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# Elk Grove Citizen

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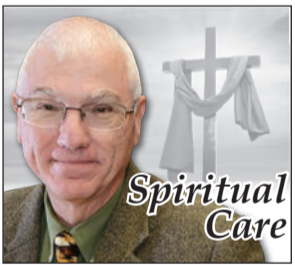
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## Playmakers Flag Football is Free



Playmakers Character and Leadership Academy events encourage all youth to participate. From mid-September through November, a free, inaugural Playmaker Flag Football will have two leagues for boys and girls: a league for youth between the ages of 6 and 14, and another league for youth with developmental differences. Photo courtesy of Playmakers Character and Leadership Academy

By Carol Feineman

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - National Football League (NFL) FLAG games give boys and girls of all abilities an opportunity to develop fundamental football skills in a positive, inclusive environment, according to the NFL FLAG organization.

And now area youth will have an opportunity to develop those skills.

That's because the nonprofit Playmakers Character and Leadership Academy is launching a free, inaugural Playmaker Flag Football in Citrus Heights next month.

Children with developmental differences of any ability, desire and age, plus

their families, are encouraged to attend. There will be two leagues, one for boys and girls between the ages of 6 and 14, and another league for boys and girls with developmental differences.

Optimist Club of Country Club and Verde Design are providing the resources for The Playmakers to offer the

free NFL Youth Flag Football.

All participants will receive a jersey, wristband and qualified coaching from high school and college players.

The games and practices will be held at both Mesa Verde High School and San Juan High School in Citrus Heights.

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## Newsom: Restrict Use of Cell Phones in Class

Office of Gov. Gavin Newsom News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)**

- In a letter to California schools on Aug. 13, Gov. Gavin Newsom called on every school district to restrict smartphone use in classrooms as the new academic year begins. In his letter, the governor applauds districts that have already implemented cell phone restrictions, like Los Angeles Unified, and reminded education leaders of the mental health, scholastic and social risks of cell phone use in classrooms.

In 2019, Newsom signed AB 272 (Muratsuchi) into law, which grants school districts the authority to regulate the use of smartphones during school hours. Building on that legislation, he is currently working with the California Legislature to further limit student smartphone use on campuses. In June, the governor announced efforts to restrict the use of smartphones during the school day.

A copy of the letter can be found below:

Dear School Leaders,

As we strive to create the best learning environment for all students this new academic year, I write today to raise an urgent issue that affects their well-being: the pervasive use of smartphones in schools.

Excessive smartphone use among youth is linked to increased anxiety, depression, and other mental health issues. A recent Pew Research Center survey found that 72% of high school and 33% of middle school teachers report cell phone distractions as a major problem. Common Sense Media found that 97% of students use their phones during the school day for a median of 43 minutes. Combined with the U.S. Surgeon General's warning about the risks of social media, it is urgent to provide reasonable guardrails for smartphone use in schools.

As I work with the

## Stay Safe from Rattlers

By Judy Andrews

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Although wildlife sightings are typically more common near rivers, creeks and open spaces, this year's extreme heat has forced the local wildlife, including many unwelcome visitors such as venomous snakes, to seek food, water and shelter in populated areas, sometimes right into our backyards.

The California Poison Control System receives hundreds of rattlesnake exposure calls every year, especially from April to October. Although rattlesnake bites are rarely fatal, they can cause severe injury or death, according to the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and prevention is the key to human safety.

"Snakes start roaming around when they get desperate for water," said Jake Molieri, owner of SNAKEOUT, Inc.

"They can die if they become overheated, so it's not unusual to find them on hot days near water sources like sprinklers, fountains, pools, pet water dishes and inside flowerpots," Molieri said.

Molieri's business provides humane snake removal services, educational resources and canine rattlesnake aversion clinics.

He's one of a handful of local snake removal companies specializing in removing rattlesnakes from businesses and homes. Molieri sees a growing need for public education and awareness of wildlife behavior, especially as more people from other areas move into Sacramento County and the foothills.

"Rattlesnakes are important to our ecosystem. We don't need to live in



Wildlife Capture Specialist Ben Nuckolls safely handles a Northern California Rattlesnake removed from a backyard. Nuckolls accepts donations through California Wildlife Encounters to keep his work going. Photo by Jane Miki Gagnier

fear of them. But we need to be vigilant and respect them for their role in the environment like we do for other wildlife," Molieri explained.

Depending on the county, this region is home to between 10 and 13 different species, including the venomous Northern Pacific Rattlesnake,

which is often the target of fear and misconception.

Sacramentan Michael Starkey supports snake conservation worldwide through his nonprofit Save The Snakes organization.

"We haven't solved the problem by

*Continued on Page 12*

# Commissioner Faces Criticism as He Tackles Crisis in Insurance Cost



By Dan Walters  
CALMatters.org

“Father Knows Best” was a popular radio show in the post-World War era that morphed into an even more popular television series starring actor Robert Young.

Young’s character, Jim Anderson, was an insurance company executive — probably the only time American mass media have positively portrayed such a figure. Young later played a much more sympathetic role, a doctor who made house calls, in “Marcus Welby, MD.”

Insurance to indemnify us for liabilities and damages to our homes, cars and businesses is a modern necessity, but consciously or subconsciously we often

resent paying for coverage that is seldom invoked.

Politicians tend to play on that resentment by promising, if elected, to protect voters from rapacious insurers.

In California, that attitude took the form of a 1998 ballot measure sponsored by a self-designated consumer protection group, that made the state insurance commissioner an elected official with new authority to regulate insurers.

The sponsoring group, Consumer Watchdog, has since been paid millions of dollars in “intervenor fees” for inserting itself into insurance rate cases pending in the Department of Insurance, but it claims to have saved Californians \$6 billion.

Ever since he launched his 2018 campaign for insurance commissioner, former state Sen. Ricardo Lara has faced sharp criticism from Consumer Watchdog, which denounced him as a tool of the insurance industry.

However, Lara has

had to contend with an unprecedented crisis in California’s insurance market. The disastrous wildfires that have swept through California in the last half-decade prompted many insurers to curtail their exposure, some to the point of abandoning the state altogether.

California’s insurance regulatory system, they said, made it impossible to accurately project potential losses and adjust their premiums accordingly.

As tens of thousands of policies were canceled or not renewed, property owners scrambled to find new coverage, and many turned to the state’s insurer of last resort, the FAIR program, that offers only limited reimbursement for losses at high cost.

Furthermore, because mortgage lenders require insurance coverage on their property, the insurance crisis has contributed to California’s housing crisis.

Lara, backed by Gov. Gavin Newsom, has proposed systemic changes in



Insurance Commissioner Ricardo Lara, left, talks to Raul Vargas, Farmers Insurance CEO, in Los Angeles on April 4, 2024. Insurers say wildfires and regulations led some to stop covering California homes. Photo courtesy of Ted Soqui for CalMatters

how insurance is priced. He agreed with insurers that their rate proposals should be processed more rapidly, that they should be allowed to include potential losses from wildfires and other catastrophes in their rates, and that the costs of reinsurance — to spread the financial burden of losses — should be folded into premiums.

“We do not have the luxury of time,” Lara said in a press release last week as he announced the adoption of new rules to speed up rate cases.

Consumer Watchdog is still nipping at Lara’s heels, saying “we remain concerned that the new procedures announced by the commissioner will short-circuit public participation and rates will be

rubber-stamped.” “Consumer Watchdog will analyze this action to determine if it is an illegal underground regulation or otherwise violates Proposition 103 by shutting consumers out of the process,” it added.

Anticipating the criticism, Lara’s announcement last week said, “Any intervenor groups engaged on certain rate filings must provide a ‘substantial contribution’ to the rate review process and not duplicate the work of the department’s rate review experts to be eligible for compensation.”

Would Lara’s proposed regulatory changes likely make insurance coverage more expensive in fire-prone regions? Yes, but there are no free lunches

and it’s better to have costlier coverage than none.

If nothing else, Lara deserves credit for actually doing something about a severe crisis, rather than passing the buck — a contrast with how California officials are dealing with another crisis, homelessness.

*Dan Walters is one of the 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.* ★

# Newsom: Restrict Use of Cell Phones in Class

Continued from Page 1

Legislature to further limit student smartphone use on campus, there is no reason for schools to wait. In 2019, I signed AB 272 (Muratsuchi) into law, which grants school districts the authority to regulate the use of

smartphones during school hours.

This legislation was a crucial step in our efforts to minimize distractions and foster a more conducive environment for our students to learn. It is imperative that school districts take full advantage of this law to

address the growing concerns surrounding student well-being and academic performance.

Leveraging the tools of this law, I urge every school district to act now to restrict smartphone use on campus as we begin the new academic year. The evidence is clear:

reducing phone use in class leads to improved concentration, better academic outcomes, and enhanced social interactions. Schools and districts, including Santa Barbara Unified and Bullard High in Fresno, have seen positive impacts of limiting smartphones on campus, with

some reporting higher test scores, grades, and student engagement, and less bullying and damage to school facilities.

I applaud these districts, and others like L.A. Unified, for their leadership.

Every classroom should be a place of focus, learning, and growth. Working together, educators, administrators, and parents can

create an environment where students are fully engaged in their education, free from the distractions on the phones and pressures of social media.

Thank you for your continued dedication to our students and support in making our schools the best they can be.

Sincerely,  
Gov. Gavin Newsom ★

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# Elk Grove Seeks Citizen of the Year

## Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce News Release

**ELK GROVE, CA (MPG)** - The Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce and American Legion, a nonprofit organization serving veterans, service members and communities, are seeking nominations for the 2024 Citizen of the Year award. Nominations close Sept. 18.

Since 1955, the Elk Grove community has presented this annual award to a

resident who renders exceptional service. More than half of the winners have been honored with a park named after them. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Elk Grove Citizen of the Year scholarship, which is applied to a qualifying high school senior.

This year's recipient will be recognized for outstanding volunteer service and community involvement, directly benefiting the greater Elk Grove community. Last year's honoree was Jon Colton.

To nominate a deserving citizen, Elk Grove residents can submit a completed nomination form, available at the Elk Grove Chamber of Commerce website, along with a signed letter of recommendation detailing the nominee's qualifications. Nominees should be remembered for their involvement in clubs and service organizations, past accomplishments in the community and contributions specifically significant to Elk Grove.

Nominees must be Elk Grove area

residents, individuals or couples and cannot be actively campaigning for political office at the time of nomination. They must also be alive at the time of nomination.

The Citizen of the Year is chosen by a selection committee and honored at an annual banquet dinner the first Monday of November.

Submit nominations at [elkgroveca.com/wp-content/uploads/Citizen-of-the-Year-Nomination.pdf](http://elkgroveca.com/wp-content/uploads/Citizen-of-the-Year-Nomination.pdf) by 5 p.m., Sept. 18. ★

# SMF Airport Breaks Ground on Pedestrian Walkway

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Sacramento International Airport (SMF) has broken ground for its new Pedestrian Walkway, a key project in the SMForward program.

The Pedestrian Walkway will connect Terminal B to Concourse B via a skybridge with moving sidewalks, escalators and elevators along a panoramic corridor. The walkway project is vital to supporting passenger growth well into the future.

The \$140-million walkway will enhance passenger convenience and connectivity, offering travelers the ability to walk or ride the existing Automated People Mover. The project will feature three major pieces of art that represent a \$2.5-million investment in public art.

"This is the first project of our \$1.3 billion SMForward program and the culmination of years of planning and creativity," said Cindy Nichol,

director of Sacramento County Department of Airports. "By transforming how people experience travel, we're enhancing our community's connection to the region and the world, boosting our economy and improving our quality of life."

The project is funded by \$33 million in grant funds through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), as well as a low-interest federal loan through the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) and airport revenue bonds. Zero local tax dollars will be used to fund this important project.

The airport has been breaking passenger records month after month, ending fiscal year 2024 with 13.2 million passengers served.

"With passenger numbers on track to break records again this year, this project is essential to meeting the demands of today and tomorrow," said District 2 Supervisor and Board Chair Patrick Kennedy. "By expanding our airport's capacity and enhancing the passenger



The new walkway will connect Terminal B to Concourse B. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

journey, Sacramento County's Department of Airports is ensuring our region remains a top choice for travelers and businesses alike."

Said District 1 Supervisor Phil Serna, "This walkway, with two sky bridges and a hub, is built with the future in mind. They will provide SMF's passengers a flexible portal that can connect to a future concourse to meet our growing region's

need for air travel for decades to come."

Following a competitive selection process, Balfour Beatty was chosen to serve as the project's Construction Manager at Risk (CMAR), a first for a major project in Sacramento County.

The Construction Manager at Risk delivery method is beneficial because it allows for early collaboration between the department, the project

designer and the construction manager, leading to better project design and cost control. The project will be delivered through multiple progressive guaranteed maximum price (PGMP), which reduces financial risk for the department.

The Construction Manager at Risk delivery method enhances project quality and efficiency through integrated project design and

delivery and proactive risk management.

The Pedestrian Walkway is just the first step in a \$1.3 billion plan to leverage transformative partnerships, lead the way in creative financing solutions and deliver the future of Sacramento International Airport.

Throughout the program's projected duration, 800 jobs will be created in the first four years alone. ★

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# POLICE LOGS

## Friday, Aug. 9

12:51 a.m., 9500 block of Harbour Point Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Kelli Conners, 32, on warrant charges.

3:31 a.m., Promenade Parkway/Lent Ranch Parkway: Elk Grove Police arrested Noemi Johnson, 60, on DUI charges.

4:14 a.m., Elk Grove Boulevard/Laguna Spring Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Joyce Campos, 43, on DUI charges.

10:52 a.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Minda Cristobal, 57, on domestic battery and weapon brandishing charges.

11:01 p.m., Power Inn Road/Geneva Pointe Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Ruben Contreras Ochoa, 25, on charges of narcotics possession, controlled substance transportation or

sale, controlled substance possession, cannabis possession and probation violation.

## Saturday, Aug. 10

3:07 a.m., Bradshaw Road/Bond Road: Elk Grove Police arrested Steven Daniel, 37, on DUI charges.

9:40 p.m., 3100 block of East Laguna Court: Elk Grove Police arrested an unidentified 16-year-old on false impersonation and warrant charges.

11:11 p.m., 8800 block of Upbeat Way: Elk Grove Police arrested two unidentified 15-year-olds and an unidentified 13-year-old on charges of unauthorized driving or taking of a vehicle, receiving a stolen vehicle, conspiracy, resisting arrest and false ID.

## Tuesday, Aug. 13

10:54 a.m., 9500 block

of Laguna Springs Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested John Valdes, 31, on warrant charges and charges of resisting arrest, and possessing contraband in a prison or jail.

12:13 p.m., 7400 block of Elk Grove Boulevard: Elk Grove Police arrested Justin Hill, 52, on charges of assault with a deadly weapon, domestic violence and vandalism.

8:26 p.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Gabirel Lenares, 19, on domestic battery and false imprisonment charges.

8:55 p.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Leann Hollis, 45, on domestic battery charges.

10:41 p.m., 8200 block of Civic Center Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Datojuan Clementin, 45,

on warrant charges and charges of meth and drug paraphernalia possession, burglary tool possession and theft of lost property.

11:13 p.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Reyn Galeos, 19, on restraining order violation charges.

## Wednesday, Aug. 14

6:20 a.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Aaronette Moore, 54, on charges of corporal injury to an intimate partner and assault with a deadly weapon.

3:10 p.m., Bruceville Road/Cosumnes River Boulevard: Elk Grove Police arrested Zachary Brown, 35, on charges of resisting arrest, parole violation and controlled substance possession.

3:10 p.m., Emerald Vista Drive/East Stockton Boulevard: Elk Grove

Police arrested Kirtus Sims, 33, on warrant charges. Sims was wanted on charges of meth transportation or sale, meth possession, committing a felony while on bail, burglary and leaded cane possession.

11:51 p.m., confidential location: Elk Grove Police arrested Miriam Contreras Perez, 35, on domestic battery charges.

6:14 p.m., Bond Road/Qual Cove Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Daniel Garcia, 40, on controlled substance possession charges.

## Thursday, Aug. 15

2:07 a.m., Calvine Road/Elk Grove-Florin Road: Elk Grove Police arrested Perian Darris, 28, on warrant charges and on charges of controlled substance and drug paraphernalia possession.

11:08 a.m., Sky River Parkway/Promenade Parkway: Elk Grove Police arrested Jimmy Guevarra, 46, on meth possession charges.

11:36 a.m., 8700 block of Shasta Lily Drive: Elk Grove Police arrested Mitchell Dixon, 43, on charges of controlled substance and drug paraphernalia possession.

3:25 p.m., 8200 block of Laguna Boulevard: Elk Grove Police arrested Dylan Mehringer, 29, on charges of receiving a stolen vehicle.

10:12 p.m., Sky River Parkway/Promenade Parkway: Elk Grove Police arrested Jose Jimenez, 53, on trespassing charges.

11:31 p.m., Sky River Parkway/Promenade Parkway: Elk Grove Police arrested Hai Pham, 45, on battery charges. ★

# MEETING MINDERS

Community members can watch these meetings online and submit public comments for the officials to review.

**The Elk Grove City Council** has its regular meetings at 6 p.m. the second and fourth Wednesdays of the month. To view the meeting, visit the city of Elk Grove's website, [www.ElkGroveCity.org](http://www.ElkGroveCity.org).

**The Elk Grove Planning Commission** has its online meetings at 6 p.m. the first and third Thursdays of the month.

A live video stream of this meeting can be viewed at the city of Elk Grove's

website, [www.ElkGroveCity.org](http://www.ElkGroveCity.org).

**The Cosumnes Community Services District Board of Directors** has in-person meetings at 5 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of the month. It governs the Cosumnes Fire Department as well as Elk Grove's parks and recreation system.

The CSD board meetings can be watched live at [www.CosumnesCSD.gov](http://www.CosumnesCSD.gov) and they are held at 8820 Elk Grove Blvd.

**The Elk Grove Unified School District Board of Trustees** will meet Tuesday, Aug. 6 at 6 p.m. This meeting is in-person

at the Cosumnes Community Services District headquarters, 8820 Elk Grove Blvd.

Members of the public can also view it online by using the Zoom application and visiting the school district's website, [www.EGUSD.net](http://www.EGUSD.net).

Past board meetings can be watched on the district's YouTube channel, "ElkGroveUnified."

**The Florin Resource Conservation District Board**, which governs the Elk Grove Water District, holds online

meetings every third Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. These meetings are held via the Zoom application.

To access them, visit the district's website, [www.egwd.org](http://www.egwd.org).

**The Elk Grove-Cosumnes Cemetery District Board** has in-person meetings every second Thursday of each month at 3 p.m. They meet at their district office, 8540 Elk Grove Blvd.

Attendees are required to wear face coverings and practice social distancing. Find agendas at [www.EGCCD.com](http://www.EGCCD.com). ★

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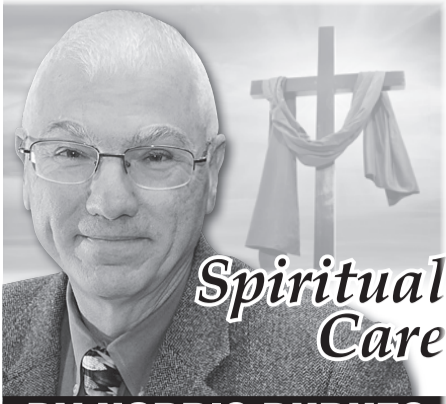
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**Thank YOU TODAY**





**BY NORRIS BURKES**

# Grieving Isn't a Secret

even Baptist teetotalers could be fun. However, my classmate to my right wasn't as sociable. Bobby kept to himself, looking straight ahead, volunteering little more than his name and religious denomination.

Finally, a few days from the course completion during a lecture on grief, Bobby dropped a bomb.

"I know you probably think I've seemed detached these past several days."

An a cappella chorus of "No-duh" rippled through our student body.

"My mother died the day after we arrived."

Suddenly, it became quite enough to hear a chaplain cuss, but I just said, "Ah, shoot."

Our class stopped to say a prayer for Bobby. The course director offered him emergency leave, but Bobby refused, holding tight his military bearing.

After class, a few of us invited Bobby to a nearby bar. He declined, so we went without him.

Inside the bar, we commiserated on Bobby's behalf, noting how tragic it was to lose a family member while so far away from home.

After a few drinks, Frank slammed his hand on the table.

"Bobby didn't trust us," he said. "We sat shoulder-to-shoulder with him all month and he was locked up too tight to share with his clergy brothers."

"Perhaps we could have helped him,"

said one chaplain.

"How could we?" asked Frank. "He didn't trust us to help him."

"We could have carried his class assignments," suggested one lieutenant.

"I would have given him my phone card to call his family," I said.

To each idea, Frank pushed back, "If only he had trusted us."

The bar debate eventually found some resolve to reach out to Bobby again the next day.

"Try again," Frank said.

A few years later, I saw Frank at a chaplain's conference, just outside a Denver hotel.

"How you doing, Baptist?" he asked.

The word "fine" came to mind, but thinking of Bobby, I didn't lie. I trusted Frank more than that.

"Not good," I said as my tears splatted the conference-room carpet.

Many readers know the story I told Frank next.

A few months prior, I'd rushed to give solace at a mass shooting scene at Cleveland Elementary school in Stockton, Calif. I was the chaplain who told six parents that their child had been killed.

I fell into the arms Frank extended. He held me and wouldn't let go.

That night, he invited me to join him and two other priests at a local bar – the same opportunity he'd offered Bobby.

As we talked in that dark, private space, I sipped at my Pepsi, feeling a restoration

budding in my soul.

During the next few hours, my priestly friends also told their stories of grief. They taught me that grief can't stay in the dark. It must come out or it will never heal.

Why did I choose this week to tell you this story? Because my 90-year-old mother died a few weeks ago and I won't keep that a secret.

She was the most wonderful mother who taught me faith, laughter and love. I want you to know that I feel grief and so should you.

By the way, I finally did take Frank's advice by accepting his offer of a Colorado Bulldog. (It's a White Russian cocktail, with added Pepsi.)

It was so delicious that I ordered two more that evening.

About midnight, when we stood to leave, the ceiling seemed a bit active.

"Don't worry. We got you, Baptist." Frank promised. And they did. They all walked me back to my room, arm in arm, like the brothers they'd become.

Join Norris' mailing list at [www.thechaplain.net/newsletter](http://www.thechaplain.net/newsletter). Contact Norris by voicemail at (843) 608-9715 or email comment@thechaplain.net.

Snail mail received at 10566 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. All his books are also available at Combie Mail or on his website or by sending a \$20 check to the above address. ★

## RELIGION NEWS

### Grace Church Welcomes You to Join Us as We Worship the One True God

Begin your week with a congregation who seeks to glorify Jesus Christ through singing and God's Word, the Bible. Sunday worship service begins at 10 a.m. All are welcome.

Our gatherings are at 9766 Waterman Road, Suite F (next to Mel Dogs restaurant). For more information, call (916) 714-3444 or email: [office@gracechurcheg.org](mailto:office@gracechurcheg.org). Visit our website at [GraceChurchEG.org](http://GraceChurchEG.org).

### Chabad of Elk Grove's Weekly Torah Classes

Local community members are invited to attend free weekly Torah Classes that will be offered by Chabad of Elk Grove. Each class will be held from 6:45-7:30 p.m. on Wednesdays at a private location.

The course, "Flashbacks in Jewish History," will examine how our past informs our future.

Rabbi Chaim Groner leads the discussion. For location, call (917) 724-4443.

### Field of Hope United Church of Christ's Services.

Community members are invited to the Field of Hope United Church of Christ's Sunday worship service at 10:30 a.m. at 9624 Melrose Ave., Elk Grove.

Sunday School and nursery services are available. For more information, visit [www.FieldOfHopeUCC.org](http://www.FieldOfHopeUCC.org).

### Music and Sermon Topics at Elk Grove Presbyterian Church MUSIC EVENTS

Our JAZZ & BLUES HOUR continues the first Sunday of the month at 4 pm. On Sept. 1, Gary Mendoza will perform and Papa Day Blues Band on Oct. 6.

Scotty Inman will return to Elk Grove on Nov. 15 for an evening concert of worship and fellowship. Joining Scotty will be the Herb Henry Family, California's First

Family of Gospel Music, and Faith Valley. Tickets are \$25 with assigned seating. A portion of the ticket proceeds will benefit several charities – One Thousand Schools (formerly Students Helping Honduras), Chicks in Crisis, Elk Grove Food Bank Services and Sacramento Stand Down. For tickets go to [www.itickets.com/events/479656](http://www.itickets.com/events/479656).

The concert will be held at The Center at District 56, 8230 Civic Center Drive, Elk Grove, CA 95757. Come early before the concert starts and listen to the musical talents of Chan Louie and enjoy some refreshments. Doors open at 6:00 pm and the concert starts at 7:00 pm.

### UPCOMING SERMON TOPICS

Rev. Dexter McNamara has announced upcoming sermon topics:

Aug. 25 – "Making A Tough Choice."  
 Sept. 1 – "Traditional Actions or Right Heart?"  
 Sept. 8 – "How Big Is God's Circle?"  
 Sept. 15 – "Holding On To What We Do Not Understand";

Rev. McNamara welcomes members and visitors every Sunday at 10 am. Our church is located at 8153 Elk Grove Blvd, Suite 50, facing Big Horn Blvd. For more information Rev. McNamara can be reached at (916) 683-1435 or [elkgrove-pres@gmail.com](mailto:elkgrove-pres@gmail.com).

### St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church's Mass Schedule

Elk Grove's St. Maria Goretti Catholic Church invites everyone to their celebrations of Holy Mass at 8700 Bradshaw Road.

Mass will be held there at 5 p.m. on Saturdays, and 8 a.m., 10 a.m. and noon on Sundays. They also have weekday Masses at 9 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays.

The church's office hours are Mon, Thurs, Fri, 9:30-2:30, Wed, 9:30-6:00. For more information, call (916) 647-4538, visit [www.SMGCC.net](http://www.SMGCC.net), or download the MyParish app and enter the code, 55321. ★

# Places of Worship

### St. Peter's Lutheran Church

8701 Elk Grove-Florin Rd.  
Pastor Joe Dapelo  
916-689-7300

Summer Service Hours (June 2-Aug. 25):  
One in Worship service 9:30 am  
Sunday School 10:45 am (beginning June 2)

Website: <https://stpeterseg.org>  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/St.PetersLutheranChurchElkGrove/>

### Light of the Valley

Lutheran Church Missouri Synod  
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A warm, friendly greeting awaits you every Sunday. We always have a special message and **would love for you to join us.**

This is a great opportunity to meet new people, join in fellowship and fun activities and learn more about our faith.

**We look forward to seeing you:**  
Traditional service at 8:45 a.m.  
Contemporary service at 10:30 a.m.  
Children's Ministry during Contemporary Service  
Nursery available at 10:30 a.m. service  
9270 Bruceville Road in Elk Grove  
Stream our service at [lightofthevalley.net](http://lightofthevalley.net)  
916-691-3568

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### Family Praise and Worship Ministries

4099 Emerson Road, Acampo, CA 95220  
Pastors Claude & Jan Moore  
209-224-8145  
Sunday School 9:30 a.m., | Sunday Service 11:00 a.m.  
Bible Study Wednesdays 7:00 p.m.  
Worship Service 4th Friday 7:00 p.m.

### Full Gospel Church

9286 E. Stockton Blvd.,  
Elk Grove, CA 95624  
Pastor Daniels  
916-685-6607  
Tuesday Prayer Healing 6pm  
Sunday School 10am  
Sunday Worship 11am

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# COMICS & PUZZLES

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by Jeff Pickering



## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



## Out on a Limb

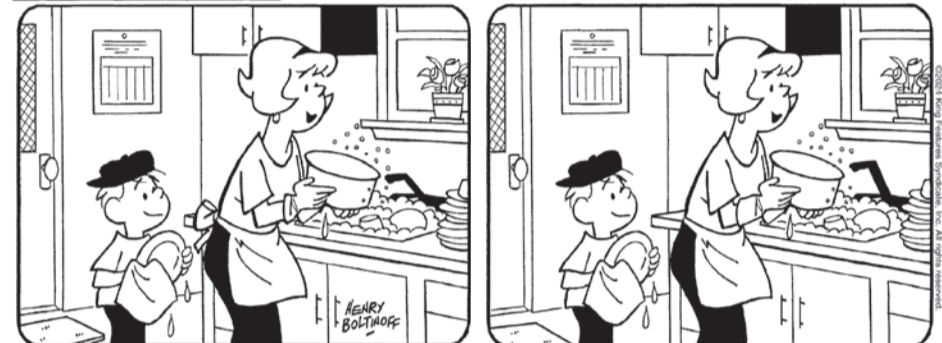
by Gary Kopervas



## HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

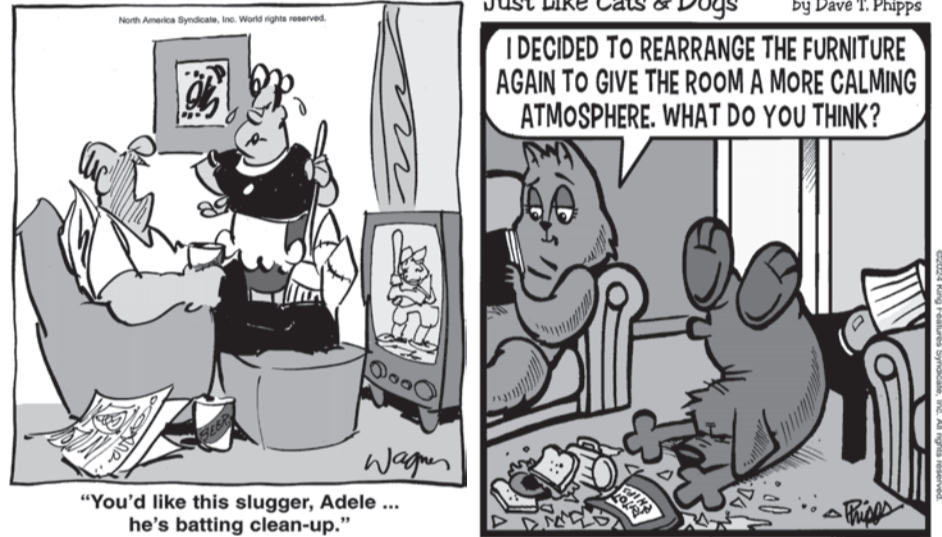


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## STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • MUSIC 101

- CLUES**
- ACROSS**
- Meat chunks
  - Calendar square
  - \*\_\_\_\_ signature, or notation that describes #34
  - Down
  - Hiya or howdy
  - Down Under runner
  - West Point student
  - At full speed
  - Big Apple
  - Flounder's domain
  - \*Complementary notes sung simultaneously
  - \*Not sonata
  - Debate position
  - Painter Chagall
  - Munchhausen's story
  - Casino chip
  - \*R in R&B
  - Spanish earthen pot
  - Lobed organs
  - Nest for an eagle
  - Bona fide
  - \*Adagio or moderato, e.g.
  - What a willow did?
  - \*Type of piano technician
  - Flock member description
  - Fill beyond full
  - Masters of ceremonies, colloquially speaking
  - Jon Krakauer's book "\_\_\_\_ the Wild"
  - High craggy hill
  - Church congregation
  - Hole punching tool
  - \*A \_\_\_\_\_, or without accompaniment
  - \*Fast
  - Not asleep
  - 2000 lbs.
  - Acquisition through marriage
  - Rubber tree product
  - Director's cry
  - \*Five lines
  - Potassium hydroxide solution, pl.
  - 168 in 1 week
  - Housed
- DOWN**
- Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's title
  - Dharma teacher
  - Resembling wings
  - Good Year balloon, e.g.
  - Mexico City state
  - Say it isn't so
  - Winehouse or Schumer
  - New Mexico's state flower
  - Diplomat's asset
  - It comes to mind
  - Not in Impossible Burger
  - European erupter
  - Shell-like anatomical structure
  - \*Nine instruments, e.g.
  - Bobby of hockey
  - Halle Bailey's 2023 role
  - \*Loud or strong
  - Part of small intestine
  - Sometimes follows sauvignon
  - 1.3 ounces, in Asia
  - Coniferous trees
  - October 31 option
  - On top of trends (2 words)
  - \*Strong-weak-strong-

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# Back to School: Prioritizing Safety for Families on Grant Line Road

By **Derek Minnema**, Executive Director Capital Southeast Connector JPA



Rancho Cordova City Councilwoman Siri Pulipati had left her son at daycare minutes before her nightmare unfolded. On Grant Line Road, she steered slightly to the right when she saw a wide-body truck barreling toward her.

“I just moved a little to the right, and the next thing I know, my tire hit the edge of the road,” Pulipati recently recalled. “I blew through the fence and rolled into the middle of the fields. As the ambulance was taking me away, my first thought was, ‘Thank God my child was

not in the car with me.” While improving traffic flow through the Sacramento region has always been the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway’s focus, improving safety throughout the route has been an equal goal. The Connector

Expressway’s route from Elk Grove to Highway 50 in El Dorado County has always been known for its dangers. During the Gold Rush, it was the rocky dirt track that about 300,000 gold miners used to receive supplies and send their bounty to market. The route is legendary for broken wheels on mule and horse-drawn carts, and many sections flooded during rainstorms.

Today’s dangers are related to the number of vehicles speeding along a road designed for travel in past eras. Grant Line Road, a backbone arterial for the south county, poses safety risks for the thousands who rely on it daily. Potholes, sharp curves, and elevations

that obstruct the view of oncoming traffic are common, and there are long sections of the road with narrow or essentially no shoulders. Bicycling is a grave risk.

Upon completion, the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway literally eliminates all those problems, and more.

As the school year begins, the familiar challenges of commuting along Grant Line Road are once again at the forefront of concerns for many families in Rancho Cordova and Folsom. The road’s current condition is more than just an inconvenience—it is a danger.

The Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway is not just about repairing

a dangerous roadway; it’s about transforming it into a modern, efficient, and safe corridor that meets the needs of our growing population.

Recently, the project received \$25 million in critical federal financial support, underscoring the project’s importance and potential to improve safety and ease congestion.

We will soon be requesting a matching state grant to further advance the work. Securing these additional funds is essential to ensuring that the project can begin widening the road and its shoulders, adding new lanes, and upgrading intersections. The project also includes a new bike and pedestrian path offering safe

travel options.

The success of the Capital SouthEast Connector depends not only on the work of engineers and construction crews but also on community support and engagement. Parents and residents can play an active role by staying informed and participating in the process. You can learn more about the project and share your support with elected representatives on our website at [www.connectorjpa.com](http://www.connectorjpa.com).

*Derek Minnema is a father of three young children, a civil engineer, and chief executive leading the Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority.* ★

## What Everybody Ought to Know... About Transportation and Traffic in Sacramento County

### Why Are We Publishing This Information

The Capital SouthEast Connector is the largest and most significant road project in Sacramento and El Dorado Counties, but its value to the region is often unknown to residents.

The Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority (the agency responsible for designing and building the expressway) hopes to change that through a series of ads appearing over the next several weeks. The ads will explore the Connector’s history and future, its financing, its challenges, and its successes.

**Please send your comments about these ads, or any questions you might have, to [ConnectorSupport@SacCounty.gov](mailto:ConnectorSupport@SacCounty.gov)**

For more information or to sign up for our newsletter, visit our website at [ConnectorJPA.com](http://ConnectorJPA.com) or go to our YouTube channel @southeastconnectorexpressway

### Q What is the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway?

A The planned Connector is a four-lane expressway that will link Interstate 5 and Highway 99 near Elk Grove to Highway 50 in El Dorado County. The new expressway will act as a southeastern beltway circumventing downtown Sacramento and relieving congestion by directing commuter and commercial traffic around the city. Travelers to and from areas south of Sacramento will no longer need to go through the city to get to their destinations. The Capital Southeast Connector Expressway will feature a parallel bike and pedestrian trail that connects residents to recreational, entertainment and retail facilities, and to each other.

### Q What effect will the Connector Expressway have on regional travel and the local economy?

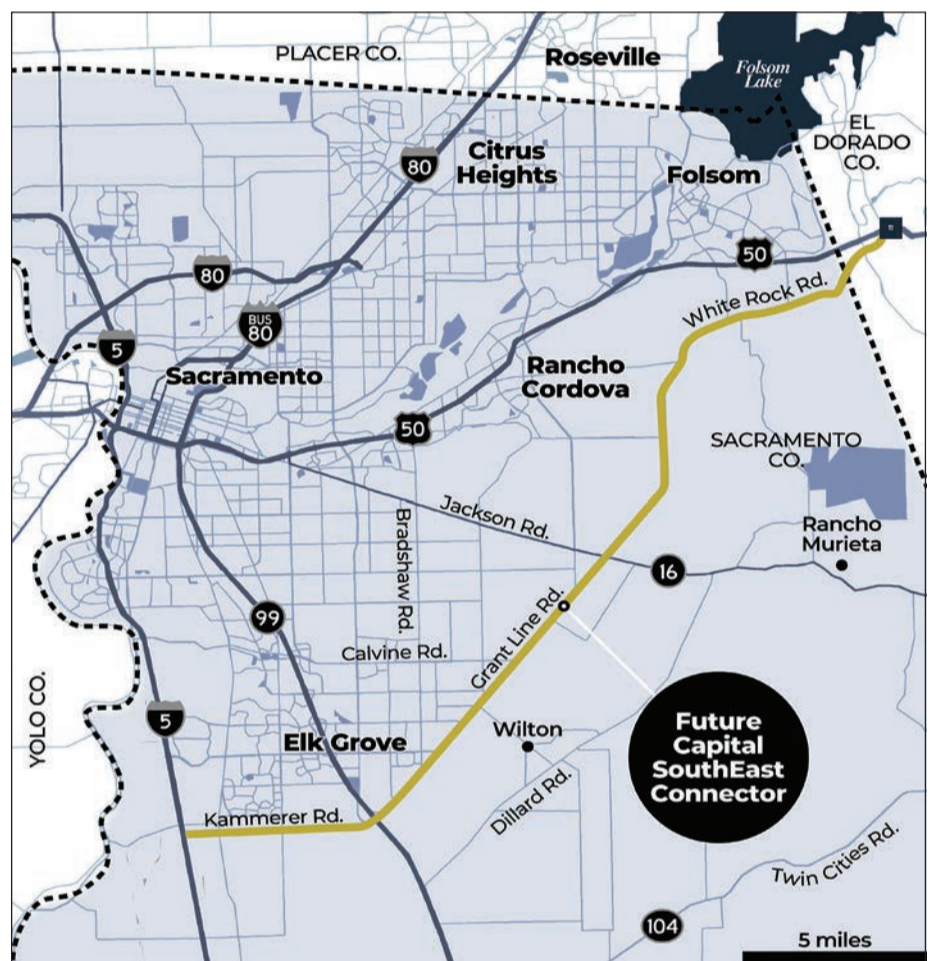
A Currently, people and products traveling Sacramento’s main traffic arteries must pass through the downtown area, where congestion is common, to reach their destinations. Residential and commercial development is expanding much faster than road construction in the region. Thousands of new homes have been built along the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway route in Rancho Cordova and Folsom, with an additional 32,600 homes approved for construction. The economic value of the completed Capital Southeast Connector Expressway is rooted in time and distance savings by more directly linking residential areas with employment and retail centers, attracting new corporations to the region, efficiently

planning community development, and ensuring the safe movement of agricultural and other products. According to a 2022 economic study, the completed Capital Southeast Connector Expressway would save commuters between \$500 million and \$1.5 billion in travel time saved from 2026-2046 compared to using current roadways. The study also found that the completed Capital Southeast Connector Expressway would generate:

- \$1.8 billion of increased economic output
- \$770 million of new labor income
- \$1.1 billion in added value to the region
- \$80 million in new state and local taxes on production and imports

### Q How is the Connector funded?

A Revenue from a one-half cent transportation sales tax passed in 2004, combined with other local, state, and federal funds, finances the project. For example, the next phase of the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway recently received \$25 million from the U.S. Transportation Department to transform a dilapidated and dangerous section of Grant Line Road into a modern expressway. These funds, along with other, will be used to complete that portion of the project at a total cost of \$60 million.



Map showing the location of the future Capital SouthEast Connector

### Q What was the purpose of the transportation sales tax, when does it expire, how much revenue has it generated over the last two decades, and how much has been allocated to the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway?

A Sacramento County’s transportation sales tax expires in 2039. Voters overwhelmingly approved the tax measure to maintain and improve I-5, I-80, Hwy 50, Hwy 99, and local roads; increase transit for seniors, and expand light rail. The only new project specified in the ballot measure was the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway. Through 2023, the sales tax has generated over \$2 billion, with about \$58 million allocated to the Capital Southeast Connector Expressway.

### Q What are the statistics regarding how people choose to travel in and through Sacramento?

A Comparing car and commercial traffic to bus and light rail use can be complex, but statistics show that most residents of Sacramento and El Dorado Counties prefer to travel by car. For example, the light rail Gold Line, which runs from downtown to Folsom, averages 9,000 boardings per day, according to Sacramento RT. By comparison, a 2017 CalTrans study documented an average of 156,000 vehicles using Highway 50 daily near its intersection with Sunrise Avenue, a location served by the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway. With

an average of 1.6 people per vehicle, this means approximately a quarter-million people were served daily on Highway 50 back in 2017.

### Q What are the primary challenges to completing the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway?

A The main challenges are funding and politics. Political support is crucial for securing funds from local, state, and federal sources, and there are many worthy projects competing for the funding. The Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway has received bipartisan support, which has been beneficial. For example, three Republican and Democratic members of Congress from the area recently requested a combined \$30 million in federal funding for the project, demonstrating that infrastructure needs can transcend political divisions. As Congressman Kevin Kiley (R) observed, “This project is a testament to what is possible

when everyone in our region works together. When you consider the political divisions in this country, local regional projects that tangibly impact people’s lives can help bridge those gaps.”

### Q How can community residents support the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway Project?

A You can share your support with your local, state, and federal elected representatives by using the quick and easy form on our website at [www.connectorjpa.com](http://www.connectorjpa.com), where you can also learn more about the project or sign up for our newsletter. Alternatively, you can use the QR code on this page, visit our Instagram page at [www.instagram.com/connectorjpa](http://www.instagram.com/connectorjpa) or our YouTube channel at [www.youtube.com/@southeastconnectorexpressway](http://www.youtube.com/@southeastconnectorexpressway)

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## Connector’s White Rock Road Improvement

