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# West Sacramento News Ledger

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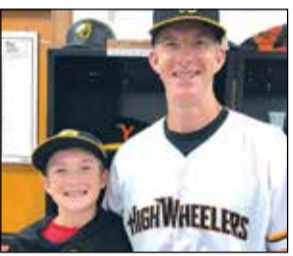
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## West Sacramento Prepares for National Night Out



Neighbors come together at last year's community block celebration, alongside West Sacramento Police Department and West Sacramento Fire Department, for National Night Out. Photo courtesy of West Sacramento Police Department.

By *Ornella Rossi*

**WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The first Tuesday in August marks a nationwide celebration of National Night Out, where bonds between neighbors and local police departments are strengthened. In West Sacramento, this tradition is upheld with enthusiasm and community spirit.

On Aug. 6, the city of West Sacramento, alongside West Sacramento Police Department and West Sacramento Fire Department, will come together to celebrate and invite the community to join them.

"This event promotes police and community partnerships as well as foster communication between neighbors

to make the community a safer place to be," said West Sacramento Police Department division manager Taylor Nelson.

This year's highlight of National Night Out will be a vibrant block party caravan featuring the West Sacramento Police Department, the Fire Department and partners, including the California Highway Patrol, Washington Unified School District, West Sacramento Home Run, Office of Traffic Safety and other community stakeholders.

For the first time, the event will collaborate with the Washington Unified School District to host a lively "Welcome Back to School" block party at River City High School's

football stadium, 1 Raider Lane, West Sacramento. The festivities will be from 5 to 9 p.m., promising an evening packed with games, booths, innovation clinics, free haircuts, an immunization clinic and vendors offering resources to prepare kids for the upcoming school year.

"This will be a party packed with fun, learning and community spirit," as mentioned on the Washington Unified School District Facebook page.

Residents are encouraged to stay updated on specific block party caravan hours via the West Sacramento Facebook page, where further event details will be posted as the date approaches. ★

## UC Davis Health Breaks Ground On 14-Story California Tower

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - UC Davis Health hosted a groundbreaking ceremony for the medical center's California Tower on July 22. The expansion project includes a 14-story hospital tower and five-story pavilion that will deliver superior care for Northern Californians and adapt to meet the evolving needs of the community.

"The addition of the California Tower to UC Davis Medical Center is a testament to our innovative forward thinking across our health system and main campus," said UC Davis Chancellor Gary S. May. "This project will position our researchers, students, faculty and staff to meet and adapt to regional health care needs for the next 50 years."

May spoke in the construction zone to an energized audience of UC Regents, university leaders, elected officials, project collaborators, and construction and facilities management workers.

### California Tower construction

Approved by the UC Board of Regents in January 2022, the California Tower will be part of the region's most advanced medical center. The new hospital and pavilion will be in addition to the medical center's existing University and Davis Towers.

The new tower will add nearly one million square feet of space to the eastern side of the existing medical center. It will include new operating rooms, an imaging center, leading edge facilities for pharmacy and burn care units, and about 334 private rooms for patients.

More than 250 of the rooms are being designed for greater flexibility in the event of a pandemic, massive wildfire or other disaster. These will easily convert into intensive-care-unit rooms with air isolation to treat patients of any level of hospitalization.

"With the California Tower, we are building a new paradigm of patient care, centered around how a health system can deliver tomorrow's health

## American River College's MESA Helps Students Succeed

By *Li Khan*  
CALMatters.org

Alina Kralya tinkers with a microcontroller for one of her computer science projects at American River College (in Sacramento). Nearby, a group of other first-generation college students sit in green and blue chairs, chatting about their math homework. It's a typical scene at this community college space for students in the Math, Engineering, and Science Achievement program, called MESA.

Two years ago, Kralya was in her first year at an engineering university in Ukraine when the



Students discuss their work in class at the MESA center at American River College on April 25. Photo by Cristian Gonzalez for CalMatters

Russian invasion and the subsequent war uprooted her family. After moving around Eastern Europe, they sought refuge in

*Continued on page 7*



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# Council Approves Affordable Housing Project



A vicinity site map shows where Evergreen Apartments, a four-story, 38-unit affordable housing project will be located. Photo courtesy of the City of West Sacramento

By Angela Underwood

**WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Affordable housing here appears lush with the addition of Evergreen Apartments.

Economic and Development Housing Assistant Community Investment Planner Tanya Flores took the floor at the July 17 council meeting to detail the new affordable housing development approved by City Council.

Councilmember Quirina Orozco said she had an opportunity to drive by the development before the meeting, noting its location by the Westside Village Apartments.

"It looks like a lot that is overgrown with weeds, a little bit blighted," Orozco said, asking for more details about the project and 0.89 acres of undeveloped land. "Tell me a little bit more about this project so that people in the community would understand what is being proposed here."

According to Flores, the four-story apartment complex features 38 units, ranging from 438 to 755 square feet, and offers a mix of studio, one-bedroom, and two-bedroom accommodations.

Additionally, infrastructure along Pine Street and Evergreen Avenue will be remedied with street corner improvements, according to a staff report, noting "new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, accompanied by generously landscaped front yard setbacks that will beautify the neighborhood's streetscape but also contribute to the overall livability of the area."

Speaking of the "overall" perspective,

Orozco questioned the project's timing, which would begin construction in 2025 and take at least a year to complete.

"We would look forward to any investment in that area, so when I saw this, I immediately tabbed it in the timeline and saw what the renderings would look like and what it can bring to a traditionally neglected area," Orozco said.

The new affordable housing project supports the "Grand Gateway Development" and the "Homelessness & Communitywide Impact Management." Because it is a market-rate development, Housing manager Raul Huerta explained, residents will pay an in-lieu fee that supports the affordable housing component of the Grand Gateway Master Plan.

Councilmember Verna Sulpizio-Hull said she is excited to bring another affordable housing project to the city, and Vice-Mayor Dawnte Early wanted to know more about the costs.

The maximum prices for the complex are \$1,200 for a studio, \$1,600 for one bedroom and more than \$2,000 for two or more bedrooms, depending on the units' size.

Mayor Martha Guererro wanted to know more.

"Did the reduction of our impact fees reach this location to benefit lowering the cost of building?" she asked.

City Manager Aaron Laurel confirmed the same, saying the fees apply to any infill project in that part of town.

"Reduction does eventually pass on to those who dwell in it," Guererro said, before accepting a motion to approve the project. ★

# Yolo County District Attorney Comfort Dog Aloha Inducted into California Animal Hall of Fame



Aloha poses next to her new Animal Hall of Fame award. Photo courtesy of the Yolo County DA

**Yolo County District Attorney News Release**

**WOODLAND, CA (MPG)** - Courtroom comfort dog Aloha was inducted into the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) Animal Hall of Fame during an awards ceremony at the Pacific Veterinary Conference in San Francisco.

Aloha has been a member of the Yolo County District Attorney's Office since Oct. 4, 2012.

Over the past 12 years, Aloha's major role has been providing valuable emotional support to many crime victims, including children, who are navigating the legal system. She has sat with victims during court proceedings,

providing them with a calming presence as they testify.

An added benefit of Aloha's service has been the comfort she has provided to the office's attorneys and staff, who often work in emotionally-charged situations.

According to the California Veterinary Medical Association, the California Animal Hall of Fame celebrates companion and working animals that "through unselfish and courageous accomplishments (exemplify) the affection, loyalty, security and value of the human-animal bond."


Aloha was nominated by Dr. Keith Rode, a local veterinarian and former California Veterinary Medical Association president, earlier this year.

Aloha's care has been provided by Laura Valdes, Victim Services director for the Yolo County District Attorney's Office.

"I appreciate the years of care Dr. Rode has provided to Aloha and we are honored that he saw fit to nominate her for this tremendous honor," said Valdes, who attended the ceremony and received a plaque commemorating the award. "Aloha is heading into retirement a hall-of-famer."

District Attorney Jeff Reisig praised Valdes and Rode.

"Having a service dog has been a tremendous accomplishment for the District Attorney's Office and Aloha has benefitted countless people," Reisig said. ★



## Employment Opportunities

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**Office Administration** - We are seeking a full-time administrative support person for our newspaper group. This position works in the Carmichael office and works directly with the Office Manager. Work hours are between 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Previous office experience is required. Primary duties are working with customers and assisting with weekly legal advertising filings. We also have a part-time position available in West Sacramento available in August.

**City Reporter** - We are seeking a full-time City Reporter for our newspaper group. This position may be assigned to work in the Carmichael office or another area office and works directly with the Managing Editor. Work hours are flexible depending on assignments. Previous reporting experience is required.

**Copy Editor** - We are seeking a part-time copy editor for our newspaper group. This position works in the Carmichael office and works directly with the Managing Editor. Work hours are flexible between 8:30 to 5:00 Monday through Friday. Previous editing experience is required.

**Delivery Driver** - Weekly Hauling to Marysville- We are seeking a part-time Delivery Driver for our newspaper group. This position would transport newspapers from our Carmichael office to our offices in Marysville and Gridley. Work hours are from 8:30 to 4:00 every Thursday. Must be able to lift and move bundles of newspapers without assistance. Must have your own reliable cargo van. This is an independent contractor position and pays a flat rate for your service.

**Newsstand Delivery Driver/Local** - We are seeking a part-time Newsstand Deliver Driver for our newspaper group. This position works from the Carmichael office and delivers to our locations in the West Sacramento/Sacramento Region. Routes also available in Elk Grove, Pocket, East Sacramento, Arden Arcade. Work hours are from 8:30 to 5:00 Thursday and/or Friday. Must be able to lift and move bundles of newspapers without assistance. You must have a reliable vehicle. This is an independent contractor position. Previous experience preferred.

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# Nonprofits Awarded Nearly Half Million Dollars from Bank of America

## Bank of America News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Bank of America recently announced it recently awarded nearly \$500,000 in grants to 20 local nonprofits across the Greater Sacramento region and San Joaquin Valley to drive meaningful and sustainable progress to help tackle society's biggest challenges. This first round of grants the company awards to local nonprofits throughout the year was focused on health-related and workforce development programs.

Two of this year's grant awardees include Digital NEST and Sunburst Projects. Digital NEST, serving Stockton and Modesto, among other California cities, creates scalable technology learning centers for Latino youth, providing culturally relevant and age-appropriate programs to help members of underserved communities explore career pathways, build confidence and pave the way for careers in tech and tech-adjacent industries. Sunburst Projects, located in Sacramento, has supported the Northern California HIV/AIDS community and their loved ones for nearly 40 years, helping clients access medical care and lifesaving medications, so they can live their healthiest lives and reach their highest potential.

"Partnerships are how you accelerate and amplify impact. We are proud to consider Bank of America, as a partner of the Digital NEST," said Jacob Martinez, founder and CEO of Digital NEST. "With the support of Bank of America, we have been able to provide programming that allows our youth to build a foundation of the professional and technical skills and experiences every young person needs to thrive in today's workforce."

"Sunburst Projects is dedicated to enhancing public health by providing free

HIV and STD testing. Thanks to the generous support of Bank of America, we can expand our outreach and better serve communities disproportionately affected by these health crises. Together, we are making a transformative impact," shared Jake Bradley-Rowe, executive director of Sunburst Projects.

Other organizations receiving grants include: Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Sacramento, California Restaurant Association Foundation Inc., Center for Employment Opportunities Inc., Food Literacy Center, GRID Alternatives North Valley, Juma Ventures, Junior Achievement of Sacramento, NPower Inc., Pride Industries, Sacramento Food Bank, Sacramento Loaves and Fishes, Saint John's Program for Change, Second Harvest of the Greater Valley, Sierra College Foundation, Soil Born Farms, Women's Center-Youth & Family Services, Women's Empowerment and Yolo Food Bank.

"As demand for nonprofit services continue to rise, businesses can play a role in creating real change for people and families in need," said CP Parmar, president, Sacramento. "Investing in the region's nonprofits that help remove barriers to economic stability is one way Bank of America can help make financial lives better."

These grants build on the \$9 million Bank of America provided to Greater Sacramento and San Joaquin Valley organizations and the 56,000 hours of employee volunteerism to local causes since 2019.

Additional background about Bank of America's Charitable Foundation giving can be found at <https://about.bankofamerica.com/en/making-an-impact/charitable-foundation-funding>. ★

# UC Davis Health Breaks Ground On 14-Story California Tower

*Medical center expansion state-of-the-art*



UC Davis representatives celebrate at the July 22 ceremony for the California Tower, expected to be ready in 2030. Photo courtesy of UC Davis

*Continued from page 1*  
care today," said David Lubarsky, CEO of UC Davis Health. "We are building into this new tower some of the lessons we learned from the recent pandemic. As an example, three out of four of the rooms in this new tower can be easily converted to fully functional ICUs if needed, tripling our ICU capacity."

When the California Tower is open for patients in 2030, Lubarsky added, it will continue the hospital's 150-year legacy of "caring for those who need it most, delivering superior patient outcomes while becoming more sustainable, and keeping our focus on improving health outcomes and equity."

The \$3.74 billion tower will replace parts of the hospital that must close due to state seismic regulations. Hospitals across California are in the process of upgrading their existing facilities or constructing new buildings that can withstand major earthquakes.

The current, 646-bed hospital, the largest in the Sacramento region, will have a total of 675 to 700 inpatient beds when the

project is expected to be completed in 2030.

Supporting the community

The California Tower project is expected to create hundreds of construction jobs and thousands of new health care positions for the surrounding community. It's one of many benefits of being home to an anchor institution such as UC Davis Medical Center.

Anchor institutions are place-based, mission-driven entities such as universities and hospitals that leverage economic power alongside human and intellectual resources to improve the long-term health and social welfare of surrounding communities.

"The hospital tower we're breaking ground on today represents another pivotal investment in our city by UC Davis," said Sacramento Mayor Darrell Steinberg. "Both this tower and the new Aggie Square innovation campus will create thousands of new, high-quality jobs and expand our ability to meet the health care needs of our residents."

UC Davis Health plans to help fuel the economic health and

overall wellbeing of the neighborhoods surrounding its Sacramento campus by hiring and developing local workforce talent, purchasing more goods and services from local vendors, investing in local projects that support vulnerable communities and engaging employees to volunteer in local neighborhoods.

"This project further harnesses the advantages of UC Davis Medical Center being Sacramento's No. 1 hospital and delivering nationally-ranked care," Lubarsky said. "UC Davis Health is Sacramento County's second-largest employer and we're making sure we are bringing not only health care but jobs and community wealth-building to our surrounding neighborhoods."

"I am so grateful for the collaborative planning effort that has spanned years and required so much hard work and coordination to bring us to this point of breaking ground for this new hospital tower," Lubarsky said.

Learn more about the California Tower project by visiting the Vision 2030 website at <https://health.ucdavis.edu/facilities/vision-2030>. ★

# UC Regents Approve New Student Housing at UC Davis



Pictured here is a rendering of what the new student housing building will look like. Photo courtesy of Katherine E Kerlin

By BreAnda Northcutt

**DAVIS, CA (MPG)** - UC Davis will break ground on a new residence hall next spring in the Segundo area, following approval this week by the UC Board of Regents. The \$100 million project aims to address the growing demand for on-campus housing and commitments the campus has made with the city of Davis.

The new complex, tentatively titled the "Segundo Infill Project," will span 118,000 square feet and feature 206 rooms, accommodating 494 students in double and triple occupancy configurations. The residence hall will stand five stories tall, offering students modern amenities, study nooks, social spaces and 600 bike spaces.

The university considered building higher than five floors, but in California, buildings six stories or higher fall under different building codes and incur significantly higher costs. Opting for a five-story structure helps manage expenses and ensure housing remains affordable, while still providing needed supply. The residence hall will feature a concrete podium and steel frame, ensuring durability, longevity and a quieter living environment.

Constructed on what are currently parking lots 22 and 16, the site will also transform its surroundings; parking will

be restored in lot 16 after construction is completed.

"The UC Davis campus has added 6,500 beds since 2017 to meet demand given undergraduate housing guarantees and enrollment growth and to make progress toward Long-Range Development Plan goals and MOU commitments with the city of Davis," Chancellor Gary S. May said before the Board of Regents meeting. "We are pleased that the regents have approved this item so that UC Davis can continue to make considerable progress toward these important housing commitments and goals."

As of fall 2023, UC Davis provides on-campus housing for 38% of Davis-based undergraduate and graduate students. The new residence hall will help the university move closer to its goal of housing 48% of its Davis-based students on campus, as outlined in the Long-Range Development Plan (LRDP) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the city of Davis.

The entire project will be 100% electric and will aim for a minimum LEED Gold certification, with a goal of obtaining LEED Platinum.

The residence hall is expected to be ready for occupancy by the fall quarter of 2027. ★

# Yolo County Fair Includes Inaugural Beer & Wine Showcase

## Yolo County Fair Beer & Wine News Release

**YOLO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - The Yolo County Fair, with an "Over the Moon" theme, is from Aug. 14 to Aug. 18 in Woodland.

New this year is the inaugural Yolo County Fair Beer & Wine Showcase that fair officials say will present the finest locally-brewed beers, exquisite wines and masterly hand-crafted spirits that Yolo County has to offer.

The Yolo County Fair Beer & Wine Showcase will be in the new event venue, the Olive Plaza, from 6:30 to 9 p.m. Aug. 15. Attendees will be surrounded by the prized Ag & Floral Cut Flower Entries, accompanied by the sounds of local musicians and treated to the finest local beers, wines and spirits of Yolo County, according to fair officials.

Attendees can vote for their favorites in each category, culminating in the announcement of the Best of the Yolo County Fair Beer & Wine Showcase of 2024.

Among the featured vendors are Blue Note Brewing Company, Bonitata Boutique Wine, Bogle Family, Vineyards -Element(AL), Carvalho Family Winery, Country Roads Wine Cellars, Due Vigne Winery, Great Bear Vineyards, Grindstone Wines and Heringer Estates Family

Vineyards & Winery.

The local breweries, wineries and distilleries collectively represent more than one-third of all locally-produced alcohol in Yolo County partnering with the inaugural Yolo County Fair Beer & Wine Showcase.

Tickets for this event are \$35 each and can be bought online at [www.yolocountyfair.net/p/tickets](http://www.yolocountyfair.net/p/tickets), at the fairgrounds office or at featured fair events. Ticket holders will enjoy 10 tastings of their choice, with additional samples available at three for \$10, complemented by light snacks and live music.

The Yolo County Fair, California's largest and oldest free-gate fair, owes its success to volunteers, community support, sponsors and partners. For more details, contact event coordinator Monique Garcia at [yolocountyfairbeerandwinesc@gmail.com](mailto:yolocountyfairbeerandwinesc@gmail.com) or the fair office at 530-402-2222.

Parking is \$10 per car. Public parking and the main entrance is at 1250 E. Gum Ave., Woodland. The walking

entrance is at the intersection of Gibson Road and the County Fair Mall. Visit [www.yolocountyfair.net](http://www.yolocountyfair.net) for updates and program information and join the Facebook Event for ongoing updates about the annual Yolo County Fair. ★



# Social Security Matters

## I was Self-Employed and Don't Have Enough Credits for Social Security



**By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor**

**Dear Rusty:** For a thirty-year period, I was making a living as an independent contractor and freelancer. I was working on behalf of myself. Thus, I was only paying state and federal taxes when applied. Due to changes in the employment landscape, I wish to apply for benefits at age sixty-four, as receiving said SS benefits would serve as supplemental income to what I would be receiving from outside sources.

I recently discovered through the SSA that I do not have enough "points" to apply for Social Security benefits. What would be the method to obtain those required points in order to receive benefits? **Signed: Needing Points**

**Dear Needing:** Social Security is an earned benefit, and eligibility is attained by contributing to SS through FICA payroll taxes, or Self-Employment (SECA) tax on your net earnings from self-employment, over your lifetime. You must have at least 40 "quarters of credit" to be eligible for Social Security benefits – essentially you must work one quarter of each year earning at least a specified amount

during that quarter to earn one credit, and you can earn a maximum of 4 credits for each year you work. The amount of earnings per credit varies each year, but for 2024, work earnings of \$1,730 give you one credit (annual work earnings of \$6,920 earn 4 credits). Usually, you must contribute to Social Security for about 10 years to be eligible for benefits. You must have earned at least 40 quarter credits to collect Social Security retirement benefits/ If you have less than 40 you are not eligible for SS retirement benefits.

For self-employed individuals, SECA SS tax is paid when you file your federal income tax return - you pay into Social Security when filing your annual Self-Employment income tax return (the self-employed must pay both the employee and the employer portion of Social Security tax). If you did not file an income tax return for each year over your lifetime you were self-employed, you didn't earn any SS credits for that year. You pay SECA tax on your NET earnings from self-employment (after all business expenses are deducted).

If you are just a few credits short of the 40 necessary to be eligible for benefits, you can still earn those extra credits needed by working and paying SS FICA or SECA taxes on your work earnings. For each \$1,730 earned this year, you will earn one SS credit, up to a maximum of 4 per year. But you must contribute to Social Security from those earnings

– if you work as a company employee you will have FICA taxes withheld from your earnings, and if you are still self-employed you would need to pay SECA taxes on net earnings over \$6,920 when you file your self-employment income tax return. You would need to do that for as long as it takes for you to attain the minimum 40 quarter credits needed to be eligible for Social Security retirement benefits. (FYI: you cannot "buy" the extra points needed; you need to earn them by working and contributing to Social Security from your earnings).

One final point: whenever SS benefits are claimed before one's full retirement age (FRA) Social Security's "earnings test" applies. The earnings test limits how much you can earn from working before some of your SS benefits are taken away. The earnings test no longer applies after you reach your FRA and, if you turned 64 this year, your FRA is 67. Self-employed individuals are also subject to an hourly limit of 15 to 45 working hours per month in their first year of early retirement.

*This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org.* ★

# West Sacramento Makes Mid-Year Budget Adjustments

**By Angela Underwood**

**WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - West Sacramento city officials talked numbers at the last regularly-scheduled council meeting.

On July 17, Finance Director Roberta Raper gave City Council mid-year adjustments to the 2024-25 mid-term budget, which runs from July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025.

Raper said the presentation was a "higher level overview to provide context for the public" for the budget adopted two fiscal years at a time.

"Because we adopt the budget over a year in advance, we prefer to perform an abbreviated process in the intervening year to review revenue projections and revisit our cost and expenditure assumptions and propose mid-term adjustments to update the budget for changes in the environment," Raper said.

Since the last adoption, labor negotiations, memoranda of understanding and benefit summaries for all labor groups have added \$4.9 million to the General Fund budget, according to Raper.

"And \$7.1 million overall," she added.

Mid-year budget adjustments for the fiscal year

2023-24, adopted in January, have ongoing annual impacts of \$371,000 to the General Fund and \$9.2 million to all funds, according to Raper, detailing budget requests by category, including development, park projects, transportation, utility projects, and municipal facilities.

Raper started with \$100,000 for the Grand Gateway Master Plan development, adding Park projects totaling more than \$1.2 million for a backstop replacement and playfield conversion at Alyce Norman Park.

The bike, pedestrian and trail project requests total \$2.797 million and include the Clarksburg Branch Line Extension, Sycamore Trail Phase 3 and Park Boulevard bike lane and crosswalk restriping.

Municipal facility improvements, totaling more than \$3.9 million, include several fire station facility improvements, a new HVAC system for the Community Center, a public safety technology master plan and updates to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) transition plan.

After going through other notable improvements, Raper said the difference between the

adopted expenditure budget for 2024-25 to that of the proposed expenditure budget is \$27.7 million.

Of the \$27.7 million increased proposal, \$5.6 million comes from new grant funding for Capital Improvement Projects.

Mayor Martha Guerrero said funding sources are difficult to track, which is why a budget book is key. Raper confirmed a digital budget book is being processed and should be available in a couple of months.

According to the mayor, the book is essential for transparency, allowing the public to see fund totals.


"It's to hold us accountable for where we are spending the money," Guerrero said, adding that "there are some long-term budget gaps. But we don't have a budget deficit today, thankfully."

"I did see that some of the budget packages were rejected and these are things that hopefully if they are necessary, we can get funded," Guerrero said.

Raper said she will return for a second reading and adoption on Aug. 7, when she will give a budget brief, which is a one-page summary "on where the money comes and where the money goes." ★

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# The Nightmare Virus

by Nadine Brandes



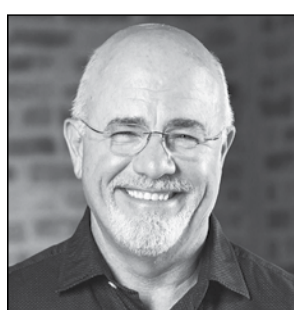
◆ Publisher: Enclave  
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 ◆ Release Date: July 16, 2024

a fantasy world of life, death, and night beasts, Cain must fight for his freedom within the arena. All too quickly Cain realizes he is different than all the others. He has found a way to manipulate the Nightmare World. Now it is up to Cain to navigate the world of Tenebra and battle the nightbeasts, the Spores, and the Emperor, all while on a dangerous quest in the Real World.

But Cain will quickly learn that everything is not as it was once presented. Now it is up to Cain to navigate the truth, the lies, and who is out to deceive him at every turn before

his time runs out. Fall into the world of The Nightmare Virus. The Last Of Us meets Hunger Games in this dystopian, fast-paced fantasy. Nadine Brandes knows how to throw her readers right into a story, delivering a high-stakes fantasy world that is thrilling, dark, and immersive. A battle against time where life and death hang in the balance, where the need for faith and hope in the darkest of times is the one shining ray of light. Brandes delivers characters you love to love and love to hate, taking readers on a thrill ride wondering who they can trust and who has betrayed their trust. Told from a male character's perspective, this story opens the door to all reading audiences, including young men.

The Nightmare Virus instantly catches the reader's attention with its dynamic cover, thrusting readers into a story whose unrelenting tempo will propel readers into the narrative, leaving them unable to put it down and asking for more. Available in both paperback and ebook formats, this is a must-read for fans of dystopian fantasy. ★



Dave Ramsey

Dear Dave,

I'm beginning to feel some bitterness and resentment towards my parents for their recent decisions and financial irresponsibility. Fifteen years ago, while I was still in school, they left good-paying jobs to enter the ministry. They both took pay cuts when they made this decision, and they've been regularly asking for money for living expenses from my husband and I ever since. Sometimes, they even try to make us feel guilty if we can't give them the amount they ask for. My mom, especially, constantly brings up their call to the ministry, adding that we should want to help them. We believe in their calling, but we also feel they knew they would have to live on less money, and they're being irresponsible with the money they make. What should we do?

- Abigail

Dear Abigail

What I'm hearing is giv-

## Dave Ramsey Says

### Right Heart, Wrong Actions

ing money to your parents isn't necessarily a financial hardship for you and your husband, but that by consistently giving or loaning your parents money you're losing respect for them. This is not a healthy situation. Your relationship has become strained, and that's a tough thing for anyone to deal with—especially in a parent-child scenario.

Make no mistake, going into the ministry with the right heart is an admirable thing. However, in the Bible, Paul made tents while he conducted his ministry. I'm paraphrasing, of course, but his line was to the effect of, "If you don't work, you don't eat." He had a job. So, I don't think suggesting your folks think about working outside the ministry while trying to do God's work is unfair in a situation like this.

I'm sure your mom is a good person, but no one should do this to their child. On top of it all, she sounds like a travel agent for guilt trips—like she's working you over while implying it's all really for God. That's not only toxic, it's just plain wrong.

It's going to be hard to

unravel it all and turn this into a respectable situation where they're not constantly asking for money, and you're not feeling pressure and falling victim to the guilty feelings that enable this behavior. I hope all of you will consider sitting down with a reasonable, objective third party and talking things through. I also hope you'll take some time to read a book called Boundaries by Dr. Henry Cloud. It will open your eyes to a few things.

God bless you and your family, Abigail.

- Dave

Dave Ramsey is an eight-time national best-selling author; personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 20 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS Mornings, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for the company, Ramsey Solutions. ★

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# American River College's MESA Helps Students Succeed

Continued from page 1  
sunny Sacramento with \$300 in their pockets.

Between language barriers, a brand new academic system and trying to make sense of trigonometry, it hasn't been an easy journey for the 20-year-old, who dreams of going into robotics. When she needs tutoring or just a quiet place to study away from her younger siblings, she comes to the MESA center.

She's still buzzing with excitement about a recent conference for female engineers she attended in San Jose. The program covered her entrance fee and transportation costs, and staff helped her set up her LinkedIn profile for the event. "Listening to all those successful ladies in STEM, oh my gosh, it was so nice," she said.

California allotted millions of dollars in 2022 to create the same program at community colleges across the state. Currently, 91 out of 115 campuses have programs established, with three more set to create one next year. The state hopes the expansion will reduce barriers to STEM jobs for "underserved and underrepresented" students. As the initiative rolls out statewide, questions remain about how long the funding will last, and how the programs can track how well they're working.

To enroll in the program, students must be both low-income and a first-generation college student. The students' parents can't hold a bachelor's degree in any country to meet the first-generation requirement.

Less than one in five community college students in California who want to transfer to a university succeed in doing so within four years, according to a report from the Public Policy Institute of California. For Black and Latino students, transfer pathways are even weaker: 13% for Black students and 16% for Latinos.

Beyond bolstering transfer rates, the goals for MESA include increasing representation of Blacks, Latinos, and Native Americans in STEM industries. In 2021, 9% of STEM workers nationwide were Black, while 15% were Hispanic or Latino, according to a report from the National Center for Science and Engineering Statistics.

"The community needs people to be in these positions as doctors, as scientists, as engineers, as computer scientists who actually understand the community that is being served," said Edrina Rashidi, the officer of advocacy for the Community College Association of MESA Directors, who recently lobbied for more legislative support for the programs.

Students in the program have access to a range of support, such as tutoring, academic counseling and help finding internships or scholarships. The physical centers offer computer equipment, textbooks and a place to study. Program directors work closely with students to connect them to resources.

As of fall 2023, 4,279 students were enrolled at a MESA program on their campus, according to state data.



Barbie Schmitt chats with interim MESA project lead Samuel Morrison in the MESA center at American River College on April 25. Photo by Cristian Gonzalez for CalMatters

## State Funds Expansion of MESA Programs Systemwide

Four years ago, MESA programs had a \$2.5 million statewide budget. After lobbying efforts from the MESA directors association, the program now has a \$39.4 million statewide budget and was written into the California Education Code. Over 50 colleges have taken advantage of the funds in the last two years, nearly tripling the number of programs from 34 to 94.

Each college received a total of \$428,576 for the 2022-23 school year, in the form of a grant from the state. This past year and every year through 2027 they'll get at least \$280,000 each. However, the state chancellor's office expects colleges to eventually start covering some of the costs, so that the programs can stay afloat if the state money disappears, according to the statewide MESA project monitor Stephanie Ricks-Albert.

The state grants will be up for renewal in 2027. Rashidi said more legislation is being written that could establish a minimum funding level, to guarantee stable funding for the programs.

The program also exists in different forms across the state and nation. In California, many universities and high schools have MESA programs or clubs that are overseen by the UC Office of the President with a budget of about \$7 million.

### Inside a MESA Program

Computers, STEM textbooks, whiteboards, a free-to-use printer and a coffee machine occupy the MESA center at American River College, housed on the first floor of the sleek new Diane Bryant STEM Innovation Center. A line of university pennants hangs from one wall; on another, three astronauts smile from a poster that reads, "FROM MESA TO NASA."

Over 200 students have access to this space. It's where tutors like Marco Alaniz, who is also a MESA student studying computer science, can often be found. He's had a love for programming since his mom bought him a computer as a little kid, but he struggled when he started

college the first time over 20 years ago, and ultimately dropped out.

"I just wasn't prepared," Alaniz said. Because his parents never went to college, they didn't have the experience to help him navigate school or teach him time management habits. "So really, growing up, I was kind of on my own on that, just kind of figuring things out."

After about 15 years of working odd jobs to pay the bills, Alaniz enrolled in American River College in 2019 in Sacramento to give his computer science degree another shot. For the past year, he has tutored MESA students. It doesn't pay enough for him to quit his job so he can take classes full time, but he really enjoys breaking down difficult concepts for his fellow classmates, and it's even made him consider a career in education.

Samuel Morrison, the college's interim MESA project lead, explained that the cost of living is one of the biggest challenges for the low-income students he serves. He helps connect them to scholarships and internships, as the programs are required to do. One creative way the college has found to financially assist its students is to create paid projects with faculty mentorship and research opportunities students can apply for.

"So students are finding, OK, this is a stipend that I can use to pay for gas to get to school, or I can use to supplement food costs," Morrison said.

Still, the college lacks a designated MESA academic counselor. Kralya, the Ukrainian student, explained that the general counselors she's seen are not always familiar with STEM-specific transfer programs, which can differ between universities. Adding financial aid to the mix makes things even more complicated; Kralya and Alaniz both had to declare multiple majors to get certain transfer requirements covered by financial aid.

"That's why we have to find a really good counselor who can tell us this, because this information is not listed anywhere," Kralya said.

The state requires the programs to

have designated counselors, but getting an in-house counselor can be a lengthy and complicated process, Morrison said. He hopes to have one on board by the spring of 2025.

Students can also sign up for field trips, which include conferences and college tours. Students this semester visited the Sacramento State University planetarium, attended the Women in Engineering conference in San Jose, and toured UC Berkeley and UC Santa Cruz.

At programs across the state, students who are either low-income or first-generation, but not both, can still access certain resources, such as tutoring and counseling, but can't go on field trips or receive paid research opportunities. There are currently 1,345 of them enrolled systemwide, called ASEM students, or "Friends of MESA" at some colleges.

## Growing Pains as Programs Roll Out Systemwide

Two years after new funding opened the doors for more programs, many still need to hire staff, find the required minimum 500 square feet of space to house the center, or recruit students to officially get off the ground.

Just hiring a program director to lead the program can be a lengthy process. A year and a half after receiving its grant, the program at Laney College in Oakland is still without a director. The college's dean of math and sciences, Inger Stark, appointed math instructor Kyla Oh as the program's faculty lead for the program in the interim.

"It has definitely slowed us down," said Stark. The bulk of the work falls on Oh, who teaches fewer credits so that she has time to focus on the program. Stark squeezes the administrative side of the program into her workday as a dean.

Right now, the state money covers the entire program, which launched in April with an initial cohort of 14 students. Stark is determined to ensure the program stays afloat through any changes in the funding, but she's spent enough time in her community college district to have seen many "beautiful initiatives" get

weeded out.

"It is heartbreaking," she said. "A huge amount of work can fall on the ground."

## The Need for More Granular Program Data

Tracking MESA programs in a comprehensive way is not easy. Some basic data is available through public dashboards, but directors want easy access to more in-depth information about their programs to help make sure they're meeting their goals.

"We actually have no way of measuring our success, still, with the Chancellor's Office," said Rashidi, the lead advocate for MESA directors.

Basic information, such as the total number of MESA students in the system, is available through the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office public data tool, DataMart. However, that information isn't broken down by race, gender or major. Granular data could give program directors the ability to quickly check if their efforts to reach students from underserved backgrounds are working.

Limited information on MESA student success is publicly available. Of the MESA students who first attempted to complete a transfer-level math course in the 2021-22 school year, 79% passed within one year, compared to a 54% completion rate for the general student body, according to the Transfer-Level English and Math Completion Dashboard.

CalMatters requested MESA transfer statistics and racial data from the Chancellor's Office. According to the data, about 62% of MESA students were Hispanic or Latino as of December 2023, while 4% were Black.

To count transfers, the Chancellor's Office counted students who were in MESA in one school year, and then enrolled at a university the next year. By this metric, MESA programs collectively transferred 1,010 students after the 2021-22 school year, including 563 Hispanic or Latino students and 23 Black students.

Nearly half of MESA students enroll at a university within four years of taking their first community college class, as of 2017, the most recent year complete data is available. Students were considered to be MESA students if they participated in the program at any point during their first three years in the community college system.

The Chancellor's Office will analyze the status of the programs at the end of the current grant cycle, and the results could affect how much money programs will receive in the future, according to an emailed statement from Melissa Villarín, a spokesperson for California Community Colleges. Any additional funding would be based on "program and campus metrics," according to the statement.

*Li Khan is a fellow with the College Journalism Network, a collaboration between CalMatters and student journalists from across California. CalMatters higher education coverage is supported by a grant from the College Futures Foundation.* ★

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This is within the Port of West Sacramento, meet off to the right-hand side of the entrance gate, we will enter the port together at 10:00AM Sharp.

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| Bid Release Date    | July 26, 2024   |
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| Proposals Due       | August 22, 2024 |

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West Sac NewsLedger 7-26, 8-2-2024

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| Proposals Due       | August 29, 2024 |

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West News Ledger 8-2, 8-9-2024

**LEGAL ADS FOR YOLO COUNTY?**

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# Gardeners Invited to Free Pest Management Class Saturday

**Yolo County News Release**

**WOODLAND, CA (MPG)**

- Yolo County gardeners of all experience levels are invited to attend a free class from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 3 to learn effective methods for managing unwanted critters and bugs in their gardens.

Hosted by the Yolo County Health and Human Services Agency and taught by Yolo County UC Master Gardeners, the class will focus on Integrated Pest Management, a cost-effective and natural approach to pest control in gardens and homes. The event will

take place at the Hanna and Herbert Bauer Memorial Community Garden, located at 137 N. Cottonwood St. in Woodland, adjacent to the Health and Human Services Agency Bauer Building.

No prior gardening experience is necessary to participate. Attendees will gain insights into identifying beneficial versus unwanted pests, assessing pest problems and exploring natural control methods. The session will also provide ample opportunity for questions and discussions on prevalent pest issues in the region.

This educational opportunity is free as part of the

Health and Human Services Agency's ongoing commitment to promoting healthy lifestyles through increased access to fresh produce. Registration is required by Aug. 2. To register, contact Nick Gazda at Nick.Gazda@YoloCounty.org or 530-666-8429.

Participants are advised to dress appropriately for warm weather and to bring water and sun protection. In case of extreme heat or poor air quality, the class will be moved indoors.

For more details about garden activities and upcoming classes, visit [www.YoloCounty.org/Garden](http://www.YoloCounty.org/Garden) ★

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**ORDINANCE SUMMARY**

At their regular meeting at 7:00 p.m. on August 7, 2024, the West Sacramento City Council is scheduled to adopt the following ordinances.

To provide comment, the public may attend the meeting in-person or submit a comment in writing, via email to [clerk@cityofwestsacramento.org](mailto:clerk@cityofwestsacramento.org) and write "Public Comment" in the subject line. In the body of the email, include the item number and/or title of the item as well as your comments. All comments received by 3:30 PM will be provided to the City Council and made available for public viewing. The comments submitted shall become part of the record of the meeting.

**ORDINANCE 24-6**  
**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WEST SACRAMENTO AMENDING CHAPTER 12.08 RELATED TO SPECIAL EVENTS**

West Sac News Ledger 8-2-2024

## Eye-Popping Construction Costs Intensify California's Chronic Housing Shortage



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

It's not hyperbole to declare that California's most serious economic, social and political issue is its chronic shortage of housing, particularly for families in the lower income brackets.

As the yawning gap between demand and supply, especially in urban areas, pushes costs upward, it drags down the economy by discouraging investment in job-creating businesses; it drives employers and their workers to other states where they can afford housing; it fuels the nation's highest level of functional poverty and it's the major factor in California's worst-in-the-nation homelessness.

The state has pushed local governments to reduce impediments to housing construction, setting a goal of 2.5 million new units over the current eight-year planning cycle, or an average of more than 300,000 units a year, "and no less than one million of those homes must meet the needs of lower-income households."

At best, California's private and public housing developers are meeting a third of that goal, and the recent trend is downward. The state budget notes that in 2023 residential permits declined by 2.9% from 2022 to about 110,000 permitted units, and it projects that

while single-family housing construction will probably pick up this year, multi-family units are expected to contract 5.5%, the largest annual decline since 2020.

The budget cites high interest rates, imposed by the Federal Reserve to combat inflation, as a major factor in the state's stagnant housing picture. But inflation itself — the rising costs of building materials and construction labor — also is a problem, as is the tangle of red tape that projects must endure.

A project now underway in downtown Sacramento, just a couple blocks from the state Capitol, illustrates how high development costs affect supply. The decrepit Sequoia Hotel, originally built in 1906, is being transformed into 88 tiny units of housing — 150 square feet each — for homeless people, at a total cost of \$50.1 million, with most of the money coming from the state. That's nearly \$600,000 per unit, more than enough to buy a detached single-family home in one of Sacramento's middle-class neighborhoods, and close to \$4,000 a square foot.

Sacramento is by no means an isolated example of the eye-popping costs of building housing for low-income Californians.

A similar project in downtown San Francisco, converting a fire-damaged building into 35 low-rent apartments, is costing a million dollars a unit, the San Francisco Chronicle revealed this week.

"Just five years ago, the cost to build affordable housing in San Francisco was only about \$740,000 a unit, according to the Bay Area Council Economic

Institute. But these days units are clocking in at \$1 million or even higher, prompting the question of what can be done to bring down costs," the Chronicle reported.

What indeed? Governmental projects, such as those in Sacramento and San Francisco, tend to have the highest costs because they must include all sorts of mandates, such as union-scale labor, and they depend on a pastiche of financing sources.

Private projects that needn't follow those mandates can be done much less expensively, particularly if they consist of modules that have been assembled in factories and then joined together on the site. However, construction unions bitterly oppose such innovations and flex their political muscles to minimize their use.

A new \$50 million housing fund created by Apple and private philanthropists will only finance projects that meet strict cost limits — less than \$550,000 for studios and less than \$700,000 for larger units. That's still a lot of money, but it's a step in the right direction.

California will never solve its housing crisis if it doesn't get more — much more — bang for its bucks.

Dan Walters is one of most decorated and widely syndicated columnists in California history, authoring a column four times a week that offers his view and analysis of the state's political, economic, social and demographic trends. He began covering California politics in 1975, just as Jerry Brown began his first stint as governor, and began writing his column in 1981. ★

## SMUD's \$10 Million State Grant Advances Long-Duration Battery Storage Technology



**SMUD News Release**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)**

- SMUD's long-duration battery storage project in partnership with ESS Tech, Inc. has been awarded a \$10 million grant from the California Energy Commission to demonstrate a groundbreaking 3.6-megawatt, eight-hour iron flow battery project and set the foundation for future large-scale battery deployments and manufacturing at energy centers in Sacramento.

The project aims to showcase the capability and reliability of iron flow battery technology, which complements renewable energy sources like wind and solar by storing energy and strategically dispatching it based on demand to support grid distribution and transmission systems as SMUD transitions to a carbon-free power portfolio by 2030.

"Thank you to California Energy Commission Chairman David Hochschild, fellow commissioners and staff for continuing to lead the way in policy development and investments that make California the leader for others to follow in the transition to a clean energy future," said SMUD's Chief Legal & Government Affairs Officer Laura Lewis. "The CEC's partnership and investment in clean technologies are critical to advancing and bringing them to scale, while helping SMUD keep its rates among the lowest in California."

SMUD continues to make great strides toward its goal to eliminate carbon emissions from its power supply by 2030 through investments in renewable energy projects, customer programs and cutting-edge technologies, such as its partnership with ESS to deliver and grow long-duration energy storage and other zero-carbon innovation. This technology not only captures and stores clean energy, ensuring it's available around the clock and maximizing the use of renewable resources, but it also enhances resource adequacy, especially during peak demand times, providing a stable, reliable and clean energy supply for its community.

"The California Energy Commission is proud to support this exciting long-duration energy storage project which will help drive this new clean energy industry into the mainstream," said California Energy Commission Chair David Hochschild. "It's a technology that's needed to harness excess renewables for use during peak demand and overnight, especially as we work toward a goal of 100 percent clean electricity."

The partnership and technology offer several anticipated benefits, including accelerating the commercialization of iron flow batteries, improving the cost-competitiveness of non-lithium long-duration energy storage, bolstering grid reliability, complementing SMUD's renewables, and supporting

workforce development and the local economy through clean energy jobs.

Currently, the ESS iron flow long-duration energy storage project is in its early phases at SMUD's Sacramento Power Academy. In September 2023, ESS commissioned six Energy Warehouse™ systems for SMUD as part of a 2-gigawatt-hour framework agreement. The existing 450 kilowatt / 2,400 kilowatt-hour Energy Warehouse system at SMUD's Sacramento Power Academy continues to provide SMUD and ESS with valuable insights through risk and benefits analysis, use case studies and performance testing. These efforts will ultimately determine the optimal applications for iron flow battery technology, aiming to achieve cost and performance competitiveness relative to lithium-ion batteries for 8-hour durations and longer.

ESS will deliver up to 200 megawatts / 2 gigawatt-hours of iron flow long-duration energy storage systems. Once fully operational and paired with renewable energy, these systems are expected to eliminate approximately 284,000 metric tons of CO2 emissions per year from SMUD's grid.

Alongside the California Energy Commission's grant, SMUD is committing approximately \$19.5 million in cost-sharing for labor and material expenses for the combined 4-megawatt ESS Tech, Inc. long-duration energy storage project, which includes the existing 450-kilowatt installation and the newly grant-funded 3.6-megawatt addition. ★

## Director Nancy Bargmann to Retire from California Department of Developmental Services

**California Department of Developmental Services**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)**

- The Department of Developmental Services (DDS) announces that after 40 years of serving Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD), Director Nancy Bargmann will retire effective Sept. 6.

Director Bargmann's career is marked by her commitment to improving the quality of life for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities through advocacy, innovation, and collaboration. During her eight-year tenure as Director, the department has closed all developmental centers and developed and implemented numerous initiatives to enhance services and supports

that foster inclusivity and choice for more than 440,000 persons served and their families. This includes but is not limited to the Safety Net Program, Self-Determination Program, Direct Support Professional (DSP) Workforce Initiatives, and the Service Access and Equity Grant Program. Bargmann's focus on strengthening relationships with self-advocates and families, regional centers, advocacy groups, and service providers to advance service-delivery, improve service access for diverse communities, and reach more individuals and families has laid a strong foundation for the department's continued progress in the years to come.

"Under Director Bargmann's leadership, more people with intellectual and developmental disabilities statewide are now able

to make meaningful decisions about where they want to live, work and enjoy their communities," said California Health & Human Services Agency (CalHHS) Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly. "I'm grateful for her years of dedicated service and guiding the department to create more equitable and accessible opportunities for all Californians."

Nancy Bargmann began her career as a Direct Support Professional (DSP) in 1984. She went on to hold several positions and leadership roles at regional centers, service providers, and the State, including as associate executive director at San Gabriel/Pomona Regional Center and deputy director of the Community Services Division at the Department of Developmental Services. Bargmann was appointed Director of the

Department of Developmental Services on March 4, 2016, by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. and reappointed in 2020 by Governor Gavin Newsom.

"It has been an incredible privilege to serve Californians with intellectual and developmental disabilities and an honor to work alongside so many dedicated professionals and advocates," said Director Bargmann. "I am very proud of what we have accomplished together, and I look forward to seeing how DDS will continue to advance its mission and vision so that every person with I/DD can live the life they choose."

Bargmann is looking forward to spending time with loved ones and pursuing personal interests while enjoying her retirement. ★

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# COMICS & PUZZLES

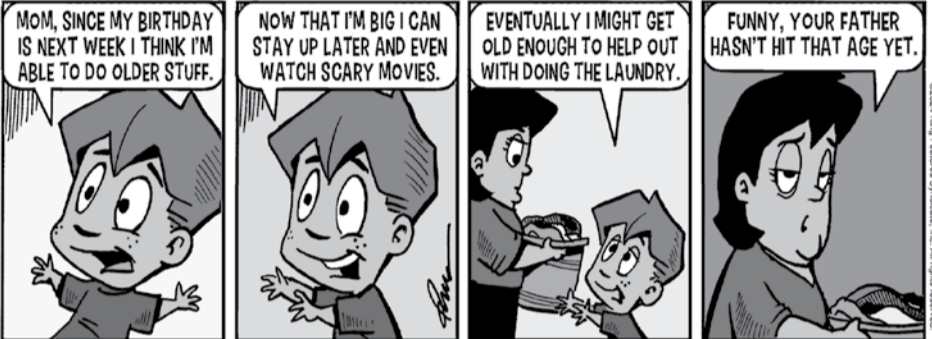
## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Differences: 1. Hand is moved. 2. Ear is larger. 3. Man is thinner. 4. Arm is different. 5. Tree is moved. 6. Cap is larger.

## Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



## GRIN & BEAR IT



## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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**ACROSS**

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- Western Samoan money
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- Literature class homework
- "The Curious Case of \_\_\_ Button"
- God of thunder
- Tight or rigid
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- \* \_\_\_ control
- \*Alarm clock delay
- Edible tuber
- Racecourses
- Crew propellers
- Often follows dark or back
- \_\_\_-Town, or Chicago
- Friend, south of the border
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- Containing uranium
- Rip off
- Sleeping sickness vector
- Che Guevara's hat, pl.
- Roman road
- "And Then \_\_\_ Were None"
- Hillside, in Scotland
- "Home ringer"
- Raccoon's South American cousin
- Debate side
- Spring in a mattress
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- Black-tie occasion
- Golfer's aim
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**DOWN**

- Collector's goal
- Kuwaiti, e.g.
- \_\_\_ of Man
- Shanty
- Flower trunks
- American Eagle's intimates brand
- "Oh \_\_\_!"
- \*Edible button
- "The Sun \_\_\_ Rises"
- "The Lion King" villain
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- More asinine
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- Bulwark
- Ems follower
- Aimless walk
- "Bravo! Bravo!", e.g.
- Pall \_\_\_ and \_\_\_ of America
- Largest organ of human body
- Mobutu Sese Seko's nation
- Cereal killer
- Land measure
- \_\_\_-cha-cha
- Walls
- \*Tall building people-mover
- Of sour taste
- All 50 states
- Spanish airline
- Make a logical connection (2 words)
- Repeat an echo
- Opposite of atonal
- In a heated manner
- Dull one
- Angry display
- Entertainingly eccentric people, Down Under
- "On Golden Pond" bird
- \_\_\_ of the valley
- \*A baseball one has a button on top
- Lexington airport code

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**Kings Korner**

**By V.G. Harris**



If there are any Kings fans left that have any doubts about the veracity of talent and basketball savvy as it relates to the Sacramento Kings general manager Monte McNair, it should be put to rest once and for all.

McNair has shown acumen beyond his years, as he embraces the competitive arena of trades and acquisitions with the senior GMs of the NBA.

Time and again, McNair has passed on trades that would have been a band-aid solution, while waiting for a better opportunity has proven invaluable to the team we see represented today.

There are undoubtedly trade opportunities that the fans will never know about, but take it from this writer, McNair has shown a level of patience that is rarely seen in young GMs.

The resigning of Malik Monk will probably fly under the radar for the casual fan, but make no mistake about it, locking up Monk for the next three years was a real feather in Monte McNair's cap.

When multiple high-priced and acclaimed free agents were signed by other teams, fans waited and scratched their heads, wondering why the Kings weren't in the mix.

Finally, when the naysayers had all but given up, came the signing of DeMar DeRozan, perhaps one of the top three free agent players available in this off-season.

Only time will tell what the resigning of Monk, and acquisition of DeRozan will do for the Kings, but hold onto your seats Kings fans, because the Kings GM is not done yet.

Just last week the Kings acquired 24-year-old big man Orlando Robinson who was recently released by the Miami Heat. On the surface this would appear to be a tepid acquisition at best, but at 6'10" this undrafted young man out of Fresno State deserves a closer look.

I reached out to a 40-year alum and booster from Fresno State, and this is the response I received after asking what we should expect from Orlando:

"He is great! A 6'10" true four. Could easily be a 20/10 guy with playing time. I have visited with him a few times. No behavior trouble. He is an essential-type player in today's NBA...who for a reasonable price is good."

These comments from a true basketball aficionado should at the very least raise some eyebrows and give Kings fans a reason to pay attention to Mr. Robinson.

Robinson played sparingly for the Miami Heat, but when he did play, he was productive, and I for one will be paying close attention to his progress in the preseason.

The signing of Robinson, for me, simply points out the fact that Monte McNair is scouring the league and beyond, to find another big man to complement Domantas Sabonis.

There remain several power forwards on the free-agent market, and I am confident that just as McNair was able to attract DeMar DeRozan, he will find the Kings the elusive big man they've been looking for.

Drew Timme impressed me with his summer league play, and at 6'10" he may yet impress the Kings front office. It would not surprise me to hear that Timme receives an invite to training camp.

The current team as it's assembled, barring any additions, will be a high-octane machine that will literally wear the competition down. Older teams will put Sacramento on the calendar as a place they would least like to play.

In the past teams have put a W on the calendar when looking at Sacramento, but those days are gone.

This season's ticket will be a coveted one, and don't look for any empty seats this year. If you're not excited yet, please check and make sure you have a pulse. This team is going to amaze you, with lightning quick De'Aaron Fox, and Mr. double-double and triple-double Domantas Sabonis just reaching the prime of their careers.

Give Sabonis just a little more help on the boards, and it's anyone's guess how far this team can go. Fans are looking at a bonafide playoff team, and on the surface this squad could easily surpass the totals of two years ago when the Kings reached the playoffs for the first time in seventeen years.

Cross your fingers Kings fans, because this writer believes Monte McNair has yet another rabbit in his hat!

All the best! ★  
 Your thoughts are always welcome at [vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com](mailto:vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com)

**West Sacramento News Ledger**

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## Yolo County Nut Buying Period Announced



During Yolo County nut buying period, persons in possession of unprocessed "nuts" (almond, walnut, or pistachio) shall be required to show proof of ownership. Photo by Fernando Espi from Pixabay

### Yolo County News Release

**WOODLAND, CA (MPG)** - Yolo County Agricultural Commissioner Humberto Izquierdo announced on July 26 that the nut buying period will begin Aug. 1 and run through April 1, 2025, in accordance with the county's nut theft ordinance.

On May 13, 2014, the Yolo County Board of Supervisors adopted a nut theft ordinance to address the issue of nuts being stolen from orchards and sold illegally. The declaration of the nut buying period, and related Proof of Ownership requirements, assists the department in enforcing the ordinance through compliance checks at places where nuts are sold.

During this period, persons in possession of unprocessed "nuts" (almond, walnut, or pistachio) shall be required to show proof of ownership. Under probable cause, the Agricultural Commissioner or any peace officer may inspect the commodity and request proof of ownership. Proof of ownership shall contain the following information:

Name, address, telephone number and signature of the seller

Name, address, telephone number and signature of the buyer

The vehicle license plate number of the seller

The driver's license number of the seller

The weight of the "nut" commodity purchased

The date and time of the transaction

The variety and condition of the "nut" commodity

Specific identification of the source of the commodity being sold. If the seller is the commodity's grower, this shall mean the address at which the commodity was grown. If the seller is not the commodity's grower, this shall mean the name, address and phone number of the person from whom that seller obtained the "nut" commodity, and if known, the address where the commodity was grown.

The proof of ownership shall be retained with the nut commodity to which it pertains while the commodity is in any person's possession. Proof of ownership forms can be obtained from the Yolo County Agriculture Department, located at 70 Cottonwood St. in Woodland, or at the Yolo County Farm Bureau, located at 69 W. Kentucky Ave. in Woodland. Additionally, the proof of ownership form is available online at [www.YoloCounty.org/NutTheft](http://www.YoloCounty.org/NutTheft). ★

## Governor Newsom Orders State Agencies to Address Homeless Encampments

### Office of Governor Gavin Newsom News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Building on California's ongoing work and unprecedented investments to address the decades-long issue of homelessness, Governor Gavin Newsom issued an executive order on July 25 ordering state agencies and departments to adopt clear policies that urgently address homeless encampments while respecting the dignity and well-being of all Californians. With the recent U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Grants Pass v. Johnson*, local governments now have the tools and authority to address dangerous encampments and help provide those residing in encampments with the resources they need.

"This executive order directs state agencies to move urgently to address dangerous encampments while supporting and assisting the individuals living in them — and provides guidance for cities and counties to do the same. The state has been hard at work to address this crisis on our streets. There are simply no more excuses. It's time for everyone to do their part," said Governor Gavin Newsom.

Governor Newsom's executive order directs state agencies and departments to adopt humane and dignified policies to urgently address encampments on state property, including by taking necessary and deliberate steps to notify and support the people inhabiting the encampment prior to removal. Governor Newsom has made record-level investments to address the housing crisis, investing over \$24 billion across multiple state agencies and departments, including billions of dollars in funding to assist local jurisdictions in providing services and wrap-around

support to people living in encampments. In Fiscal Year 2022-2023, these investments helped lift more than 165,000 people out of homelessness and into interim or permanent housing.

### California blueprint

Governor Newsom's order directs state agencies and departments to adopt policies and plans consistent with the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) existing encampment policy. Since July 2021, California has resolved more than 11,000 encampments, and has removed 248,275 cubic yards of debris from encampments along the state right of way in preparation for Clean California projects. Prioritizing encampments that pose a threat to the life, health, and safety of the community, Caltrans provides advance notice of clearance and works with local service providers to support those experiencing homelessness at the encampment, and stores personal property collected at the site for at least 60 days.

The order encourages local governments to emulate the state's successful model to adopt local policies and to use all available resources, including those provided by the state's historic investments in housing and intervention programs, to address encampments within their jurisdictions.

### Proposition 1 funding available for local governments

Governor Newsom also encourages local governments to apply for the newly available \$3.3 billion in competitive grant funding from Proposition 1 to expand the behavioral health continuum and provide appropriate care to individuals experiencing mental health conditions and substance use disorders — with a particular focus on people who are most seriously ill, vulnerable,

or homeless. Proposition 1 includes two parts: a \$6.4 billion Behavioral Health Bond for treatment settings and housing with services, and historic reform of the Behavioral Health Services Act (BHSA) to focus on people with the most serious illnesses, substance disorders, and housing needs. The state also recently released the Proposition 1 Behavioral Health Services Act: Housing Supports Primer (July 2024) for counties, which explains how to spend the projected \$950 million annual BHSA revenue on housing interventions.

### Unprecedented investments to support communities

Governor Newsom is tackling California's homelessness crisis head-on. Since he took office, the state has developed a Statewide Action Plan for Preventing and Ending Homelessness and the Governor has demanded unprecedented accountability from local governments to do their part to end the homelessness crisis through regionally coordinated action plans. The Governor has also pioneered nation-leading homeless and housing reforms and invested more than \$24 billion to address this crisis with state and local support, including \$4.85 billion for Homeless, Housing Assistance and Prevention Grants for local jurisdictions to prevent and reduce homelessness, \$1 billion in Encampment Resolution Funding to assist local jurisdictions in providing services and supports to people living in encampments, and \$3.3 billion for Homekey to rapidly expand housing for persons experiencing homelessness.

A copy of July 25's executive order can be found at <https://www.gov.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2024/07/2024-Encampments-EO-7-24.pdf>★

## New California Law Aims to Address Teacher Shortage

### California Commission on Teacher Credentialing News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing is optimistic that a new state law intended to address the teacher shortage will help eliminate barriers to the profession and attract more prospective educators into classrooms.

Senate Bill 153, signed by Governor Gavin Newsom on June 29, and effective immediately, allows for a qualifying bachelor's degree or higher in any subject to be all that is needed for an individual to demonstrate basic skills required for admission to most teacher preparation programs.

This means that if an applicant holds a bachelor's degree or higher from a regionally accredited institution of higher education, teacher preparation programs will no longer need to verify demonstrated competence in reading, writing, and mathematics through any other options, including passing the California Basic Skills Examination for Teachers (CBEST) or performing a transcript review.

"This change in state educator preparation policy represents a major shift that will benefit the vast majority of prospective educators in California," said Mary Vixie Sandy, executive director, California Commission on Teacher Credentialing.

"Now is a great time for anyone with a qualifying bachelor's degree or higher who has considered teaching to take the next step to pursue their passion for education and apply to one of the state's many accredited teacher preparation programs."

The Commission's recent teacher supply annual report to the Legislature tracked an 11.2 % year-over-year decrease in the number of new teaching credentials issued between 2021-22 and 2022-23. In the most recent 2022-23 fiscal year data, there were 14,636 new teaching credentials issued compared to 16,484 the previous year.

"The CSU greatly appreciates the state's decision to recognize the bachelor's degree as demonstration of basic skills competence for educator credentials," said Commissioner Shireen Pavri, assistant vice chancellor of the Educator and Leadership Program at California State University.

"We believe this is exactly the right move toward reducing barriers for those considering teaching, counseling, and other education professions in California."

The State of California has provided approximately \$1.6 billion since 2016-17 to address the teacher shortage.

The 2022-23 state budget funded eight career counselors staffed at the Commission on Teacher Credentialing to provide one-on-one assistance to anyone interested in becoming an educator.

These experienced staff members serve as career guidance counselors, credential experts, subject matter experts, and resource specialists for individuals seeking to make the transition into a PK-12 educational career.

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing offers the following resources for those interested in pursuing a teaching credential:

Roadmap to Teaching Career Counselor Appointment Request Approved Teacher Preparation Programs Funding Your Future in Teaching

For additional information on how to become an educator in California, contact [credentials@ctc.ca.gov](mailto:credentials@ctc.ca.gov). ★

## Thompson Votes to Pass 2024 Water Resources Development Act

### Office of Rep. Mike Thompson News Release

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG)** - On July 22, Rep. Mike Thompson (CA-04) voted to pass H.R. 8812, the Water Resources Development Act of 2024, bipartisan legislation that will authorize the Army Corp of Engineers to make crucial investments in America's ports, inland waterways, flood management systems, ecosystems, and other water resources infrastructure.

"Every community in our district deserves to have clean water and modernized water infrastructure. I'm proud to have secured three infrastructure requests to support municipal drinking water and wastewater projects and one study request to support flood risk management in our community," said Thompson.

Rep. Thompson secured authorization for the following Fourth District projects:

Up to \$10,000,000 to the City of Rohnert Park to remove arsenic from the city's wells and improve efficiency. The City of Rohnert Park has a significant well water capacity unique to the rest of the region and ensuring that the community's wells are operating to their full potential would provide a substantial benefit for the entire region.

Up to \$20,000,000 to Lake County to address stormwater flows and habitat restoration in and around Clear Lake.

The project would develop infrastructure that protects communities near the lake from stormflows and ensures water

is entering the lake. Additionally, it would address habitat restoration efforts of species in Clear Lake and support river and stream restoration.

Up to \$20,000,000 to the Yolo County Flood Control District for water and wastewater infrastructure, including water supply and stormwater management. The project would ensure a more sustainable water supply for the County and protect communities from stormwater. Once complete, the flood control district will be able to divert storm flow into existing pits during wet seasons, ensuring accessibility to county roads during storms. This funding would also assist the flood control district in redirecting water back into the system when water levels subside.

The legislation also authorized a study for the Army Corp to assess flood risk management and ecosystem restoration for Clear Lake.

Next, the legislation must pass the Senate before being signed into law. Once signed into law, authorized projects will become eligible for federal funding.

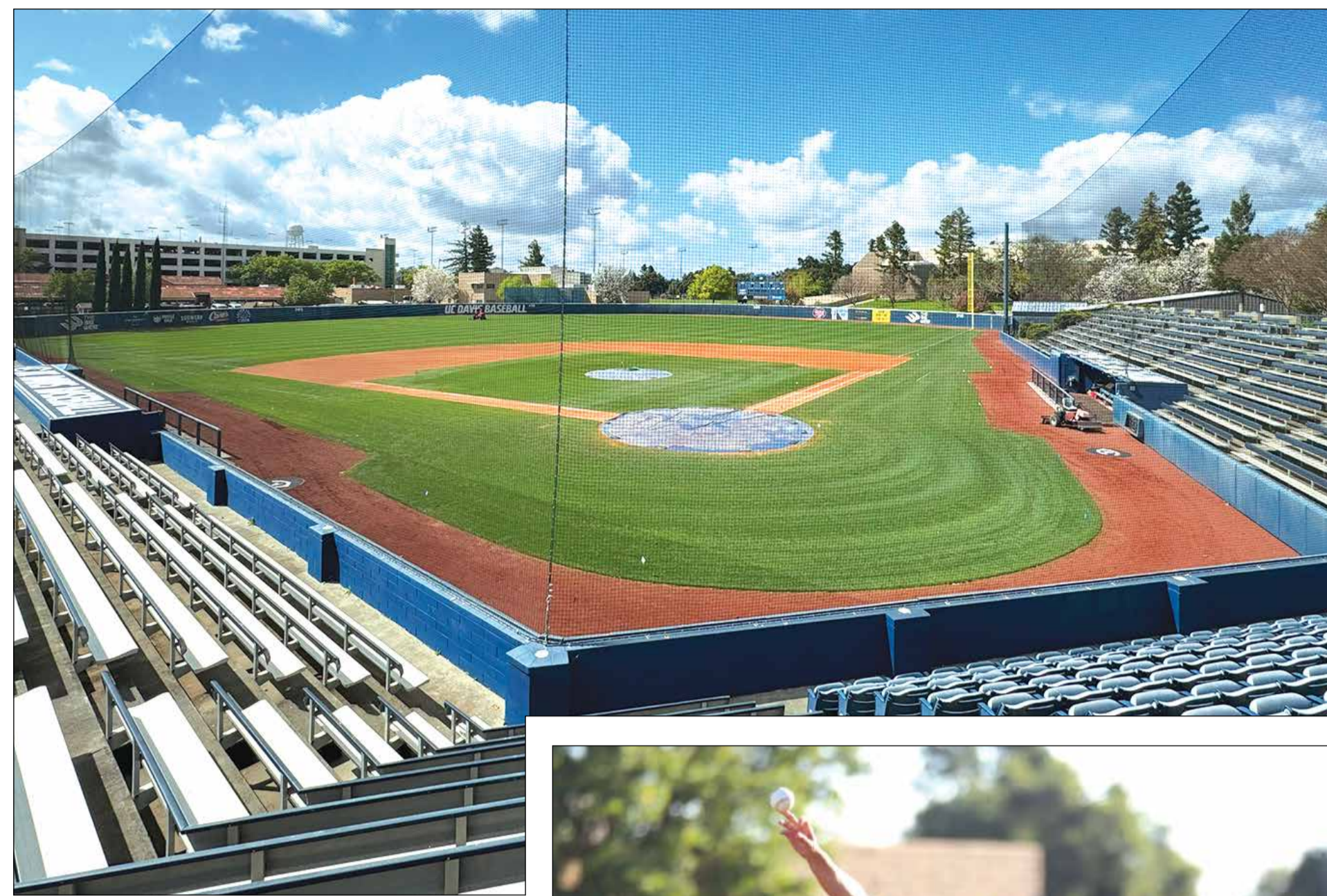
Congressman Mike Thompson represents California's 4th Congressional District, which includes all or part of Lake, Napa, Solano, Sonoma and Yolo counties. He is a senior member of the House Committee on Ways and Means and chairman of the House Gun Violence Prevention Task Force. Thompson is also co-chair of the bipartisan, bicameral Congressional Wine Caucus and a member of the fiscally-responsible Blue Dog Coalition. ★

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# YOLO with the Yolo High Wheelers



Phil Swimley Field at James M. & Ann Dobbins Baseball Stadium has room for 3,500 spectators. Photo courtesy of Yolo High Wheelers

By Mitch Barber

DAVIS, CA (MPG) - It takes little effort to find baseball in its purest form, somewhere multi-million dollar salaries don't lure players into a money game. One has only to look at a Little League diamond, a high school ballpark, or a college's personal-sized stadium; these places are where athletes participate for the love of the game.

In the city of Davis, on the University of California, Davis campus, such an environment exists on a competitive level: elite-level players throw baseballs and swing bats for little more than spare change.

The Yolo High Wheelers play in the Pioneer League where the squads have no affiliation with Major League Baseball teams. Their stadium is spacious — with a 3,500-fan capacity — but on a

safety. He was visiting Davis from Arizona to be with his dad, while his high school is on summer break.

The older Horton was a tall, imposing presence in what could be described as the team's locker room (what looked like former classrooms); he was clothing his chiseled body, complete with six-pack abdominal muscles, when this reporter arrived at the clubhouse in the cart.

Horton's favorite position as a player was third base, but he had more success as a catcher. He said, "I only started catching because I didn't hit with enough power."

The High Wheelers had a winning record at 27-25 at the time of publication, but Horton humbly stated, "I believe our team is better than what our record shows." One of Horton's players is especially local. Jack Zalasky played

varsity baseball for Elk Grove High School, and later Sacramento State University. He was happy to be met in the clubhouse hallway on that Wednesday afternoon.

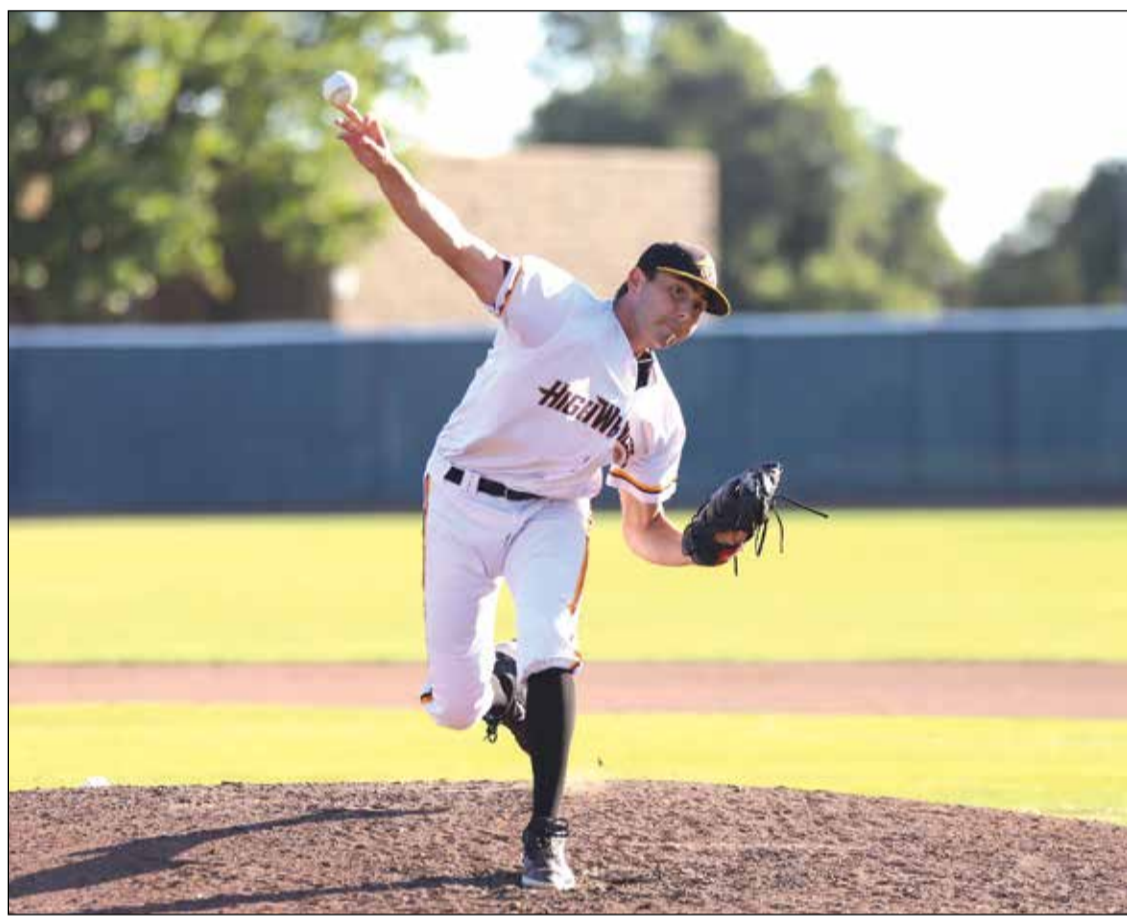
Zalasky is tall and lanky, with a dark-brown head of hair that was somewhat disorganized, and he was full of competitive energy. When asked where he saw himself in a couple years, Zalasky said, "I don't know. I'm just kind of going day by day."

Zalasky has a tie to catching like his manager; he has a pug/chihuahua named Posey, after legendary San Francisco Giants catcher Buster Posey.

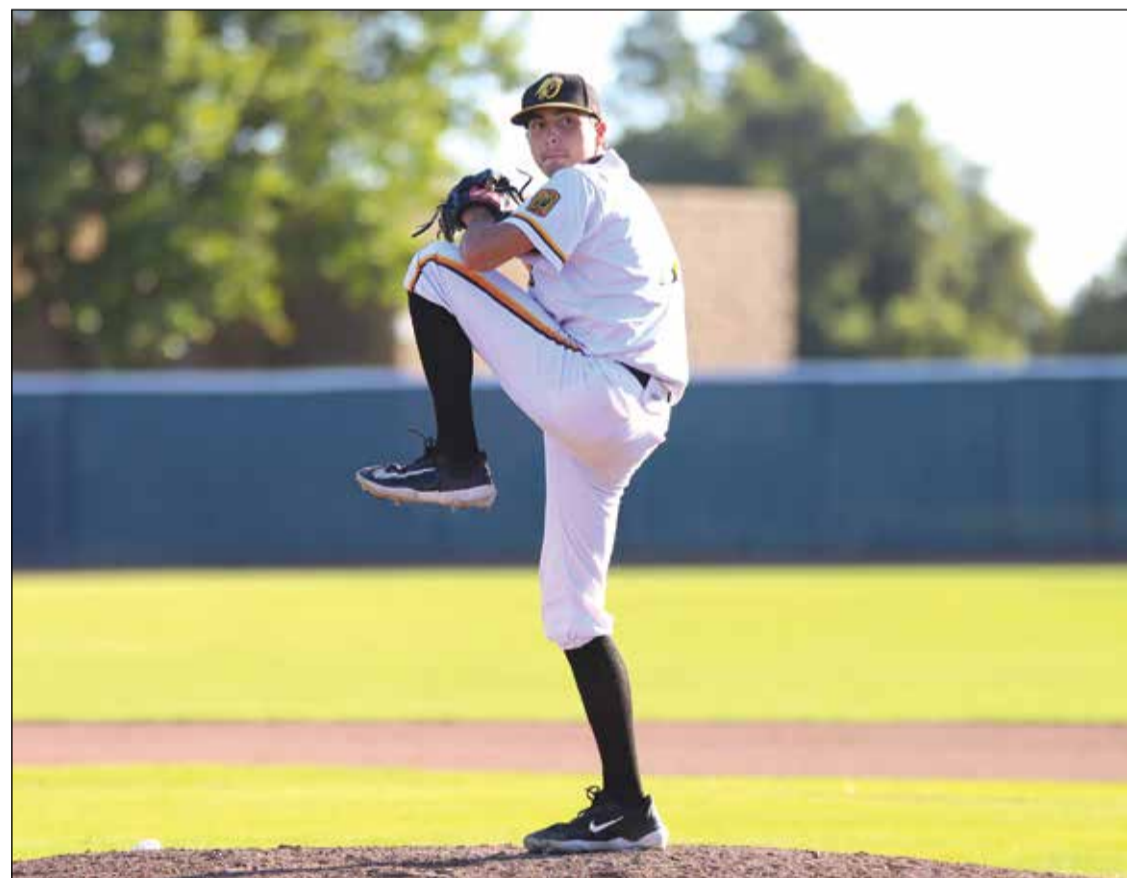
But there was a game to be played that summer Wednesday.

The bottom of the first inning included a homerun by Yolo High Wheeler Braedon Blackford.

During that same inning, a song by Common and Kanye West played over the public address system. (West is a man who made the term "YOLO" famous.) Divine intervention? Or something planned by the PA announcer, Shiloh Roiss-Hume, who has a voice that brings to mind Samuel L. Jackson's radio broadcasting in "Do the Right Thing?" ★



Jack Zalasky delivers from the mound on July 16 versus the Oakland Ballers at Dobbins Baseball Stadium. Photo courtesy of Yolo High Wheelers



Jack Zalasky kicks his leg high in a game on July 16 versus the Oakland Ballers at Dobbins Baseball Stadium. Photo courtesy of Yolo High Wheelers



Billy Horton's son, Bryce, is also in town for Yolo High Wheelers games. Here, father and son smile in the clubhouse. Photo by Mitch Barber

