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Addresses Missile Site
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East Sacramento News

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JULY 12, 2024

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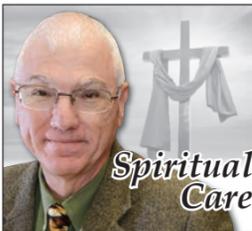
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STARTS WITH
A SNIP**



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Cemetery Tales Dark and Light a Thrill

Story and photos by
Kristina Rogers

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Old City Cemetery Lantern Tour is the “hot ticket” for October. A local morbid tale told around Halloween is fun, and the docents enjoy spinning terrifying yarns about the cemetery’s residents. They also know these were real people who lived and breathed entire lives.

SalliAnne Maliguine was just re-elected the Old City Cemetery Committee board president. Her favorite lantern tour story involves a love triangle. The jealous lover of Mr. Kawahara’s wife snuck into their house and hid under the bed while they were out. At around 2 a.m., the lover leaped out and murdered the wife. Mr. Kawahara retaliated and killed the lover. He pleaded self-defense at trial and won. But Maliguine wonders, was the lover really under the bed that long?

Listeners eat up stories like these on a dark night in a historical cemetery. But there is plenty of work for Maliguine and her volunteer board for the rest of the year. Tours can run four times a month, plus events. For instance, the Beer Babes and Brawls event is supported by Ruhstaller

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Eric Vraznar, Rachele Weed and Eric Thomsen (in black hat) smile in front of a mausoleum in the Old City Cemetery.



Unhoused Homeless Down 41% in Latest PIT Count

Sacramento City
Express News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The number of people living outdoors in the city and county of Sacramento plunged 41 percent between 2022 and 2024, one of the largest decreases in homelessness statewide.

The biennial Point-in-Time Count released June 5 by the nonprofit Sacramento Steps Forward found that overall homelessness, including those living in emergency shelters, fell by 29 percent compared to the count two years ago.

Sacramento Steps Forward coordinates community-level efforts to end homelessness. Every two years, it recruits hundreds of volunteers to go out and count people who are unhoused throughout Sacramento County. This year’s count, on Jan. 24 and 25, found 3,944 people living unsheltered, down from 6,664 people identified in the 2022 count.

The total number of unhoused people counted, including those in shelter and temporary housing, dropped by 29 percent from 9,278 to 6,615.

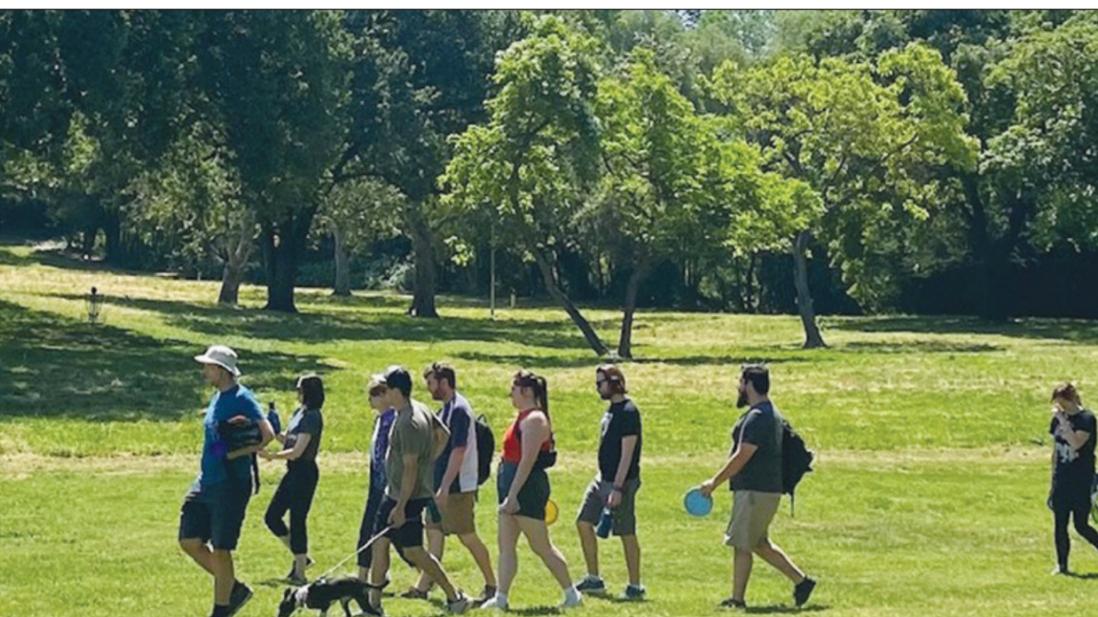
“These results are truly outstanding and, undeniably, reflect Sacramento city and county’s ‘all in’ approach to addressing this crisis,” said Lisa Bates, CEO of Sacramento Steps Forward.

Leaders from Sacramento city and county said the decrease in unsheltered homelessness reflected the tens of millions of dollars invested by both local governments in standing up new emergency shelter beds and permanent supportive housing units, and an increasingly coordinated response to sharing resources and responsibilities.

“There are still too many people who are homeless for us to declare victory but maybe homelessness is not so intractable after all,” said Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg. “The

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Disc Golf is Aces in Sacramento Parks



A group of friends walks the disc golf course.

Story and photos
by Kristina Rogers

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - In 2007, Josh Everett was invited to try a game called “disc golf.” He had time, so he thought why not. “I went out and did a 100-foot shot. It went in the basket, and that was it; I was hooked,” Everett said.

Sacramento is ranked the

eighth-best place to play disc golf, according to Udisc.com. Its general appeal could be accessibility and affordability. “Things are expensive these days,” said Everett. “I like regular golf but prefer to spend less than \$50 to get on the green. Disc golf costs nothing to walk on the course and play.”

Messenger Publishing Group spoke to Everett in Reichmuth Park

on Gloria Drive, where there is a disc golf course. He rolled a cart filled with colorful discs that immediately caught the attention. He proudly showed off his collection.

Discs come in various weights and are stamped in colorful foils and graphics. Players buy, sell and trade discs. Although Everett is an avid player willing to invest in pricier

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Cemetery Tales Dark and Light a Thrill

Continued from Page 1

Brewery. Guests enjoy beer and wine over bawdy stories about the local saloons. They also do movies in the cemetery. Maliguine said, "We showed 'Night of the Living Dead' and 'Steamboat Bill,' a black and white movie shot in Sacramento."

An MOU (memorandum of understanding) signed in 2022 has been the foundation for a clear relationship with the city. Volunteers raise money for projects like fixing and replacing headstones. Maliguine said, "Our goal is for everyone who resides here to have an address. Every plot will get a marker, which will also help during research."

A docent can be a board member or not. They can update a story or create their own. If they are enthusiastic about a specific subject, such as the gold rush, or plagues, there's a cemetery resident they'll want to talk about. It takes a little research, memorization and speaking.

Long-time Docent Eric Vraznar finds cemetery relationships fascinating. He said, "I learned many residents who didn't like each other are buried beside each other. There's a lot of tea spilling during these tours. You didn't make the court records unless you got arrested or went to court."

As a writer, Vraznar knows how to research stories. He finds the cause of death, checks old newspapers, and reviews state library manuscripts. He said, "The Sacramento Room in the library on I Street is a great research place."

Vraznar can also read between the lines. He said, "One of the first articles described a crazy woman whose behavior was so well-known and unsavory there was no need to go into it. I thought, how can you not say her quirks? We know everyone's quirks today. It indicated there was a great story to tell."

Docent Rachelle Weed believes in teaching today's youth about past trailblazers. One of her favorite residents is Luella Johnson. Weed said, "She was Sacramento's first woman city council member elected in 1912, and the first female elected to such a position in the U.S. I always feel like everyone should

know who she is."

Diversity is already part of Sacramento's history. SalliAnne Maliguine explained, "In 1849, there was no segregation in the cemetery. No one was turned away. All they had to do was pay for their headstone."

New board member Dan Dolliver wants to tell those diverse stories. The cemetery has a sizable Afghan population from the 1800s he's researching. Currently, he provides a symbolism tour and shares his favorite society. He said, "The Knights of Pythias was a secret order of government employees." He laughed, "As a former state worker, I have an affinity for that group!"

As a board member, Dolliver is considering getting McClatchy High School and Sac City College drama students involved in the tours to help enliven the stories and support a new generation of history buffs.

Docent Eric Thomsen was surprised by his personal connection to a cemetery resident. He found a gravesite for a man named Allowing (pronounced all-wing), who was a retired boxer and local restaurateur. Thomsen found out that

Allowing fought Thomsen's grandfather, Caesar Attell, in 1906 at a Los Angeles match. Caesar Attell's brothers were Abe Attell, a featherweight champion, and Monte Attell, who held the world bantamweight title in 1909.

A capital tour guide and soft-spoken introvert during the off-hours, Thomsen comes alive when he tells a story. Like SalliAnne Maliguine, and the other docents, he loves the old cemetery and feels connected to the residents.

Thomsen explained, "A famous epitaph states, 'Where standing, I was once. Where I am, you will be.' These people had lives similar to mine. If I were living during their time, I'd never get a chance to meet the more famous residents. But today, I can stand at their graves and tell their stories."

To learn more go to historicalcitycemetery.org. The Old City Cemetery is at 1000 Broadway.



The historic old city cemetery is located at 1000 Broadway in the Land Park neighborhood.



A fairly new resident of the cemetery, Sandra Westlake keeps her sense of humor with "See ya on the flip side toots" on her gravestone.

"I learned many residents who didn't like each other are buried beside each other. There's a lot of tea spilling during these tours."

—Docent Eric Vraznar



Docent Eric Vraznar speaks at the Capitol Connections Cemetery Tour.

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Grand Jury Addresses Missile Site Contamination

By Carol Feineman

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA, CA (MPG) - One of the 2023-2024 Placer County Grand Jury Final Consolidated Report's 13 individual reports addressed the trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination spreading today from a Lincoln Titan 1-A Missile Site that closed in 1965.

The 58 county grand juries, made up of interested community members, investigate operations of the various officers, departments and agencies of local government, according to California Courts, Judicial Council of California.

The grand jury is part of the county judicial system authorized by the California State Constitution.

What's striking about this year's report is that the grand jury took on the missile site's contamination that falls under the responsibility of a federal agency, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the state's Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Water Board oversees what corrective actions the Army Corps will finally take to eliminate the TCE.

The areas which are not within Placer County Grand Jury jurisdiction include federal agencies and state agencies.

Yet the Placer County Grand Jury addressed today's contamination spreading into a Lincoln active-adult community from the missile site because "it is important to educate the citizens of Placer County about this issue. Cleanup of former military sites contaminated

with toxic chemicals such as TCE is a lengthy process. The process typically involves assessments, cleanup plans and implementation, with involvement from multiple stakeholders. It is crucial to prioritize safety and effectiveness in these cleanup efforts."

The grand jury's 18-page report, "From Missiles to Meadows: Restoring Nature's Balance," stressed that the former Lincoln missile site "poses environmental health risks due to past activities, including chemical use, chemical spills and unexploded ordnance (military supplies such as weapons, rockets, or armor). The source of contamination is trichloroethylene (TCE), a solvent which was used to clean the liquid oxygen Rocket Propellant-1 piping and was discharged into the ground..."

The grand jury found that "Cleanup efforts will require soil remediation and groundwater monitoring to mitigate environmental impacts.

To date, no remediation efforts have been completed, resulting in health and environmental concerns from the community. Without cleanup efforts, the contamination poses a risk to the surrounding environment and public health.

It is essential for proper authorities to prioritize and initiate cleanup efforts to address these potentially serious hazards. This remediation project underscores the importance of monitoring and managing environmental contamination at former military sites to ensure public safety and environ-



From left, Lincoln City Councilman Bill Lauritsen, Ray Birge and Anne Constantin Birge, members of the grassroots Titan 1-A Missile Site Environmental Contamination and Remediation Committee, were looking at the number of the monitoring well to see what the trichloroethylene (TCE) levels have been over the years. Photo by Carol Feineman

mental preservation."

A little history is in order. The 54 former intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) silo sites in California, Colorado, Wyoming and Washington built during the Cold War in the early 1960s were designed to destroy enemy targets anywhere around the world within an hour of launch.

The two-stage missiles

were stored in underground silos and raised to ground level for launch, according to the Library of Congress. Furthermore, each complex consisted of three missile silos supported by a network of underground fuel storage tanks, equipment terminal, antennas and connecting tunnels.

Beale Air Force Base 851st Strategic Missile Squadron oversaw

Northern California's triangle of Titan I missile silo complexes in Lincoln, Chico and Live Oaks.

Co-founder Anne Constantin Birge of the grassroots Titan 1-A Missile Site Environmental Contamination and Remediation Committee trying to speed up the cleanup process appreciated the grand jury report. The report accurately

stated that no remediation efforts have been completed, according to Birge.

"Many thanks to the members of the Placer County Grand Jury for succinctly and clearly putting the issues on the table for all to see," Birge said. "And, for the Water Board and United States Army Corps of Engineers to know, there are others watching them." ★



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A ribbon from the competitions is a huge honor for the hundreds of competitors.



What would a fair be like without going on rides at the carnival? There are rides for the thrill-seekers as well as for those who want a tamer but just as fun experience. Photo courtesy of California State Fair

By Carol Feineman

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The 170th California State Fair offers 17 days of old-fashioned fun for the whole family, from July 12 to July 28.

Lucky for us that we don't have to drive too far; the first state fair sponsored by the California State Agricultural Society, was held in San Francisco on Oct. 4, 1854, and rotated to different cities for the next six years. In 1861, however, Sacramento became the permanent location for the extravaganza.

While today's California State Fair still honors the state's agricultural industry, there is much more to see and enjoy at the annual event.

There are plenty of activities for all ages. That includes eating funnel cakes, waffles to sliders; listening to top

musicians; riding Butler Amusements' thrilling Zipper to the classic and calmer Crown Merry Go Round; and checking out competitions and exhibits that feature our neighbors' talents and skills.

Besides the nightly concerts, entertainment is ongoing each day. For starters, there are the Tanzanite African Acrobats, the Stilt Circus and the Salsa Steel Band.

The many competitions include the Open Livestock Show with beef cattle, sheep, Boer goats, dairy cattle, dairy goats, Nigerian dwarf goats, pygmy goats, angora and fiber goats, longhorn cattle, llamas and alpaca.

And the always popular Junior Livestock competition spotlights the dedicated youth FFA members with their beef cattle, sheep, swine, goats, dairy cattle and dairy goats.

Exhibits range from a Candy Maze Selfie Exhibit, a Student Showcase & CA

Crafts Exhibit, Animation Academy to a fine art and photography exhibit.

The California State Fair is open different hours of the week.

Main Gate and Blue Gate hours are from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday through Sunday.

Green Gate opens at 2 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and at 11 a.m. Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Carnival and Skyride hours are from 2 to 11 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Kids Park hours are 1 to 11 p.m. Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Tuesday, Saturday and Sunday.

Exhibit Building hours are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. Monday through Thursday; and from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Friday through Sunday.

Mayor Steinberg's Legacy: A Tale of Broken Promises and Declining Civic Trust

Commentary by W. Bruce Lee

Disappointment. That's the best way to sum up Mayor Darryl Steinberg's tenure. Despite the high expectations when he was first elected and his political clout as the former California State Senate leader, Sacramento has taken a sharp downward turn for the worse during his time in office. Many of us are ready to say goodbye and good riddance.

Mayor Steinberg's legacy is perfectly encapsulated a few weeks ago by a viral online video, showing Sacramento police officers casually moving past a person who was breaking into a local historic diner – the fourth break-in since September. While the suspect was later arrested, this glaring instance of inaction underscored a troubling breakdown of law and order that has spread across our city, leaving residents feeling vulnerable.

The Sacramento mayor has limited power so the City Manager and Council share some of the blame for the current problems. However, after being the second most powerful person in a state that rivals the size of many countries, Steinberg's

inability to effectively lead a group of local elected officials and staff shows his failures as a leader.

Sacramento's decline isn't because of the lack of money. In 2018, voters approved Measure U, a sales tax increase that raised approximately \$100 million annually and was pitched as a way to "protect and enhance essential public safety services." Mayor Steinberg promised the revenue would not be diverted to public employee pensions, claiming it would be a "true game changer" to fund affordable housing, homeless shelters and job training.

Once passed, Mayor Steinberg failed to lead the Council and uphold his commitments. Instead of reinforcing public safety, Sacramento now has an understaffed police force with over 100 vacancies, where many residents receive a text message in response to their 911 calls unless it's a severe crime. Police officers privately tell me they quit as soon as they could as it was so frustrating. In the words of one officer, "It is sad to see what used to be a somewhat great city diminish right before our eyes. It certainly isn't the city I started working for many years ago."

Despite the Measure U sales tax and \$110 million in federal aid during the pandemic, Sacramento's budget faces a daunting \$66 million deficit, a testament to the city's fiscal mismanagement. Ironically, the city predicted that the deficit would reach \$85 million by 2024 without Measure U.

To address the budget shortfall, Mayor Steinberg and the Council pitched another tax (Measure C), this time it was aimed at Sacramento's business community, including doctors and dentists. Measure C was resoundingly rejected by voters and drew a scathing for avoiding transparency requirements. The whole episode deepened public distrust in Steinberg's leadership.

Even as Steinberg's false promises have become apparent, he has been able to avoid difficult questions about his leadership as the city's main daily newspaper, the Sacramento Bee, has been mostly unwilling to voice criticism of the mayor. It's no coincidence that the Bee's readership continues to plummet as residents can clearly sense the city's declining services and growing problems even if the paper omits coverage of these issues.

As the mayor's tenure nears its end, he has one final insult to taxpayers. Steinberg is vocally opposing the Taxpayer Protection Act, a statewide ballot measure that empowers voters to approve all state and local taxes and improve accountability for our tax dollars. Unsurprisingly, Steinberg's response to giving voters more of a say in their government is, "Are you kidding me?" He is leading a coalition who falsely claim it would stifle cities' ability to raise taxes when the initiative has no impact on taxes proposed by a city council.

Steinberg ascended to the Mayor's office with high hopes and big promises, but his leadership leaves behind a city marred by crumbling public trust, declining public services, and a massive budget deficit.

Given his lofty expectations, it's not hyperbole that Steinberg has been Sacramento's worst mayor in recent history. Whoever wins the Mayor's race in November, they should learn from Steinberg's example of false promises and failed governance.

W. Bruce Lee is the Sacramento Taxpayers Association president. ★

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ABOUT TOWN

Elks Lodge Calendar of Events

Farmer's Market, 9 am-1 pm every Saturday.

Elks Lodge Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday. Bring your friends and family; \$15 tax included. Best deal in town. Made to order Omelets or eggs any way you want.. Bacon, sausage, potatoes, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, waffles, coffee large parties should call for reservations. Guests are VERY welcome!

Water Aerobics, Monday 10 am, Wednesday 2 pm, Friday 10 am

Yoga, Monday 12 pm, Wednesday 3:30 pm. Lodge members free.

Martial Arts, Monday 5 pm

Pickleball, Mon & Wed 9 am-12 pm, Thu 4:30-7:30 pm, Sun 4-7 pm

To sign up or confirm schedule, join

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Improv Night, 2nd & 4th Wednesdays, 6-8 pm

Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 pm

See above and elks6.net for weekly menu.

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Thursday 7 pm

Saturday 7:30 pm

Friday Happy Hour, Friday 4-7 pm

Line Dancing, 2nd and 4th Fridays

Friends of Sutter's Fort Discounted Admission Rates

Friends of Sutter's Fort, in partnership with Sutter's Fort State Historic Park, is proud to present a series of family-friendly events and activations this fall highlighted by holiday themed movies, an all-ages concert, and adventurous self-guided evening tours by flashlight or

lantern light.

For those interested in visiting inside Sutter's Fort State Historic Park (that is open from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily), all Fort admission fees will be waived for the duration of a major roof replacement and seismic stabilization project that is currently underway.

Visitors can observe the rehabilitation project firsthand and tour the Central Building, which remains open.

For more, please visit www.suttersfort.org

Elks 6 Volunteer Opportunities

PM Crew - We welcome anyone willing to work but especially if you have experience in mechanical, electrical, general contracting, painting, or plumbing the lodge really needs you.

- **Bar Back** - Help out the paid bartenders for large events.

- **Bartender** - Riverside bar for Elks events

There will be a meeting for volunteer bartenders some time this week. email or text Sue Hill if you want to be on the meeting list

- **Sunday Breakfast** - Cook, Serve, bus tables

- **Wednesday Night Dinners** - Help or adopt a night one time or once a month.

- **Join the membership committee**. Attend events and be available to give tours

- **Help at membership booth at Farmers Market**

- **Man a membership booth at the Craft Fair or Parking Lot Sale**

- **Make phone calls to members**

If any of the above sound like something you would enjoy doing, please text Kathy Smith, 916-606-9313. ★

Amid Wildfire Smoke, Take Steps to Protect Health

California Department of Public Health News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - With wildfire smoke and reduced air quality affecting many California communities, the California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is urging Californians to take steps to protect themselves from air pollutants. Wildfire smoke can affect anyone's health, but some people are at higher risk, including pregnant people, children, older adults, first responders, and people with chronic conditions like asthma, COPD, diabetes, kidney disease or heart disease.

"All Californians should be aware of the risks of wildfire smoke and ash inhalation and take steps to avoid breathing in pollutants, including reducing outdoor

activity and staying indoors when possible," said Dr. Tomás J. Aragón, California Department of Public Health Director and State Public Health Officer. "Wildfire smoke can make anyone sick, but it's particularly unhealthy for vulnerable individuals, including children, people who are pregnant, and those with chronic health conditions."

To avoid possible health problems due to wildfire smoke and poor air quality, California Department of Public Health recommends taking the following steps:

Stay informed. Check the air quality and sign up for updates. Californians can check their local air quality index (AQI) at AirNow.

Stay indoors. If the air quality is bad, stay inside as much as possible and close all windows, doors and vents.

Adjust your A/C. Change the settings on your A/C unit to re-circulate or close outdoor air intakes to avoid drawing in smoky outdoor air. Running an air purifier can also help.

Wear a mask. If you must go outside, wear a well-fitting N95 mask. This is especially important for those who must work outdoors for long periods, in areas with heavy smoke.

Wildfire smoke contains fine particles which are respiratory irritants, and when inhaled deeply, can affect the lungs and the heart. Exposure to high concentrations of fine particles can cause persistent cough, runny nose, phlegm, wheezing, and difficulty breathing.

Smoke from wildfires can also cause eye irritation, reduced lung function, and bronchitis. Those with asthma or another

lung disease should keep at least a seven-day supply of medication on hand and call a health care provider if nearby wildfires worsen breathing issues.

Knowing the "Ps of Preparedness" can help you react quickly if a wildfire threatens your area:

People (help children, older adults and people with disabilities)

Pets

Papers (important documents)

Phones

Prescriptions (and glasses)

Pictures

PCs (computers) (for the information stored)

Plastic (credit cards and cash)

More information can be found at the California Department of Public Health's Extreme Heat site. ★

Skunk Tests Positive for Rabies in Sac County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - A juvenile striped skunk showing neurologic signs (e.g., staggering) was found on June 19 near the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) facilities on Nimbus Road in Rancho Cordova, adjacent to the American River Parkway.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife staff humanely euthanized the animal and submitted it to the California Animal Health and Food Safety Laboratory for necropsy. On June 25, confirmation was received that the skunk tested positive for rabies.

Rabies is a severe infection of the nervous

system caused by a virus that is most often transmitted through the bite from an infected animal. Rabies can infect all mammals, including humans. Preventative treatment is available for humans after exposure but must be started promptly. Once clinical signs of rabies are seen, the disease is almost always fatal.

If you are bitten by an animal believed to have rabies, contact Sacramento County at 3-1-1 or 916-875-4311.

In California, rabies is identified in about 200 animals every year, most often in wildlife like bats and skunks.

Domestic animals such as dogs, cats and horses can also get rabies, but this is not as common due

to legal requirements for rabies vaccination. For more information, see the California Department of Public Health's website.

With the American River Parkway being a popular destination for outdoor recreation, including hiking, kayaking and cycling, visitors should take these steps to minimize exposure to rabies:

Avoid contact with wild animals; call animal control if you see sick or injured wildlife.

Report unusual behavior of wildlife or domestic animals (e.g., stumbling, seizures, aggressiveness) to local animal control or wildlife officials.

Immediately wash all animal bites with soap and water and seek medical attention. ★

Nonprofit Receives \$15,000 to Help Unhoused Sacramento Women

Kristin Thébaud Communications News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Women's Empowerment has received a grant of \$15,000 from Union Pacific's Community Ties Giving Program to help women experiencing homelessness in Sacramento find jobs and safe homes during the housing crisis.

"We are proud to once again partner with Union Pacific's Community Ties Giving Program to ensure unhoused women can find and retain employment so they can afford a safe home for themselves and their children," said Lisa Culp, executive director, Women's Empowerment.

Women's Empowerment provides a two-month

employment-readiness and empowerment program, paid job training, childcare and support services so women and their children can break the generational cycle of homelessness. Women's Empowerment offers the most comprehensive job-readiness program in the Sacramento area designed specifically for women experiencing homelessness and their children. In 2023, 165 jobs were secured by graduates, and 189 women either secured or maintained housing.

Since 2001, 1,870 women have graduated from the program with their 4,002 children. Women's Empowerment is funded through private donations from the community and grants. To make a donation:

Womens-Empowerment.org.

"Union Pacific proudly supports organizations that improve the quality of life where our employees live and work," said Liisa Stark, vice president of public affairs, Union Pacific. "Investing in high-quality, non-profit programs puts our communities in a position for future growth and prosperity."

The Community Ties mission is to build safe, prosperous, vibrant and inclusive communities by investing in high-quality nonprofits and programs in the cities and towns in which Union Pacific operates and its employees live and work.

For more: up.com/aboutup/community/foundation/index.htm. ★

Unhoused Homeless Down 41% in Latest PIT Count

Continued from Page 1 41% reduction in unsheltered homelessness is dramatic and affirms that the steady course we set seven years ago to address this state and national crisis is working."

District 2 County Supervisor Patrick Kennedy also cited the work the county has been doing, including opening two Safe Stay sleeping cabin communities in his district.

A Safe Stay community

now under construction on Stockton Boulevard in the city of Sacramento will include tiny homes provided to the city by the state. It will be run by the county through its partnership agreement with the city.

"It is encouraging to see positive results from the hard work we've been doing for years," Kennedy said. "The county has invested significant resources into new programs, services and

shelter beds. I am proud to have many of these shelter beds in my district and more coming this year. Together, we're making a difference!"

Sacramento Steps Forward CEO Bates noted several significant factors that have helped ease the crisis of unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento, including:

Direct assistance from the state to cities, counties and Continuums of Care through the Homeless

Housing, Assistance and Prevention Grant (HHAP) program. The city, county and Sacramento Steps Forward have received \$120 million in HHAP funding since 2019. HHAP currently pays for 97% of the city's emergency shelter beds.

The partnership agreement signed by the County and City in 2022 increased street outreach to homeless encampments with teams that include county behavioral health workers.

A sizeable increase in emergency shelter and homeless housing capacity. The number of shelter and transitional housing beds in the city and county has increased by 84 percent from 2020 — to a total of 3,527 beds. The number of permanent supportive housing units has risen 30 percent, an increase of 1,001 units.

An easing of rents and the availability of apartments. Bates noted that the average apartment vacancy

rate rose by 58% since 2022, with rents dipping by 3%.

The new Coordinated Access System funded by the City and County and run by Sacramento Steps Forward provides a centralized access point for shelter, housing and homelessness prevention services.

To read the full 2024 Point-In-Time Count report and view infographics, go to www.sacstepsforward.org. ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Celebration time, come on! Yes, it really is celebration time in Sac Town, and for the naysayers in the group that were waiting that the free agents were flying by and Monte McNair wasn't pulling the switch, it's time for some credit and accolades.

The most recent acquisition, albeit not yet complete, of free agent DeMar DeRozan, has a 50-plus win season written all over it for our hometown team.

DeRozan, without question one of the most coveted free agents in this year's mix, has apparently chosen the Sacramento Kings over other contenders such as the L.A.

Clippers and L.A. Lakers. What makes this exceptional is that DeRozan is from Southern California, and he chose Sacramento over his hometown.

Sacramento has received criticism over the years that the Kings can't attract big free agent names, and the signing of DeRozan may spell an end to that rhetoric.

One of the shortcomings of last year's team was their inability to close out close games, and that they were somewhat too one-dimensional with their late-game methodology.

No question De'Aaron Fox can't be called upon to provide all of the late game heroics, and that was

primarily the end-game strategy the past couple of seasons.

The signing of DeRozan will enhance opportunities for not only Fox, but Keegan Murray, Domantas Sabonis and Malik Monk, as well.

Opposing teams cannot plan their defense around stopping De'Aaron Fox with a weapon like DeRozan on the floor, and his scoring ability will undoubtedly enhance the scoring capabilities of everyone around him.

DeRozan doesn't come cheap, and part of the process in procuring a six-time NBA all-star is making room under the salary cap. To make that happen, the

Kings had to shed the \$18 million per year they were paying to veteran Harrison Barnes, and Harrison was dealt to the San Antonio Spurs, who are apparently looking for veteran leadership amid their current youth movement.

For many Kings fans that have enjoyed watching Harrison bring his slashing style of offense and the mid-range shooting he has become known for, it's bittersweet. Harrison was a fixture in the Kings starting lineup since February of 2019, and his durability was one of the unquestionable qualities the Kings will miss.

For a team that led the NBA in scoring just two seasons ago, Sacramento dropped 13 spots last year, and even a stronger defensive presence wasn't enough to make up the difference. Missing the playoffs after making the playoffs just one year ago was a gut punch, and it put a bull's eye on

the backs of players that were too inconsistent with their scoring. Harrison, as a starter, was at the top of the list.

So, we wish Harrison well, and usher in a different looking starting lineup that will hopefully include fan favorite Malik Monk, as well.

Without question, DeRozan brings a veteran strength that will show itself in additional wins this season, but the Kings still need help for their all-world center and NBA leader in rebounds, Domantas Sabonis.

While Monte McNair could run for mayor of Sacramento and probably win right now, other potential moves are still in the offing. Drew Timme, 6' 10" center from Gonzaga, was just signed to the Kings' summer league team, and although not drafted, there is something about this 23-year-old that will make you look twice. Could he be a diamond in

the rough? It's possible, but for much needed up front help, let's not forget that already secured on the Kings roster are little-heralded Alex Len and veteran Trey Lyles.

At times, coaches have a tendency to overlook what they already have, and I for one do not believe that we've seen the best basketball that these two Kings have to offer.

For the Chris Duarte fans out there, sadly Chris was sent to Chicago along with two second-round draft picks and money to conclude the DeRozan acquisition. We will miss Chris and his spark off the bench, but like Harrison, the fans wish Chris all the best in Chi Town.

Stay tuned, Kings fans, for more magic from your intrepid GM, and thank you Monte McNair for having the patience to wait for the right player to surface for the Kings.

Welcome, DeMar DeRozan! ★

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Back to the Grind

If I say “1492,” chances are it’ll bring to mind that old school rhyme, “In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue.”

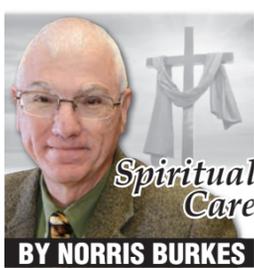
But now I suspect I’ll remember 1492 in a different light. That’s because last month I flew to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, to sharpen 1,492 pencils.

You say, “That’s an expensive trip for such a menial chore.”

Yes, I get your point, but if you’re a regular reader of this column, you know that Chispa Project needed those pencils for the inauguration of their 88th Honduran library at Pedro Nufio Elementary School.

I know I’m not the sharpest stick in the pencil box, but still I expected the project director to match me to something more in line with my talents.

After all, the director is my daughter, Sara Brakhane. She knows that I’ve spoken to dozens of



U.S. audiences. I thought she might arrange a speaking gig in a Honduran soccer stadium.

At the very least, she should have arranged for me to mentor the school’s principal and share the B.F. Skinner Psychology of Education I learned in seminary.

I mean, what’s the harm in a little nepotism?

A lot, apparently.

She assigned me to count pencils, sharpen them, and drop said writing instruments into 421 of the new school backpacks.

Of course, I wasn’t the only volunteer that arrived

on the Dallas connection. The less jet-lagged and talented ones were slotted for important jobs.

Under the direction of Lester Reconco, an artistic Chispa employee, volunteers helped paint a large mural onto the library wall. It was no Banksy or Wyland Whale, but in quick time, our fledgling artists brought the room to life with bright primary colors.

Designed to inspire, the drawing features a Honduran boy in an oceanside scene. He’s reclined on a wave of books while reading. On a field of blue, volunteers added a sailboat, a swan, and multiple fish.

Other artists meticulously painted a line of books that encompassed the room.

Meanwhile my pencil sharpener overheated and forced Sara to assign me to the painting team.

However, it was still not the fame I sought.

My job was to pour various paints into red Solo cups, lug them to the talent, and wash their brushes. My nickname was Pour-Pour-Norris.

Suddenly, I became a truly irreplaceable member of the team.

I know this because I begged others to replace me.

They would not. But finally, after two days of painting, the moment came to shelve the books in the new library.

From the school parking lot, our volunteers worked an assembly line offloading 850 new books from our bus. We carried the books through a playground of kids playing soccer and girl-chase-boy games.

Still, several stopped to hug us, sharing broad and cheeky smiles that stretched for miles and miles. Suddenly we were surrounded by a gaggle of schoolgirls and boys, all grinning with unrehearsed wonder. They weren’t

subtle. They wanted to see the new books we were shelving.

If you know the excitement U.S. children express over a new video game, you can conceive the enthusiasm building in these students as they saw their first children’s picture book.

On the final two days, Chispa volunteers hosted the library inauguration, a sort of all-day birthday party. Students rotated among classrooms for hands-on-fun that included puppets, science experiments and storytelling.

I never did get to deliver my Skinner lecture. But I can share with you that, like Skinner, Chispa believes that changing the environment can make education enjoyable and effective for all students.

Books are used to affect that change.

And the school where we were is definitely an environment that needed changing.

This rural school sits near the city’s landfill

where many parents work to collect trash, operate the landfill’s incinerator, or commute by bus to a day laborer job.

When we left Honduras, the new library we had painted and filled with rows of new books had changed their environment for the better.

Chispa’s challenging slogan suggests we all “Help change the story.” I like to think that sometimes their stories can be changed, and a sharpened pencil can write that new story.

So, with more libraries coming soon, shall I “pencil you in” for the next volunteer trip? In the meantime, I guess you can say, it’s back to the grind for me.

You can be a part of the change by sending a check made to “Chispa Project.” Or give online at Chispaproject.org/chaplain Send to 10556 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. Email comment@thechaplain.net or message at (843) 608-9715. www.thechaplain.net. ★

California Expands Access to Naloxone

Office of Governor Gavin Newsom News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA, (MPG) - On June 21, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that CalRx-branded over-the-counter naloxone HCL nasal spray, 4 mg, will be available for free to eligible organizations through the Naloxone Distribution Project.

This follows the state’s contract with Amneal Pharmaceuticals to purchase an over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray product through CalRx’s Naloxone Access Initiative at a significantly lower price.

“The CalRx brand is more than a logo; it’s a way to show that the state cares. CalRx is proof positive of California’s innovation, business acumen, and most importantly, our heart. California is spending smarter by making life-saving drugs more affordable so that we stretch our

dollars further – and make that same low price accessible to more people,” Newsom said.

Eligible entities can obtain CalRx over-the-counter naloxone HCL nasal spray, for free through the California Department of Health Care Services Naloxone Distribution Project. CalRx is also working on an option for individuals to buy CalRx over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray directly.

Additional details will be shared on the Naloxone Distribution Project website as they become available.

Qualifying California business entities and organizations seeking to purchase CalRx over-the-counter naloxone HCL nasal spray, for \$24 per twin-pack can do so by visiting CalRx’s Get Naloxone website at <https://calrx.ca.gov/get-naloxone>.

In May alone, the state purchased

approximately 24,000 units, leading to \$415,000 in savings. Since the Naloxone Distribution Project was created, more than 4,433,700 units have been distributed, and more than 277,000 lives have been saved.

“By making naloxone widely available and affordable, we are empowering communities and saving lives,” said California Health and Human Services Agency Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly. “This is a crucial step in our ongoing efforts to tackle the opioid crisis head-on.”

The overdose epidemic claims thousands of lives each year throughout the nation – and California is combatting this through an all-hands-on-deck approach. A critical component of that is through harm reduction services and methods like naloxone, which can reverse opioid overdoses swiftly and effectively.

By making CalRx-branded over-the-counter naloxone nasal spray readily accessible, and maximizing the state dollars used to purchase it, California is taking a significant step toward reducing the number of opioid-related deaths and ensuring that over-the-counter naloxone is available when and where it is needed most.

Recently, Gov. Newsom launched Opioids.CA.GOV, a one-stop-shop for Californians seeking resources around prevention and treatment.

Following meetings with the US FDA, CalRx’s partner Civica has a clear path forward. California is using its market power as the fifth largest economy in the world to save lives and make health care affordable.

More about CalRx can be found at calrx.ca.gov. ★

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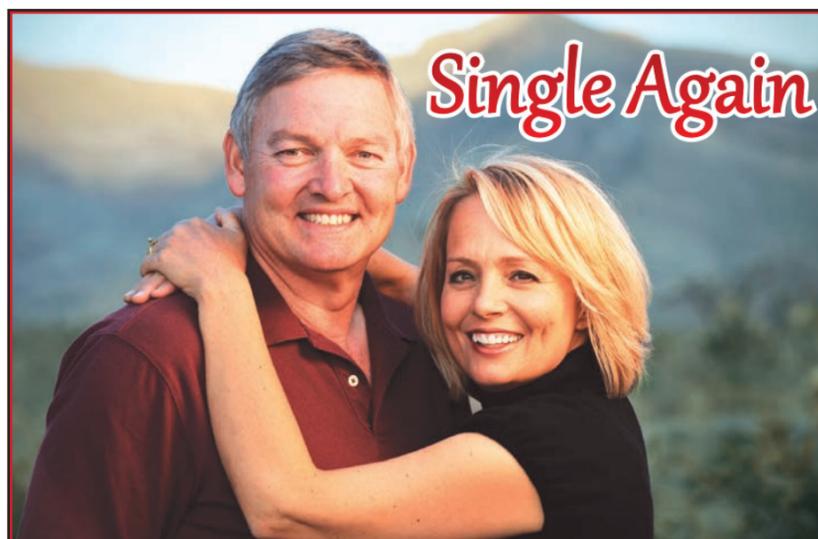
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Disc Golf is Aces in Sacramento Parks

Continued from Page 1
 accessories, anyone can buy used discs for \$5 or less. Discs are available at local tournaments or at stores like Play It Again Sports.

The terminology is interesting, too. Throws have names like hyzer, s-curve and flex shot. "Don't nice me, bro," is a funny term used by players who think complimenting their throw is bad luck. Check out the disc golf pro tour site for more lingo: www.dgpt.com.

The game has reactivated several Sacramento parks. In Reichmuth, crime has significantly dropped since the disc golf course opened. Everett said, "I lived at an apartment complex right across the street from here before the course was installed. It wasn't a nice place to go. I felt uncomfortable with my girlfriend coming here even during the day."

All that was seen were happy groups of people playing and enjoying the day with no obvious concerns.

A new course at Chorley Park has also helped cut down criminal behavior. Since the activation of the disc golf course in June 2023, park ranger

calls have dropped by 50%, according to the City of Sacramento. The working-class neighborhood surrounding the park is enjoying the positive results.

Matt King, leader of the Chorley Park Neighborhood Association, spent years revitalizing the park: "There's a playground and soccer field here. We have low-income families who were afraid to take their kids to play because of drug users and crime. There were fires set in the natural spaces all the time. It was so sad." He smiled and said, "Between our collaboration with law enforcement and new park activities like our disc golf course, that's all changed. Everyone loves coming here now!"

Josh Everett doesn't believe disc golf is the answer to stopping all illegal activity, but it is a deterrent. He said, "When you have a decent amount of people cycling through a property, it discourages drug use and crime."

For him, it has been great for both his mental and social life. Everett said, "When depression and anxiety are at an all-time high, you're out hearing the birds and the



Colorful discs are typically collected and traded.

wind in the trees. It's a mood booster. As you get older, making friends is harder; we become socially isolated. This a great way to meet people."

As basket chains rattled and players laughed and talked, he explained how the sport is growing. Sacramento currently has six courses and fifteen local leagues, including the Cap City Flyers, Mackey Chain Wreckers and Chorley Goats. Everett plays with The Goldfish and joins random groups or plays solo.

The game is trending with youth, too. Everett said, "Kids stop by and ask me, 'What is this?' We give them a disc, and they try it. The next time, we see them out playing, too." The sport is considered "low impact" for park environments. Unlike a golf course, disc golf courses don't require frequent watering and maintenance. Also, disc



Josh Everett stands with his disc caddy, ready to play.

golfers help maintain the courses because it benefits them to do so.

The only drawback players experience is standing in line to get on a course.

But that could be a good problem. It means people are excited to play a new, fun outdoor activity.

If you are interested in

learning more about disc golf, go to www.pdga.com, www.udisc.com, www.paulmcbethfoundation.org or www.flyingdiscmuseum.com.

Prepare for Boating Hazards

U.S. National Weather Service News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Before you go out on the water, check the forecast at your local National Weather Service coastal office. You should also check for the latest National Weather Service buoy observations from the National Data Buoy Center.

You should also make sure your boat has essential -- and in some cases, required -- safety equipment and communications tools.

Life Jackets

Before you and your family get out on the water this year, grab a life jacket and "Wear It!" Nearly

85 percent of those who drown while boating were not wearing a life jacket. Wearing a life jacket is one of the most effective and simple life-saving strategies for safe recreational boating. Boaters are required to have a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket on board for every passenger on their vessel.

Today's life jackets are available in a wide variety of shapes, colors and sizes. They are comfortable, lightweight and perfect for any boating activity.

The most important thing is this: remember to grab a life jacket and "Wear It!" To learn more, visit the National Safe Boating Council online at www.safeboatingcouncil.org.

Fire Extinguishers

U. S. Coast Guard-approved, marine-type fire extinguishers are required on boats where a fire hazard could be expected from the engines or fuel system. When required, boats less than 26 feet must carry at least one B-I, Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher. Boats 26-40 feet must carry two B-I or one B-II Coast Guard approved fire extinguisher(s). Boats 40-65 feet must carry three B-I or one B-II and one B-I Coast Guard approved extinguishers.

Fire extinguishers are classified by a letter and a number symbol. The letter indicates the type of fire the unit is designed to extinguish, and the number indicates the size of the



As fun as boating can be, it is also very important to practice it safely. Photo courtesy of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

extinguisher.

A type B extinguisher, for example, is intended to extinguish burning liquids such as gasoline, oil or grease, all of which are common on a boat.

You shouldn't have to travel more than half the length of your boat to get to the fire extinguisher. Check your fire extinguishers at least once a year to ensure

they are properly charged, stored and are undamaged. Start your boating season with this vital safety check.

Communications

Cell Phones, Weather Radios and Other Options
 If you have a smart phone, get weather news at mobile.weather.gov.

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric

Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio All Hazards will sound an alert when the National Weather Service issues a weather advisory. Weather radio is a vital tool for a mariner.

There are many other communications options available to mariners on the U.S. National Weather Service marine site: weather.gov/marine/

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New Community Starts with a Snip

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Designed as an all-electric community, a subdivision of one of few remaining parcels in Carmichael welcomed buyers two weekends ago.

Developers report four homes have already been sold. Many more potential buyers registered during the open day two weekends ago.

"It's a good start," said Homes by Towne Division President Jeff Pemstein. "There's already lots of interest in The Paseos."

The Paseos (Spanish for "pathways") will offer 46 dwellings, set among landscaped walkways that lead to a small park. For now, it is 6.5 acres of dirt heaps and houses under construction. The main street — Caminata Lane — boasts three completed demonstration homes.

A steady flow of visitors inspected models and considered available lots during the open day. Live music and free taco lunches sweetened deals. Escrow and loan officers were on hand, as was SMUD Director Heidi Sanborn, who touted all-electric household benefits to potential purchasers.

"With SMUD power 54% below PG&E, operational costs here will be much lower," she explained. "In new communities like this, electricity is underground. This improves aesthetics and power reliability. Electric appliances are better for residents' health. They also



Builder Jeff Pemstein (center) gives SMUD Director Heidi Sanborn (second from right) and husband Brad a kitchen tour. They are joined by sales broker Christopher Rocky (left) and Christine Pemstein.



SMUD Director Heidi Sanborn (left) checks out home interiors with Carmichael Honorary Mayor Miranda Viani.

reduce the risk of fire."

Milwaukee-based Homes by Towne corporation bought the property — part of historic Carmichael Colony — five years before breaking ground.

"We're excited to at last bring homes to this location," said Carmichael resident Pemstein. "Few opportunities exist to buy new properties here."

"California's now in the midst of a housing crisis," said the builder. "The county had visions of an even higher-density neighborhood. We told them there wasn't a market for that. The scale of Carmichael lends itself to 46 homes on this parcel."

Planned around three streets, the community will contain conventional-sized dwellings and small patio homes.

Yards allocations are uniformly petite. Landscaping will include drought-tolerant natives. These will be maintained by a homeowner association. "That's what many people prefer these days," explained Pemstein. "Some homeowners just don't want much responsibility for maintenance."

Prices range between \$590,000 and \$675,000.

"We've done all we can to make our homes attainable for families," said Pemstein. "Carmichael's a fantastic place to live. I've



Homes by Towne Division President Jeff Pemstein (center, with scissors) slashes a ribbon at The Paseos residential development. He is joined by company staffers and Carmichael Chamber of Commerce members. A promo blimp for the Fair Oaks Boulevard development floats above.



The Paseos development includes larger perimeter lots and smaller inner street sites for patio homes. Diagram courtesy of Homes by Towne.

been a builder and a town planner for many years and it's a joy for me to hand over the keys to homes where people can begin

making memories."

Weekend viewing opportunities will continue at The Paseos through summer. Weekday visits are by

appointment. For information, visit The Paseos Facebook page or call 916-262-8800, extension 1.

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