IFA) 2017 Franchise Small Business Award last week for his support of the small business community. Rep. Bera was recognized for championing local franchises and businesses, as well as his leadership on smart policies that promote economic growth and job creation.

"Owning a small business is part of the American Dream," said Rep. Bera. "If you work hard and play by the rules, everyone should have the opportunity to get ahead. I've seen how hard small business owners work in Sacramento County and we need to support them every way we can. Thank you to the International Franchise Association for this award. I look forward to working together to continue improving Congress' support for small business."

"Congressman Bera has proven to be steadfast advocate who ensures small businesses are protected in his district and



Rep. Ami Bera Accepts the International Franchise Association's 2017 Small Business Award. Photo courtesy Office of Ami Bera

across the country," said IFA President and CEO Robert Cresanti. "Franchise businesses are the small business backbone of our economy and hugely important to their local communities. They create a significant portion of our nation's jobs, give aspiring entrepreneurs a unique and guided path to business ownership, and even sponsor local teams and charitable events. On behalf of the 733,000 franchise businesses across the country and the 7.6 million people they employ, the IFA is proud to recognize Congressman Bera

today."

Rep. Bera is committed to supporting Sacramento County's vibrant small business community by fighting for common-sense tax relief, reducing burdensome regulation, and ensuring that government is a strategic partner for growth – not an obstacle. His office can also connect local businesses with resources they can use to grow and hire. For more information on Sacramento County's small businesses, visit <https://bera.house.gov/helpforbusinesses>. Source: Office of Ami Bera ★

Sacramento Area Animal Lovers Provide "Snips" and Care for Underserved Family Dogs and Cats

By Alexis Kagarakis, SacAnimal.org

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Animal lovers in Sacramento and Yolo Counties can reserve low-cost spay and neuter surgeries for their dogs and cats during Spay Day Sacramento 2018.

Spay Day Sacramento is an annual event run by Sacramento Area Animal Coalition (SAAC), an all-volunteer nonprofit committed to eliminating local pet overpopulation. Since 2000, nearly 10,000 dogs and cats have been spayed or neutered through the program.

Each pet receives a spay or neuter surgery, permanent microchip identification and vital vaccinations. An appointment and proof of income are required. (Limit: two dogs or



Spay and neuter surgeries will be provided at participating veterinary clinics and animal shelters on or around February 25, 2018.

cats per household)

Sacramento and Yolo County residents who receive public assistance and/or have an annual household income of \$35,000 or less are eligible to participate. Priority is given to pitbulls and Chihuahuas.

Each cat costs just \$15 and each dog just \$20.

Spay and neuter surgeries will be provided at participating veterinary clinics and animal shelters on or around February 25, 2018.

To apply, fill out an online request form at www.sacanimal.org. ★

11 Critical Home Inspection Traps to be Aware of Weeks Before Listing Your Home for Sale

Fair Oaks/Orangevale - According to industry experts, there are over 33 physical problems that will come under scrutiny during a home inspection when your home is for sale. A new report has been prepared which identifies the eleven most common of these problems, and what you should know about them before you list your home for sale.

Whether you own an old home or a brand new one, there are a number of things that can fall short of requirements during a home inspection. If not identified and dealt with, any of these 11 items could cost you dearly in terms of repair. That's why it's critical that you read this report before you list your home. If you wait until the building inspector flags these issues for you, you will almost certainly experience costly delays in the close of your home sale or, worse, turn prospective buyers away

altogether. In most cases, you can make a reasonable pre-inspection yourself if you know what you're looking for, and knowing what you're looking for can help you prevent little problems from growing into costly and unmanageable ones.

To help homesellers deal with this issue before their homes are listed, a free report entitled "11 Things You Need to Know to Pass Your Home Inspection" has been compiled which explains the issues involved.

To hear a brief recorded message about how to order your FREE copy of this report call toll-free 1-800-665-3596 and enter 1003. You can call any time, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Get your free special report NOW to learn how to ensure a home inspection doesn't cost you the sale of your home.

This report is courtesy of Bob Kelnhofer, Realtor CalBRE 01215785. Not intended to solicit buyers or sellers currently under contract. Copyright © 2018

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Crossword Puzzle on Page 5

A	S	D	I	C		B	A	A		B	U	M	P
S	H	I	V	A		A	L	L		S	O	R	E
H	A	V	O	C		I	I	I		A	N	G	L
	W	A	R	H	O	L		K	E	N	N	E	D
		Y	E	P		L	E	W	D				
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B	A	R	T		A	R	A	B		L	I	A	N
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M	A	C	A	U		S	I	T	E		S	E	R
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K	N	O	X			N	A	Y		E	S	S	A

Sudoku Puzzle on Page 5

3	4	2	8	7	5	1	9	6
9	8	1	2	3	6	7	5	4
7	6	5	9	4	1	2	8	3
8	7	6	3	1	9	5	4	2
5	3	9	4	2	7	8	6	1
1	2	4	6	5	8	3	7	9
2	5	7	1	9	4	6	3	8
4	1	8	7	6	3	9	2	5
6	9	3	5	8	2	4	1	7

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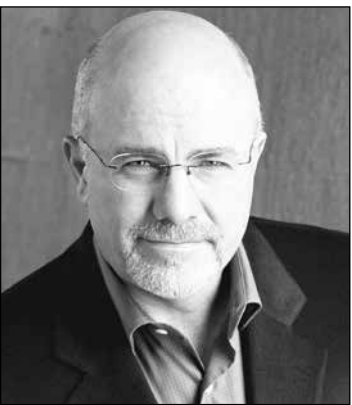
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Dave Says

Mortgage ratios
Dear Dave,
Do you have a guideline ratio for mortgage debt to income?
- Levon

Dear Levon,
When it comes to buying a home, I always tell people to get a 15-year, fixed rate mortgage, with monthly payments that are no more than 25 percent of their take home pay. This type of mortgage is the only debt I don't beat up people for having. Still, I urge folks to pay off these loans in less than 15 years.

The average person following my plan pays off this type of loan in about seven or eight years. That's a pretty big deal in terms of your financial security. And paying extra on your mortgage doesn't have to be a strain. You can start by simply rounding up your payments. If the payment is \$770, make it \$800 instead, and apply the

extra to the principal balance. If you want to get more intense, you could make an extra house payment each quarter, or go the route of bi-weekly payments. To do this, simply make half a monthly payment every two weeks. By the end of the year you'll have made 13 payments instead of 12. This will knock years off the length of your loan.

Remember, your income is your largest wealth building tool. It's so much easier to save, invest, and give when all your money isn't flying out the door to make payments!
—Dave

No commodities
Dear Dave,
Do you recommend having gold and silver as part of your investment portfolio?
-Don

Dear Don,
No, I do not. I also don't recommend oil or corn futures. All of these are examples of commodities, and the commodities market is extremely volatile. In addition to the market being wildly volatile, the prices on commodities isn't based on actual production. It's based

largely on a supply and demand curve. If there's a shortage on one of them, the price shoots up. For example, when you're talking about gold and silver, there's more demand than supply when the economy is bad. In this kind of scenario, people are fearful and lots of them run to buy gold. This drives up the price to unrealistically high levels. Again, the price on a commodity isn't based on anything other than fear or greed, and a supply and demand curve. The prices aren't based on an actual production of income, like it is with stocks or real estate. I don't buy commodities at all, especially gold and silver. I don't recommend you buy them, either.
—Dave

Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored five New York Times best-selling books: Financial Peace, More Than Enough, The Total Money Makeover, EntreLeadership and Smart Money Smart Kids. The Dave Ramsey Show is heard by more than 8 million listeners each week on more than 500 radio stations. Follow Dave on Twitter at @DaveRamsey and on the web at daveramsey.com. ★

Pot Goes Legit, Sort of

Continued from Page 1

neighborhoods. So pot is legit as of Jan. 1, and yet it isn't, depending on where you reside and how you intend to consume or even grow it. If you're cloudy on the issues, there's good reason for it. The medicinal marijuana laws passed several years ago that ushered in the growth of the pot dispensary market made it legal for those with a "prescription" from their physicians to purchase limited amounts of pot. Proposition 64, passed in November 2016, effectively made it possible for weed growers who are lucky enough to obtain licenses from the state to come out of the shadows and begin cashing in on the commercial recreational pot market, which is expected to generate roughly \$1 billion for the state annually. Tax proceeds on pot farmers' bounties will, in part, support enforcement and oversight of the industry, among other programs.

In addition, Prop. 64 allows for the personal cultivation of up to six living pot plants for non-medical purposes, provided they are grown inside a person's private residence or a green house, but not in a field or backyard, as many cultivators have been doing under the radar for years. So, where and when will it be legal to grow, sell or possess pot? And are pot dispensaries legal or not? Because marijuana remains categorized as a controlled substance under federal law, the state has left it up to individual counties and cities to determine if they wanted in on the action or not, giving them a Dec. 31 deadline to say so, in order for the approval process for applications from prospective growers to begin Jan. 1.

The City of Sacramento voted this fall to join the party and is currently cultivating its own guidelines for commercial growing and distribution. Licensees will be taxed 4% of their proceeds, for starters. Applications for conditional use permits are required and renewable annually. Depending on the type of

“Whether you grow 25 plants illegally or 250,000 plants, it's a misdemeanor and 180 days in the county jail. So even for a convicted felon, it's now like a speeding ticket.”

ROBERT GOLD
ASSISTANT CHIEF DEPUTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY

business you want to run, city fees for setting up a grow operation will run you anywhere between \$9,000 and \$15,000, and between \$8,000 and \$13,000 to renew the license each year.

But, since it's a cash flow operation, there are many unanswered questions as to how growers will deposit and move earnings, just one of the headaches fueling the Rancho Cordova City Council's "no" vote.

"We have been watching all the things the city of Sacramento is going through and we see it as just a headache we do not want to deal with," said Vice Mayor Linda Budge following her council's 3-2 vote against lifting the ban on commercial operations Dec. 4.

Sacramento currently has roughly three dozen pot dispensaries, again built out primarily after the medicinal pot laws went into effect, but there is a moratorium on approval of new applications for licenses. Pot cultivation beyond the legal limit of six plants inside a residence, delivery services and pot dispensaries all remain illegal in Citrus Heights, Folsom, Rancho Cordova and countywide.

Proponents of Prop. 64 and the decriminalization of the marijuana industry site the stigma of pot and previous felony-level charges for minor offenses that, they say, often stood between offenders' abilities to find a

job or, in some cases, obtain approval for adequate housing. Opponents of the law, however, including city officials, law enforcement agencies and county prosecutors have repeatedly pointed to what they see as a direct through-line between cannabis cultivation and pot dispensaries and serious crime, including murder, which they expect will continue, despite the changes in the law.

"I've been a prosecutor for 30 years, and as long as I've been involved with cases involving crimes related to marijuana, it has always been a very high-risk, dangerous activity," said Robert Gold, assistant chief deputy district attorney. "It is always going to be a dangerous activity whether legal or not, because so many of the growers are less sophisticated. The bad guys are going to believe that they have a lot of product, a lot of money and probably guns. And the other thing is, they won't often report crimes against themselves, which makes them vulnerable victims."

Gold also cautioned that it remains illegal, regardless of where you live, to carry more than an ounce of marijuana, but conceded the misdemeanor charges that now accompany most minor pot infractions, make it difficult to justify the costs of prosecuting such cases.

"The law certainly has resulted in changing the laws in favor of those who want to make this a business," said Gold. "Whether you grow 25 plants illegally or 250,000 plants, it's a misdemeanor and 180 days in the county Jail. So even for a convicted felon, it's now like a speeding ticket." ★

POT OR NOT:
Sacramento Region:
The City of Sacramento: YES
Sacramento County: NO
Citrus Heights NO
Folsom: NO
Rancho Cordova: NO
Elk Grove: NO
Galt: NO
Placer County: NO
Roseville: NO
Rocklin: NO

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CLUES

ACROSS

1. Echo sounder

6. Sheepish cry

9. Speed obstacle

13. Seven day mourning period

14. 100%

15. More painful

16. It's often wreaked

17. Cardinal 3

18. Figure with vertex and rays

19. *Pop icon-painting pop icon

21. *Jackie O's first husband

23. "You betchul!"

24. Off-color

25. Like TV's Randall/Klugman couple

28. Genealogy "plant"

30. No, it doesn't crawl in one's ear

35. *World-famous yellow cartoon boy

37. Kuwaiti, e.g.

39. Tarzan's swing

40. Indian nursemaid

41. Gardener's pipe, pl.

43. Overeat

44. Last European colony in China

46. Surfer's stop

47. Bone-dry

48. Choose by divine intervention

50. Police informer

52. Hi-_____

53. Chihuahua-Pug hybrid

55. By means of

57. *Norma Jean's pseudonym

61. *His Airness

64. Naked protozoa

65. Not an amateur

67. Type of wave

69. Surrendered land

70. What iodine and quinine have in common

71. Like unbagged tea

72. *Kentucky's Fort _____

named for first US Secretary of War

73. Aye's opposite

74. English homework?

DOWN

1. Wildfire remains

2. *Famous American clarinetist, Artie _____

3. Cher or Mariah Carey, e.g.?

4. Poacher's ware

5. Prestige

6. Get-out-of-jail money

7. *Cassius Clay

8. Like Mary-Kate and Ashley

9. Capital of West Germany, 1949-1989

10. Push for something

11. Mix together

12. Mouse to a snake

15. Footwear to match toga

20. *Queen of All Media

22. Bo Peep follower

24. Renting

25. *2009 Nobel Prize for Peace recipient

26. Israeli statesman Moshe

27. Famous Slytherin member

29. Aphrodite's son

31. Semis

32. Australian horse

33. Accustom

34. *Man behind Windows

36. Bangkok inhabitant

38. Between Phi and Kappa

42. Aussie gas station

45. Without clothes

49. Olden day "your"

51. Middle Ages garment

54. Remove from Google Maps

56. Dora the Explorer's farewell

57. *Baseball Hall of Famer, Connie _____

58. End of grace

59. Redecorate, e.g.

60. Wild goat

61. *Actor Bishop or punk rocker

62. Fussles

63. *Neil Armstrong's employer

66. Ribonucleic acid

68. Grazing land

CROSSWORD

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12

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Crossword Puzzle Solutions on Page 4

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3 2 1 9

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5 1 3

8 1 4 2 7

5 9

2 1 6

1 3 2

9 3 4 7

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

Solutions on Page 4

SMUD Board of Directors Approves 2018 Budget

Continued from Page 1

The 2018 budget includes initiatives to deliver a new SMUDapp with bill pay and outage communications functionality, as well as increasingly personalized customer experiences on SMUD's digital channels.

In 2018, SMUD embarks on exploring new business opportunities that open new markets and revenue streams. These include expanding opportunities for new revenue in traditional wholesale energy markets, such as successfully selling excess transmission capacity, plus new net revenue from non-traditional sources such as the new e-commerce solution, the SMUD Energy Store.

SMUD signed a contract in

2017 with Valley Clean Energy Alliance (VCEA) to provide Community Choice Aggregator (CCA) services. SMUD's work with VCEA, which launches next spring, will create a new revenue stream for SMUD and creates possibilities for expansion into other CCA markets.

The capital budget includes funding for improvements and investments to support development of SMUD's load serving capacity—the amount of power needed to meet high demand during peak summer hours—as well as continued modernization of the grid; regulatory compliance; and customers' experience dealing with SMUD.

The O&M budget includes funding for the work associated with SMUD joining the

Energy Imbalance Market (EIM) in 2019. The EIM is a real-time, wholesale power market managed by the California Independent System Operator that enables participating utilities to buy low-cost energy available across eight western states—the resulting efficiencies of pooling power resources across a wide geographic area provides cost savings and environmental benefits.

SMUD customers continue to pay significantly less for electricity than most Californians, and as of November 1, 2017, about 32 percent less than residential customers who are supplied by neighboring PG&E.

For more information, visit itsmud.org. ★

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By Marlys Johnsen Norris,
Christian Author

When God places His love in your heart wonderful things begin to happen in every life.

A brand new fire is kindled within as one begins to experience the awesome agape love of God provides. One's own love experience is healed, changed and transformed by His loving power. It is with this new love one has invited God's Beloved

The Fire of God

Son Jesus Christ into their heart and they accept His sacrificial death on the Cross for all their sins. This decision is when His Holy Spirit enters and to inspire and help with all things in this brand new life. It's an awesome brand new beginning!

People all over the world have just celebrated the day of His birth at Christmas. Now we begin a brand new year that will offer new ideas and experiences in life. This brand new beginning for one who has just decided to follow in the footsteps of the Lord and Savior of their soul is the greatest adventure of a lifetime.

Everyone will discover this is the key to true happiness just begun. Read and study the Word of God, the Holy Bible; then be obedient what it speaks to you. Join a church that teaches the authority of God's Word. This new path with God in a life will be a constant adventure that will

bring blessing upon blessing into one's life.

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but He(Jesus) that comes after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and fire." (Matthew 3:1- John the Baptist)

This decision will one day grant you will enter into the gates of heaven and live with the Lord in a brand new body that will be like Jesus' A body that can walk through walls and move everywhere miraculously the instant you lovingly think about someone, you will be in their presence. The greatest adventure of a Holy Fire of God's love transforms and that touches your life!

Marlys Johnsen Norris
Chrisitan Author of 6 books
Writer: American River Messenger
Marlysjn@gmail.com ★



By Pastor Ray Dare

Life is not an unbroken series of victories. The fact is everybody experiences failure in life. We all have setbacks, failures, defeats, losses. And sometimes a defeat can seem to overwhelm you...this is the way Job felt when he said, *"My days have passed. My plans are shattered and so are the desires of my heart."* Job 17:11

When you feel like "your days are past and your plans have been shattered", what do you do? Three things... God says in Isaiah 43:18-19, *"Forget what happened before, and do not think about the past. Look at the new thing the I am going to do. It is already happening. Don't you see it? I will make a road in the desert and rivers in the dry land."*

1. Forget Your Past. God says, *"Forget what happened..."* Your past is past. It's water under the bridge. You can't change the past by worrying

Pastor Ray's Encouraging Words

It's Never Too Late to Start Over

about it. I don't care what your failure in life is. You are not washed up unless you choose to quit, unless you choose to reject the grace of God. You can either live in condemnation or you can confess your mistakes and get on with life. Let it go and focus on the future. It's not so much where you've been, but what direction your feet are headed now that counts.

2. Perceive Your Possibilities. God says, *"Look at the new..."* You don't ponder your past, you perceive your possibilities. Be positive and expect God to complete what He started in you. *"God began doing a good work in you, and I am sure he will continue it until it is finished when Jesus Christ comes again."* Philip. 1:6 (NCV)

You may think, "It's too late for me... I've lost too much time... I'll never recover, my life is half over, and I'm not even going to try to try again..." Don't ever think that way – not for a minute! Yes, you may have blown it. But God is not through with you! The race is not over! It's not how you start the race of life that

matters, it's how you finish.

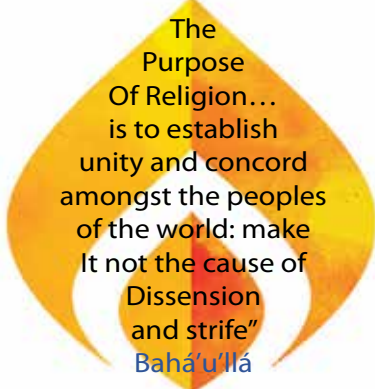
3. Expect God's Help. God says, *"I will make a road in the desert and rivers in dry land."* God says, *"I will do it."* "I will do for you what you cannot do for yourself." Maybe you've felt like you've been in a desert lately...a spiritually dry place? God says, "I will make a road...a way out." Maybe you've felt emotionally overwhelmed... God says, "I will make rivers in dry places...I will refresh you."

One of my favorite verses in the Bible is Jonah 3:1 *"And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah a second time."* God is the God of second chances. I don't care how many times you've failed, God never gets tired of forgiving and it's never too late to start over!

I would like to personally invite you to our Community Candlelight Service this year on December 24th at 10am. Visit our website at NBC4U.org for more information and directions or call 916- 992-1997.

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A Merit-based Immigration System Would Help Americans – and Skilled Foreigners

Commentary
by Deena Flinchum

Don't expect a bigger pay-check anytime soon. Fed Chair Janet Yellen recently admitted there might be far more "slack" in the labor market than she and her colleagues realized, meaning that employers can attract all the workers they need without raising wages.

This is a longstanding problem. Inflation-adjusted wages have climbed just 0.2 percent annually since 1973.

Several lawmakers on Capitol Hill plan to end this wage stagnation by transitioning to a merit-based immigration system. Limiting low-skilled immigration would make it easier for working-class Americans to find jobs and negotiate raises.

Each year, the US gives out more than 1 million "green cards," permanently allowing foreign-born individuals to live and work in the United States. Only 140,000 of those are for highly skilled immigrants.

The current immigration system reserves two-thirds of all green cards for foreigners who already have extended family in the country without accounting for immigrants' economic potential.

Because so many extended family members of immigrants possess few skills, they compete with the most vulnerable

Americans for jobs.

This influx of workers has pushed many less-educated Americans out of the job market entirely. In the 1960s, 95 percent of male high-school dropouts were working or actively looking for jobs; today, only 80 percent participate in the labor force.

American workers also take a pay cut. Harvard economist George Borjas found Americans lose \$402 billion annually in foregone wages as a result of competition from immigrant laborers.

Congress may soon consider a bill, the Reforming American Immigration for a Strong Economy (RAISE) Act, to relieve these Americans. The RAISE Act would cut the number of green cards by 50 percent by scrapping family-sponsored green cards, with notable exceptions. Recent immigrants would still be able to obtain green cards for their minor children and spouses but no longer be able to bring adult children and siblings.

People will receive points if they have high-paying U.S. job offers, fluent English language skills, and college degrees.

The RAISE Act would eliminate slack in the labor market, giving workers more leverage to demand raises.

Some special interest groups have expressed skepticism. They needn't be concerned.

American universities worry the RAISE Act would disadvantage foreign students. Actually, the RAISE Act would benefit them because currently, those students often struggle to obtain work visas once they earn degrees.

The new system would award extra points to graduates of U.S. universities, giving them a leg up on graduates from foreign institutions.

Some agricultural firms fear the RAISE Act would jeopardize their labor force. Those concerns are similarly misplaced.

The agricultural industry doesn't depend on green card holders. Out of more than 1 million green cards distributed in 2015, less than 4,200 went to immigrants in farming, fishing, or forestry jobs. The H-2A visa program, which lets firms bring in an unlimited number of guest workers for farm work, would remain untouched under the RAISE Act.

Our economy is changing. It's becoming tougher for less-educated Americans to find decent-paying jobs. Reforming the legal immigration system would help these citizens while still attracting the best and brightest from around the world.

Deena Flinchum is an IT worker who was employed by the AFL-CIO for 25 years before retiring. She is now a community volunteer in southwest Virginia. ★



POPPOFF!

with Mary Jane Popp

Serene in 2018

This is our hope, but will it be serene? There seems to be so much turmoil in the world and even our own backyard. So I checked in with Astrologer Mercury to get his read for the New Year and how will affect us all.

Mercury is a noted Astrologer and yoga instructor. He hosted his own radio program called "The Center of the Universe" and wrote for several Northern California publications. He was born in Tokyo, Japan and spent his early years in Puerto Rico. From Switzerland and Germany to Canada and throughout America, his exposure to many cultures and locales has helped him develop a unique perspective to Astrology. He also authored "Astrological Predictions for the Age of Life" which is now available. Some of Mercury's predictions for 2018 might seem a little precarious, but

then so is life. He shared these predictions with me on my POPPOFF Radio Show the day after New Year's and now I want to share them with you in an abbreviated form.

In June 2016 Great Britain voted to leave the European community, and starting in 2018-2019, Mercury sees the beginning for a potential world recession. If the European Union starts to splinter in 2018, this will be one of the many factors contributing to this economic downturn worldwide. This signifies financial loss for the United States in general. The 2017 tax cut by Congress for corporations and the wealthiest people in America contributes to the 2018 economic downturn.

The soul of America is going to be in questions this year. What are we now? What do over 300 million Americans want for the future of America? We have so much. We can do and accomplish anything our consciousness is capable of imagining, but only if we can look at each other and ask what can we each do to help America be a better, cleaner, and safer place to live on a healthy beautiful planet...the only home we have. The mid-term election for the United

States brings the Democratic Party back into power in both Houses of Congress, and this is the beginning of the end of the Donald Trump Presidency.

Mercury sees the possibility of another major earthquake hitting Tokyo's astrology chart this year, and this delays not only Japan's financial recovery but, in turn, affects world recovery.

China's President Xi Jinping will have health problems this year which may interfere with his leadership. There is a possibility that the Chinese news agency declares he died in his sleep due to a heart condition. This can add uncertainty to the world economy for 2018. If he dies this year, Communist hardliners will make a move to return China closer to previous Communist Party ties and past ideologies.

That's it in a nutshell. If you want more information or to see what's in store for you, check out www.Mercuryminute.com or call 916-834-4321. Like Mercury told me "Remember to pay attention, it is the simplest act of love." **HAPPY NEW YEAR!!!** ★

California's Adolescent Birth Rate Drops to Another Record Low

STATE POINT MEDIA (MPG) - The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) announced that California's adolescent birth rate continues to decline. In 2015, there were 17.6 births per 1,000 females aged 15-19: a 10 percent decline from the 2014 rate of 19.6 and a 62 percent decline from the 2000 rate of 46.7.

"By empowering young people with

the knowledge, tools and resources to make healthy choices, California is succeeding in reducing births among adolescents," said CDPH Director and State Public Health Officer Dr. Karen Smith.

The adolescent birth rate decreased across all racial and ethnic groups between 2000 and 2015. During this time, the adolescent birth rate dropped

among Hispanics from 77.3 to 27.0, among African-Americans from 59.1 to 19.7, among Whites from 22.3 to 6.9, and among Asians from 15.0 to 2.9.

Despite declining birth rates, racial disparities persist in adolescent childbearing in California. African-American and Hispanic adolescents were three to four times as

likely to give birth as White females. Additionally, the adolescent birth rate varies considerably across counties, from a low of 6.7 in Marin County to a high of 43.1 in Del Norte County.

California has a number of programs aimed at preventing adolescent pregnancy and improving pregnancy outcomes among young women. CDPH funds the Information and

Education Program, the Personal Responsibility Education Program authorized through the Affordable Care Act of 2010, and the Adolescent Family Life Program for expectant and parenting adolescents. Also, the state provides no-cost family planning services to eligible men and women, including adolescents, through the Family PACT Program. ★

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ILoveMyFarmersMarket.com



By County Supervisor Susan Peters

Through the generosity of the American River Messenger, this column serves to provide an update about matters affecting the unincorporated community of Carmichael.

Community Coffee Meeting

My first Fair Oaks Community Coffee Meeting for 2018 will be on Wednesday, January 24, at 7:30 am featuring County Executive Nav Gill as our guest speaker. He is responsible to the Board of Supervisors for planning, organizing, directing, controlling, and coordinating county activities that include more than 30 departments, offices and agencies that provide services to the residents of Sacramento County.

We will meet at the Fair Oaks Water District's

FAIR OAKS COMMUNITY UPDATE

conference room, 10326 Fair Oaks Blvd. near Winding Way. As usual, I will give a brief update then introduce our guest speaker followed by questions and answers.

And coffee, of course, will be provided!

Become a Grand Juror

Grand Jury service is often referred to as being a "citizen watchdog" of local government with the crucial role of monitoring and reviewing government actions.

The Sacramento County Superior Court is now accepting applications for Grand Jury service for the 2018-19 Term. To be eligible you must be a U.S. Citizen, at least 18 years old, a resident of Sacramento County, and not currently serving in any elected office. Applicants must be prepared to devote at least 25-35 hours per week to Grand Jury service.

For more information about serving on the Grand Jury, please visit their website at sagrandjury.org or call 874-7559.

The application deadline is January 26, 2018.

Help Sheriff Expand Electronic Surveillance

Help improve the odds of catching perpetrators by assisting the Sheriff's Department

in fighting crime by participating in the Sheriff's Electronic Eye (S.E.E.) Camera Registry Program.

The S.E.E. Program allows citizens and business owners to register the locations of their video surveillance systems with the Sheriff's Department. When a crime occurs, the Sheriff's Department will be able to identify the locations of video surveillance systems and enlist your help collect video evidence.

Using the geographic locations of the registered cameras, the Sheriff's Department will be able to directly email you in an area in which a crime occurred. A common email to a geographic area may ask citizens to check their video surveillance systems for a specific date and time for video capturing a suspect, getaway car, a crime, etc. If the citizen finds any possible video evidence, they can contact the Sheriff's S.E.E. Program to make arrangements for video retrieval.

For more information, please contact the Sheriff's Department at see@sacsheriff.com

Susan Peters represents the Third District on the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors. She can be reached at susan-peters@saccounty.net. ★

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www.EastLawn.com



By County Supervisor Sue Frost

Through the generosity of the American River Messenger, this column serves to provide an update about matters affecting the unincorporated community of Orangevale.

The last board meeting of the year has come and gone, and I have officially completed my first year as your County Supervisor. During the year I made it a point to write an opinion piece every month – some of them were to explain how and why I voted the way I did, some were to explain my stance on a controversial issue, and some were to simply bring to your attention an important topic that impacts Orangevale residents. I noticed though as I reviewed all 11 of them that very few of them were positive. So in the spirit of the holiday season, I want to use my 12th article of the year to be about something I am advocating in support of: the expansion of Proposition 13.

As you may know, Proposition 13 was passed in 1978 by a large margin and resulted in a cap on property tax rates in California, reducing property taxes by an average of 57% while also requiring

Orangevale Community Update

Why I Support an Expansion of Proposition 13

a two-thirds majority in both legislative houses for future tax increases. Unsurprisingly, opinion polls conducted since then have shown it remains wildly popular among homeowners and taxpayers.

But there are two notable catches to Proposition 13. First, if you want to ever sell your home and buy a new one for a higher value, your new home will be taxed at a brand new rate and you will lose your former cap. Second, even if your new home is a lower value than the one you sold, you lose your former cap if the new home is in a different county. This causes a disincentive to sell, causing less turnover in the housing market and making it more difficult for young people to buy a home. This is especially problematic in California, as we are experiencing a housing crisis that has homeownership rates at their lowest since World War II. I know this personally impacts me, as I would never dream of selling my home if I knew I would lose my lower property tax rate.

We can fix this rather easily by removing these two impediments. We need to make it so all counties can accept these transfers from counties across California, and we need to make it so you can buy a more expensive home and keep a similar tax rate.

I fully recognize that expansion of Proposition 13 would

not just allow homeowners to keep more money in their bank account, but as a consequence counties would receive less tax revenues. As such, my stance may be an unpopular one among County Supervisors across California, as government representatives have a tendency to be wary of any efforts to strip their governmental entities of funding. I am convinced however that people being able to keep more of their tax dollars at home would have a positive impact on our local economy and provide more homeownership opportunities to entry level homebuyers.

Finally, I want to invite everyone to my first Orangevale community meeting of 2018, on January 10th at 6:00pm at the Orangevale Community Center (6826 Hazel Avenue). This is an opportunity for you to get an update from me and to ask me any questions you may have. I always stay after the meeting to make sure that every person has an opportunity to ask their questions. Thank you for reading – and as always, if you want to contact me, call me at 916-874-5491 or e-mail me at SupervisorFrost@saccounty.net.

Sue Frost represents the 4th District, which includes all or part of the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, Rio Linda, Elverta, Gold River, Rancho Murieta, North Highlands, Carmichael, Foothill Farms, and Fair Oaks. ★

California Capital Airshow 2018 Dates Announced



The United States Air Force Thunderbirds will be headlining the event. Photo courtesy CCA

By Liz Fox Johnson, California Capital Airshow

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California Capital Airshow (CCA), presented by Sacramento County in partnership with the City of Rancho Cordova, will use the power and magic of flight to thrill spectators of all ages as it hosts the thirteenth annual airshow at Mather Airport, September 21-23, 2018. The three-day event includes a Friday night show, Airshow After Dark, as well as two full days of heart-pounding aerial performances and aircraft displays.

The United States Air Force Thunderbirds flight demonstration team returns to Sacramento for the first time

since 2015 to headline the event. In conjunction with this year's show, Mather Airport celebrates 100 years as a pivotal fixture of aviation in the greater Sacramento region.

"We are thrilled to welcome back the USAF Thunderbirds to Sacramento," said Darcy Brewer, executive director, CCA. "Airshow After Dark kicks off Mather Airport's monumental 100th birthday celebration in a big way, and the action-packed lineup planned for Saturday and Sunday promises to keep airshow fans on the edge of their seats the entire weekend."

For the latest information about the airshow, visit californiacapitalairshow.com. Be the first to know more about 2018 California Capital

Airshow performances and discount tickets by signing up to be an Airshow Insider.

Established in 2004, the California Capital Airshow 501(c)(3) plans and operates the exciting, family-friendly annual event designed to honor the Sacramento region's rich aviation heritage and veterans while using the power and magic of flight to inspire young people. CCA gives back to the community through scholarships, charitable group donations and exciting educational youth programming throughout the year. For more information about the airshow, performers, and discount tickets, please visit www.californiacapital-airshow.com. ★



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