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Hawaiian Luau
Fundraiser Held**

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Roosters Up**

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Citrus Heights Messenger

VOLUME 14 • ISSUE 37 *Serving the City of Citrus Heights & Sacramento County* SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

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FINAL MEETING**



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BE OLD**



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Sunday Funday Brings Family Fun



Lisa Taylor, third from left, celebrates Sunday Funday with her fellow Purple Pageant members in 2023. Photo courtesy of Marisa Brown

**By Marisa Brown,
City of Citrus Heights**

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - The City of Citrus Heights is celebrating Sunday Funday from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 22.

The city welcomes families, friends, and community members to Rusch Community Park to enjoy this free event. Residents and visitors alike can build community connections by joining in on Sunday Funday festivities.

The event will feature inflatables for kids, music from the Citrus Heights Community Marching Band and tours of Historic Rusch Home from the Citrus Heights Historical Society. Citrus Heights Police Department will host K-9



The Citrus Heights Police Department will host K-9 demonstrations during Sunday Funday for attendees to watch. Photo courtesy of Marisa Brown

demonstrations for attendees to watch during the event.

Sunday Funday is an event in partnership with Sunrise Recreation and Park District and Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce. This family-friendly event includes booths from business, craft, non-profit, and service group vendors. All activities are free for attendees and food trucks will be on site for guests to purchase food items.

The City of Citrus Heights has hosted Sunday Funday since the City was first incorporated. The event is known for bringing together neighbors and visitors for a day of fun.

For more information on Sunday Funday, including parking information and scheduled activities, you can visit citrusheights.net/SundayFunday. ★

Hoover, Niello Talk About Concerns

**Story and photo
by Ornella Rossi**

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - A crowd of more than 200 gathered at Bella Vista High School on Tuesday Sept. 3 for a community meeting featuring Assemblyman Josh Hoover and Sen. Roger Niello. The event provided citizens with an opportunity to hear firsthand updates from the Capitol and ask questions regarding their concerns.

Hoover and Niello offered a range of legislative updates, focusing on issues such as homelessness and crime. Hoover emphasized recent legislative efforts aimed at improving oversight of homelessness spending.

"AB 2903 was passed, which requires state-run homelessness programs to report cost and outcome data annually to the California Interagency Council on Homelessness," Hoover said. "This transparency is crucial, especially after recent audits revealed a lack of systematic tracking."

Hoover also highlighted his support for legislation protecting vulnerable children from sex trafficking. Senate Bill 1414, he noted, aims to increase penalties for purchasing children under 16 for sex from a misdemeanor to a felony.

Niello addressed the shift in legislative focus toward public safety.

"We are seeing a significant change in how crime is approached in the legislature," Niello said. "Many new bills have been proposed and passed to enhance public safety."

The meeting featured a Q&A session where attendees voiced concerns and sought clarification on various topics.

When asked about AB 1840, a home purchase assistance program, Hoover and Niello responded to concerns about aid for non-citizens.

"This program is intended to help California residents with down-payment assistance," Hoover said. "I do not support expanding this to non-citizens."

Niello agreed, "I would like the author of that bill to explain to people that apply and don't get the assistance when a non-citizen does."

Equal access to education also drew attention as frustrations were brought up by attendees over educational disparities affecting unvaccinated students and concerns over Zoom schools. Hoover acknowledged the issue, citing the long-term harm caused by prolonged school closures during the pandemic and Niello emphasized the importance of local politics, advocating for school

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Underground Clothing Connection Reopens for Students in Need

By Thomas J. Sullivan

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - A free clothing store located in Sunrise Mall near the former United Artists Theatre, exclusively for students and their families in San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD) enrolled in its McKinney-Vento program, has reopened.

The Underground Clothing Connection store is open from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Thursdays only by appointment, according to its manager, Michelle Camba, at 5932 Sunrise Mall in Citrus Heights.

Camba has been busy reorganizing the store and getting it ready for the new school year so that students can receive a free selection of clothing from the Underground Clothing



Michelle Camba is the general manager of the Underground Clothing Connection, located in Sunrise Mall. Photo by Thomas J. Sullivan

Exchange twice a year.

Interested students and their families can contact the McKinney-Vento liaison at the San Juan Unified School District at 916-979-8794 or email

mckinney-vento@san-juan.edu to enroll in the program or to check their eligibility status.

According to Camba, clothing from the Underground Clothing

Connection is offered to San Juan Unified School District families and local families enrolled in the McKinney-Vento program who are in financial need

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Underground Clothing Connection Reopens for Students in Need

Hoover, Niello Talk About Concerns



Assemblyman Josh Hoover and Sen. Roger Niello appeared together at a community meeting held on Sept. 3 at Bella Vista High School.

Continued from page 1

districts making decisions. "I will continue to fight for quality education for all students," Hoover affirmed.

Business owners raised concerns about difficulty accessing grant money. Niello directed them to Go Biz, the state agency handling business grants, while Hoover acknowledged the state's budget challenges.

"We need to better manage our finances to support small businesses," Hoover said.

Residents also expressed frustration with the poor condition of local roads and the lack of investment in street maintenance. They emphasized how the neglect of street upkeep negatively impacts property values and diminishes the pride they take in their homes.

In response, Hoover agreed, noting that California's roads are ranked 46th in quality, despite the state's high gas taxes.

"Funds meant for road maintenance are often

redirected to other priorities," Hoover explained. "We should not be taking money from our roads; our community deserves better."

Niello added that the state's broad approach to transportation funding often undermines the ability to allocate resources effectively. "The policies compromise our ability to focus funds where they're needed most," Niello said.

In response to questions about homelessness enforcement, the Sheriff's Department emphasized the importance of promoting transitory movements rather than allowing large, stationary encampments in efforts to reduce criminal activity. The department also highlighted the role of the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT), which focuses on connecting homeless individuals with essential resources and support.

When asked about the implications of the governor's plan to return state workers to the office, including potential costs related

to utilities, traffic, pollution, and employee expenses, opinions differed.

"Working from home can be more cost-effective for both the state and employees," Hoover said. "It also helps keep spending within our local economy."

In contrast, Niello emphasized the importance of in-person collaboration.

"While remote work has its benefits, face-to-face interactions are crucial for developing efficient and cohesive work groups," Niello said.

When questioned about the alarming increase in hit-and-run incidents and the high number of fatalities, Niello expressed his strong concern. He attributed the rise in reckless driving and speeding to the habits formed during the COVID-19 pandemic when streets were less congested.

"We need to increase the consequences for speeding," Niello asserted, highlighting that improving traffic safety remains a critical priority for him.

Continued from page 1
and receive some form of social services, families who are unhoused or in unstable housing, and foster youth and families escaping violence.

"I learned that Citrus Heights HART was looking for a volunteer who would be able to manage the store and I welcomed the opportunity to help," she said.

Camba has since reorganized the store's inventory and has added new signage to describe the specific clothing choices that students and their parents can make.

"It takes a village and I'm so thankful for mine," Camba said. "With just a handful of nine, hard-working, dedicated volunteers, they helped complete my new vision for the store."

Camba also volunteers her time with the Sacramento Food Bank and the North Highlands Christian Food Ministry.

The Underground Clothing Connection opened in November 2020. This past March, a sign posted on the door notified the public that the store had permanently closed.

"We were closed briefly this spring to reorganize," Camba said. "There was concern for a time that we might also be losing our lease in the mall and I am very grateful that Kathilynn Carpenter, executive director of Sunrise MarketPlace (SMP), reached out to help us renegotiate the terms of our lease, so we stay in Sunrise Mall."

Citrus Heights Homeless Assistance Resource Team (HART)'s goal is to make the Underground Clothing Connection store a more sustainable operation, according to Camba.

"The store was just overwhelmed by demand," Carpenter said. "It's a valuable resource for many in the community."

Favorable lease terms, which include all store fixtures, were recently re-negotiated with Namdar Corporation, Sunrise Mall owners, Carpenter said.

"We were serving way too many people and it got out of hand," Camba said. "There's no doubt that the demand for clothing by those in need we could serve is there. All too often, we had a line outside the door when we were open."

Camba created a new receiving area to

accept donations and works with a three-person volunteer staff to get inventory onto the store's display racks quickly.

Since reopening by appointment, Camba estimates that she has been able to serve between 20 and 30 clients.

Donated items needing minor repairs such as replacement buttons or zippers are set aside for further repairs when possible, according to Camba.

"Our customers can now shop for what they need and want. All of the donated clothing which we receive is inspected, put on hangers and placed out on the floor quickly," Camba said.

The Underground Clothing Connection store does not have dressing rooms or restrooms but customers are welcome to return their choices on the following Thursday if needed.

"The need for volunteers to help store clothes and assist customers on just one day a week from the Citrus Heights community remains very strong," Camba said. "We just can't do it without the public's ongoing support and its clothing donations."

Camba said she's also actively working on outreach efforts to the greater Citrus Heights community for both donations and volunteer support, which dropped off when the Underground Clothing Connection store had temporarily closed.

She is networking with representatives of Single Mom Strong, the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce and other local community service groups to seek store volunteers.

Volunteer opportunities at the Underground Clothing Connection Store are also posted online on the Citrus Heights Volunteer Hub, a new city web link. Interested volunteers can visit citrusheightsvolunteers.net to learn more about the store and then sign up.

Camba said volunteers act as store staff. "We welcome help one shift per week or per month," she said.

For more information or to donate, call 916-969-9404, visit <https://citrusheightshart.org/programs/underground-clothing-connection> or email TheUnderground411@gmail.com.



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AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY

Fabreeze Pet Odor Fighter Spray 700 ml \$3.99	Banzoni Macaroni No.44 & No.47 16 oz \$1.99	Durrell Lea Milk Cheese Crispy Block 5.6 oz \$1.99	Storck Chunk Light Tuna in Water 5 oz \$1.29	Kerr Beef Bouillon Cube 3.1 oz \$1.29
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ASIAN GROCERY

Global Deer Bean Thread 21 oz \$4.79	Choon Choon Quail Eggs 15 oz \$2.79	Twin Fish Sliced Dried Mushroom 3 oz \$4.69	Clover Chips Cheddar 5.11 oz \$1.99	FOCO Organic Coconut Water 1 liter \$2.49
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EUROPEAN GROCERY

Traditional Cookies Tylkynce 268 gr \$2.99	Gusto Puffulet 85 gr \$1.94	Cham Sunflower Oil 0.9 liter \$4.49	Goodwill Backwash 3 kg \$12.99	Lay's Condensed Milk 8.5% 350 gr \$2.99
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WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS

Beef Cross Rib Shoulder Roast - Bnls \$4.99/lb	Beef T-Bone Steak \$5.99/lb	Beef Porterhouse Steak \$6.49/lb
Pork St. Louis Ribs - Single Pack \$3.99/lb	Pork Loin Chops Bone In \$2.99/lb	Boneless/Skinless Chicken Breasts \$2.69/lb

KOREAN/JAPANESE GROCERY

Choco Pie \$7.99	Lotus Choco Pie 12 x 2.5 g \$2.99	Korean Fried Chicken Stack 300 g \$8.99	CW Egg Cookies 170 g \$1.99	Shirakiku Mayonnaise 800 g \$2.99	Shirakiku Honey Panko 227 g \$2.99	St-Fry Noodle 16.95 oz \$1.99
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HOUSEWARES

Biggen Speedy Hair Color (REFILL ONLY) \$5.99	Electric BBQ Grill \$39.99	Electric Rice Cooker (4 CUPS) \$4.99	Electric Rice Cooker (8 CUPS) \$5.49	Electric Rice Cooker (10 CUPS) \$5.99
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FROZEN & FISH DEPT

Frozen Tornado Potato 14.10 oz \$4.99	Columbus Roast Beef \$13.19	Columbus Black Forest Ham \$7.99
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EUROPEAN DELI

Greek Black Olives \$4.99	Pitted Green Olives \$4.99
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Mayor Daniels' Final Meeting, Affordable Senior Housing Funding Approved

By Shaunna Boyd

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - The Citrus Heights City Council at its Aug. 28 meeting recognized Mayor Bret Daniels for his years of service to the City of Citrus Heights. This was his last meeting as he is not seeking re-election this November, and he recently announced his resignation from the City Council due to plans to move out of state.

Vice-Mayor Jayna Karpinski-Costa read the proclamation, stating that Daniels worked "to promote quality of life for residents by his support of fiscally responsible leadership, safe and secure neighborhoods, and economic growth to benefit Citrus Heights and the surrounding region." Daniels was commended for his "distinguished and devoted service" and received a standing ovation from his fellow councilmembers.

Councilmember MariJane Lopez-Taff said Daniels was "the most real elected official that I've ever met" and that Daniels always "remembers who he serves and why he serves them."

Councilmember Tim Schaefer said he was grateful for Daniels' leadership and "real understanding" of what the community needs.

Karpinski-Costa said Daniels was dedicated to standing up for Citrus Heights and never wavered on his principles.

Daniels delivered an emotional goodbye to the staff and his fellow councilmembers, and said, "Thank you to the citizens of Citrus Heights for trusting me. ... I'm incredibly grateful and honored to have served you."

Staff brought back for further discussion the Auburn Oaks Project, where the non-profit Hope Cooperative plans to operate 88 units of permanent supportive housing for low-income seniors, particularly those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. At the previous meeting, councilmembers

expressed some concerns about the project, so Community Development director Casey Kempenaar provided an updated report.

Kempenaar explained that there is already an existing assisted-living facility for seniors on the site (located at 7501 Sunrise Blvd.). Currently, the building is dilapidated and mostly vacant, with only 20 occupied units. It's a site that's at risk of being purchased and rented at market rate, said Kempenaar, which would displace the existing residents and compound the lack of affordable housing for vulnerable seniors. Due to the vacancies and disrepair, the Citrus Heights Police Department already gets many calls for service to the site.

"It could use some sprucing up to really fit the city's image that we're trying to portray," said Kempenaar. It is a busy corridor, "and it tells a story coming into the city. So I think it's an opportunity time to rehab that and make it shine again," he said.

Hope Cooperative's improved facility would have a property manager onsite 24/7, as well as case workers, resident liaisons and on-site chefs. Kempenaar said the improvements to the site, both aesthetically and in provided services, would benefit the city and meet the council's objectives of reducing homelessness and improving the city's image. The 20 existing residents would keep their housing and benefit from the many improvements.

Hope Cooperative will put in \$100,000 into the \$30-million project but most of the funding — \$24.7 million — comes from the state's Community Care Expansion Grant. Local funding for the project includes \$2.5 million from Sacramento Housing Redevelopment Agency (a joint partner agency between Sacramento County and the City of Sacramento), and \$2.25 million from Sacramento County Behavioral Health.

The City of Citrus Heights is



Mayor Bret Daniels

being asked to provide \$500,000 to fill a funding gap. The money would come from the city's Permanent Local Housing Allocation fund, which is ongoing state funding allocated to Citrus Heights' housing needs.

"This project is happening," City Manager Ashley Feeny said.

Investing in the project "gives us some local control where we otherwise wouldn't have it," Feeny said. "This project is much better than the alternative. It's certainly way better than the existing condition. We think it's a fantastic opportunity."

Daniels said the current site already has a negative impact on nearby businesses, so this project will benefit the city while also providing affordable housing for seniors who need supportive services. The fact that existing residents of the site will be able to remain "is critical," he said.

Daniels also said it's important for the council to actually do the work of reducing homelessness: "You can't complain and moan

about seeing them on the streets if you're not going to be willing to do something to house them."

City Council voted 4-0 (with Councilmember Porsche Middleton absent) to approve the funding allocation for the Auburn Oaks Project.

The council also considered municipal code amendments adding the use of vehicles to the ordinance against nuisance camping. This change is intended to align with updates to state law addressing the growing trend of individuals living in RVs, motorhomes, trailers and other vehicles parked on private property. According to the Citrus Heights Police Department, this type of long-term parking causes disturbances and safety concerns in local neighborhoods, so updating the ordinance allows law enforcement to effectively protect the rights of property owners.

The amendment specifies that such long-term parking is only allowed with written permission from the property owner, up to 72 hours at a time and only three times per year. Language in the ordinance also specifies that in the course of enforcement, possessions belonging to the unhoused population are not discarded without their consent.

Citrus Heights Police Department Chief Alex Turcotte made it clear that all enforcement against illegal camping comes with referrals to supportive services.

When someone has fallen on hard times and is forced to live in their car, Karpinski-Costa said, "sometimes, they just need somewhere to sleep."

"I'd like to see an exception that you as police can use your compassion, your understanding of this person's circumstances, and allow it," Karpinski-Costa said.

Turcotte said, "Nothing about this ordinance requires action. Officers have discretion. Our main goal here is to try to get

people to services." He also clarified that the Citrus Heights Police Department doesn't get many calls reporting people sleeping overnight in their cars. The main issue is when vehicles such as RVs are parked long term.

City Manager Feeny cautioned that if passenger vehicles were excluded from the ordinance, it would take away the Citrus Heights Police Department's enforcement capabilities if someone were causing problems with long-term camping in their parked car.

"We have to be very careful, because even though there's discretion, the discretion lies with that officer," Mayor Daniels said. "And I think that there are a lot of people... that are living in their cars and that's because that's the last thing they have."

Many of those people have jobs but don't make enough to afford housing, Daniels added. He recommended an exception for passenger vehicles, stating that City Council can always amend the ordinance again later if necessary.

City Council approved the amendments to the nuisance camping ordinance, with an exception for licensed, registered and insured passenger vehicles, on a 3-1 vote, with Councilmember Lopez-Taff dissenting.

The next Citrus Heights City Council meeting is set for 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 11 at 6360 Fountain Square Drive. ★



CITY OF CITRUS HEIGHTS
SUNDAY FUNDAY!

SEPTEMBER 22
11 AM TO 3 PM
RUSCH PARK - 7801 AUBURN BLVD

- Food Trucks
- Inflatables
- Citrus Heights Community Marching Band
- Tours of Rusch Home

citrusheights.net/sundayfunday

Celtic Cross Seeks Choir Director

MPG Staff

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - Celtic Cross Presbyterian Church in Citrus Heights is actively looking for a choir director for its traditional 9 a.m. service, according to Pastor Bob Yule.

"The commitment would be for weekly one-hour rehearsals on Thursday evenings to lead the small choir in an anthem of two Sundays a month at the traditional 9 a.m. service," Yule said.

The choir director position is part time at about 15 hours average per month.

"The choir year runs from Sunday following Labor Day through May," Yule said.

The church, at 5839 Dewey Drive, Citrus Heights, also plans to include scholarships for a strong tenor and a strong bass to strengthen its choir.

"We're also blessed to have a very talented organist, Sten Bolander," Yule said.

For information or to obtain a job description, call Yule at 916-508-0601 or personnel chair Alice Sundquist at 407-489-6492. ★

Gallagher Demands Answers on Undemocratic End of Session



James Gallagher

Assembly Republican News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Sept. 9, Assembly Republican Leader James Gallagher (Yuba City) demanded answers from the Assembly Rules Committee in the wake of several parliamentary violations that crushed debate and caused chaos at the end of the 2024 legislative session.

In the final hours of the session, Democrats illegally amended the Assembly's rules to limit debate on bills to just 30 seconds per person and refused to recognize

multiple Republican lawmakers attempting to speak on behalf of their constituents. Additionally, Democrats repeatedly and improperly ignored motions to permanently adjourn the special session convened to take up Gov. Newsom's gas storage mandate proposal.

"A vital part of a thriving democracy is fair and equitable debate. The people of California didn't get that this year," said Gallagher. "Californians deserve an investigation into the unlawful and undemocratic actions taken by the supermajority that silenced Republican voices and stamped out important discussions. We're elected to provide a voice for our constituents - if Democrats continue to run the Assembly as chaotically and unfairly as they did, that can't happen. Our constituents deserve answers." ★

On top of Democrats' actions to silence Republican lawmakers, poor time management and political squabbles led to a frantic rush to consider dozens of bills in the final minutes of the legislative session. Despite spending hours on ceremonies and speeches, adjourning early the night before, and not convening until 2:30 p.m. on the final day of session, legislators crammed through bills with little to no debate while multiple other proposals failed to meet the midnight deadline for passage.

A copy of Gallagher's letter to the Assembly Rules Committee calling for an investigation is available <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ysjjs94vcs0bjkg12isc5/Request-to-Investigate-Floor-Actions.pdf?rlkey=5z2fwd-k4fgxo406jfb6f-084p&e=1&dl=0> ★



Popp Talk

With Mary Jane Popp

It's Ok to be Old

Do you feel old? What is old anyway? I've spoken with people who are in their 40s and 50s and they sure act old already. On the other hand I've had people on my show who are in the 80s even 90s and they are still living life to the fullest. Unfortunately, our American view is that old is not useful. **Patricia Greenberg** wants to change that point of view in her new book **"It's OK to be Old."** She challenges our societal views on aging. When she was on POPPTALK with me, she shared her thoughts on what aging is all about. **Patricia** is a best-selling author, and she drew from her extensive research and personal experiences to create this comprehensive guide. "The inspiration for her book came from observing the widespread misconceptions about aging" she said, "I wanted to provide a resource that not only challenges these beliefs but also equips individuals with the tools to age with confidence, purpose and joy." She is also a wellness coach, and so she shared these ten tips for aging well.

- 1) Stop caring what people think of you, and embrace each day as it comes on your own terms.
- 2) Tackle each day by taking on the hard things first. It will make your evenings easier and your sleep peaceful.
- 3) Instead of aggressively chasing your dreams, take a step back and carefully think through each step you are taking. Slowdown is not a negative. It's prudent.
- 4) Approach your nutrition with positivity. Eat what you love, just make sure it's the healthiest version you can find.

Good food, wine and chocolate make life wonderful.

5) As we age, fitness is more about staving off decline than competing. Stay upright in all you do. Walk, run, yoga, bike, and weight train. All of it is good. You choose.

6) Socialize on a regular basis. Interactions with other people will keep your brain engaged and your emotions intact.

7) Relationships should bring you joy and a sense of well-being. Seek out those who make you feel good about yourself.

8) Enjoy nature and embrace the beauty of the world around you.

9) Hold yourself accountable with goals. It gives you hope for the future and always gives you something to look forward to.

10) Give back to the world around you. Having purpose by helping others is still the most rewarding gift you can give yourself.

"It's OK to be Old" combines cutting-edge research on aging with practical, actionable advice. Her book is a unique approach which bridges the gap between academic insights and daily life, making it an invaluable resource to redefine what it means to grow older in today's world. You can check out more of what **Patricia** has discovered at www.patriciagreenberg.com. Let's keep an open mind with strategies for maintaining mental and physical vitality at any age. I'm up there in age, and you bet I won't be going quietly into the night. Why? Because "It's OK to be Old." WOO HOO! ★

Presidential General Election Update

Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center Locations Posted

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Voter Registration and Elections (VRE) has posted the list of Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations for the Nov. 5 Presidential General Election on the VRE website at elections.saccounty.gov.

Vote by Mail ballots will be mailed to voters beginning Monday, Oct. 7. Ballot Drop Boxes will begin opening Monday, Oct. 7, and Vote Centers will begin opening Saturday, Oct. 26. A complete list of Ballot Drop Box and Vote Center locations, and days and hours of operation can be found at: <https://elections.saccounty.gov/votecenters/pages/locations.aspx>

For more information, contact VRE at (916) 875-6451, email voterinfo@saccounty.gov, or by using the toll-free voter assistance hotline at (800) 762-8019. The hotline has the ability to connect voters with disabilities with TTY (Text Telephone).

Key Election Dates

Monday, Oct. 7: Mailing of ballots to all registered voters begins

Monday, Oct. 7: Voted ballots may be returned in any of the Ballot Drop Boxes located throughout the County

Monday, Oct. 21: Close of voter registration for this election. Voter registration forms must be postmarked by this date or delivered to the VRE Office at 7000 65th Street, Suite A, Sacramento 95823 by 5 p.m. Online voter registration must be completed before midnight on this date at www.registertovote.ca.gov

Tuesday, Oct. 22: Conditional Voter Registration (CVR) begins

Saturday, Oct. 26: 11 Day Vote Centers open

Tuesday, Oct. 29: Last day a Vote by Mail (VBM) ballot can be mailed to you. After this date, VBM ballots are only available at the VRE Office or a Vote Center.

Saturday, Nov. 2: All Vote Centers open throughout the County

Tuesday, Nov. 5: Election Day ★



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INFORMATION & ENTERTAINMENT

FOR SENIORS, THEIR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS



Saturday, September 21, 2024

10 am to 3 pm

FREE Parking

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SCAN ME

California Has Spent Billions on Homelessness but Lacks Hard Data on Outcomes



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

California has allocated more than \$20 billion to alleviate the state's homelessness crisis since Gavin Newsom became governor in 2019, but there's precious little data on how the money was spent and what effect it's had, other than the number of unhoused people has continued to climb.

Despite the absence of hard information, Newsom has been highly critical of what he characterizes as the shortcomings of local governments and has threatened to withhold funds from those deemed to be laggards. Local officials, in turn, say they cannot construct comprehensive, long-term strategies unless Newsom is willing to make multi-year commitments of financial support.

Earlier this year, state Auditor Grant Parks issued a harshly worded audit of the California Interagency Council on Homelessness, the Newsom administration's tool for coordinating homelessness programs.

"The state lacks current information on the ongoing costs and outcomes of its homelessness programs, because (the council) has not consistently tracked and evaluated the state's efforts to prevent and end homelessness," Parks wrote, adding that its most recent data is three years old.

Moreover, Parks said, the

council "has also not aligned its action plan to end homelessness with its statutory goals to collect financial information and ensure accountability and results. Thus, it lacks assurance that the actions it takes will effectively enable it to achieve those goals."

It's rather cheeky for Newsom to blame local officials if his own agency has been so laggard in gathering information about where billions of dollars have been spent and how effective those expenditures have been.

The footdragging on data, however, is not confined to the state.

Since 2020, David O. Carter, a federal judge in Los Angeles, has been presiding over a lawsuit filed by the LA Alliance for Human Rights, a coalition of persons from businesses, neighborhoods and homeless groups demanding to know how officials in Los Angeles County have spent homelessness funds. He's angry about a lack of response from the Los Angeles Homeless Services Authority.

"If there isn't documentation of the work being done, it's not being done. That can be our only conclusion," Carter said during a recent hearing, telling agency officials, "You're not working on your time frame now. You're working on mine."

Matthew Umhofer, an attorney for the LA Alliance for Human Rights, said, "The city and the county have been saying for decades they're trying really hard on homelessness, but we have to see results."

"An audit like this is a tool that helps us try and figure this out, but at the end of the day we need more beds," Umhofer added. "We

need more services. If the city and county don't know where the documentation is that shows beds and services are being provided, we've got a massive problem."

Umhofer said that if the situation doesn't improve, Judge Carter can impose sanctions on the city and county, appoint a receiver or even assume control of homelessness services.

Meanwhile, back in Sacramento, the quest for hard information on homelessness has taken a baby step forward.

Before adjourning its 2024 session, the Legislature approved a bill that would direct state agencies that administer homelessness programs to annually file reports on spending and outcomes to Newsom's interagency council, which then would be required to make the information available to the public.

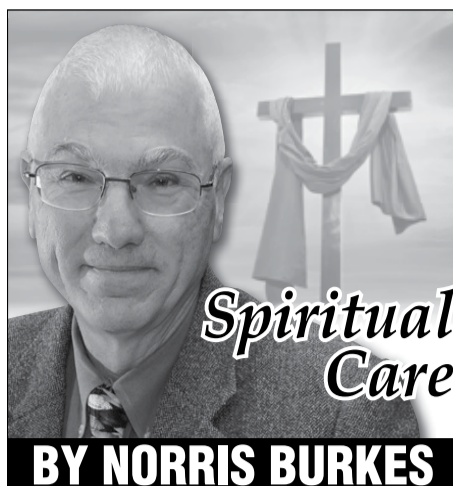
Assemblyman Josh Hoover, a Folsom Republican, carried Assembly Bill 2903, which implements one of the Parks audit's recommendations.

"Improving accountability over the dollars we are spending is the first step toward real reform," Hoover said in a statement. "Spending billions of taxpayer dollars only to make the crisis worse is the definition of failure."

That should be obvious. Now we'll see if Newsom signs the bill.

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. ★

Don't Tell it to the Chaplain



BY NORRIS BURKLES

Last year I wrote a book called, "Tell It to the Chaplain." If you've seen it, then you're likely wondering why this headline makes the opposite request.

My title refers to certain phrases people use that cause me to jokingly reply, "Don't ever say that to a chaplain."

When they cock their head in search of an explanation, I tell them that I'm a retired healthcare chaplain and I may inject a totally different meaning into common sayings.

For instance, I once asked my photojournalism professor if he could stay after class to explain my new camera.

"I really can't," he said, "I'm on my way out."

"Please don't say that to a chaplain," I replied. "'On the way out' means you're going to meet God."

"No - no. I have a faculty meeting," he said. "And God's not often there."

On another day, I ran breathlessly to an airline gate, only to be told by the agent, "They've already departed."

Ouch. Don't say that to a chaplain.

"Departed" describes someone who has taken flight to their celestial destination. At some point, chaplains call these folks the "dearly departed."

On a different occasion, my neighbors described how they moved out of the city into our forested lake community in the California foothills.

"It just feels like we're in a better place now," the husband blurted.

I winced at "a better place" since the phrase most often describes the afterlife.

In another example, I was walking with my friend, Roger, through a sports stadium when he abruptly stopped at a concession stand to buy a Pepsi.

"Keep walking," he said, "Meet me on

the other side."

Of course, I knew he was simply asking me to meet him at our seats on the other side of the stadium.

But as a chaplain, he should have known that I'd make a heavenly inference that we'd not meet again until we got to the "Other Side."

Finally, I once stood on the banks of the Jordan River as our Israeli tour guide pointed toward the land "just beyond the river."

I nudged my wife and said, "I wish he wouldn't say that."

I started humming the refrain to Fanny Crosby's hymn, "Near the Cross."

In the cross, in the cross,
Be my glory ever;
Till my raptured soul shall find
Rest beyond the river."

Becky groaned, recognizing this as one of my favorite fragments.

I jest with these phrases because I love puns, but I also appreciate them as a comforting way to remember the three people I've lost in the past four years.

My brother, the one I called "Brotherman," died of COVID in Dec. 2020. He was so full of conspiracy theories that he wasn't contented in this world, so I really do feel a sense of comfort knowing he's very much "in a better place."

And, as you know, I lost my mother last month. I thank all of you who sent me numerous messages and cards.

But most reassuring is how I still hear the notes of her operatic voice singing those Crosby hymns. "Near the Cross" was among her favorites, and I take consolation believing she's found her "rest beyond the river."

However, my most difficult loss came four years ago this month, when I lost my life-long best friend, Roger Williams. On the last day I saw him, we sat on his couch, shoulder to shoulder, the same way we'd stood for 45 years.

As we said our temporary goodbyes, I held his cooling hand and laid my head on his shoulder. Then, in between my sobs, I told him that I'd see him "on the other side."

"That's OK, Norris," he said. "It'll be all right." Soon he was asleep. Four days later, Roger died at 63 years of age.

So, sometimes all I have left to say is "See you, Mom. See you, Roger. See ya, Brotherman. I'll meet you all "in a better place," "on the other side" just "beyond the river." ★

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Football season has begun, but make no mistake about it, basketball fans are eagerly anticipating the upcoming camp and preseason for the Sacramento Kings.

This year's team will take on a decidedly offensive look, as they have added a perennial 20 points per game with DeMar DeRozan to their already potent offense.

Last season with the Bulls, DeRozan averaged 24 points per game, but he has exceeded 27 points per game twice in his already legendary career. This bodes well for the hometown team, as three-point shooters like Keegan Murray, Malik Monk, and De'Aaron Fox will undoubtedly get better looks, as defenders try to control the frenetic mid-range game of DeMar DeRozan.

The Kings can actually put 5 scorers on the court at the same time, and although Keon Ellis is known for his ferocious defense, his offensive game has come to life as well. We saw a man among boys in the NBA summer league, as Keon did pretty much what he wanted as he scored at will against the newcomers and younger players in the league.

Keon's experience from last year, particularly as a starter, will in all likelihood lead to a standout year in the upcoming campaign.

Starters for the Kings that we can already pencil in include Domantas Sabonis, De'Aaron Fox, Keegan Murray, and of course the standout offseason acquisition of DeMar DeRozan. That leaves one spot to be filled, and everyone seems to be coming up with their own personal favorite. The leading candidates are Malik Monk, Keon Ellis, and Kevin Huerter who is returning from a shoulder injury that cut short his 2023/2024 season.

Huerter and Ellis are accustomed to starting, but Malik Monk has made it known that he would like to transition from the 6th man position to the starting lineup.

The unknown quotient is coach Mike Brown who has a difficult decision to make. Hopefully he will give each of the three an opportunity to start in preseason games, but the preseason is short, and the body of work will be minimal to make a decision.

There are those for whom it's not who starts but who finishes, but I respond by

saying, starting is a place of pride, and I've yet to meet the player that would rather come off the bench than start a game.

Trey Lyles has never gotten the love from coach Brown that Keon Ellis receives, and I contend that Trey has acquitted himself well, and to the point that his name should be in the conversation. When Trey plays alongside Sabonis the Kings present a much more formidable front line, and Lyles could be the missing ingredient the Kings need to give Domantas the wingman he needs to help clean the boards.

The truth is, whether Huerter, Monk, Ellis, or Lyles, all four of these players represent quality NBA talent, and Brown has some notable ballers to make his final selection.

All that said, the bench will be strong this year, and if Alex Len can take just one more step, I believe this 1st round draft choice from 2013 could finally live up to the potential that so many pundits believed that he had when originally drafted.

I like Len's game, and his effort is unquestionable. He acquits himself well when Sabonis needs a breather, and if he can take that next step, I can see moments when he and Sabonis are on the court together.

If I haven't yet mentioned your favorite player, dark horses like Colby Jones, Jordan McLaughlin, Boogie Ellis, or newcomers Orlando Robinson and Isaiah Crawford are waiting in the wings to make their presence known.

Just as Keon Ellis emerged last season, one of these players is waiting to show the Sacramento Kings fans that they deserve some accolades, and it will surprise me if I'm not surprised by one of the aforementioned candidates.

Let's not forget that we haven't even mentioned Kings' top draft choice Devin Carter, and although he is scheduled to miss the first half of the upcoming season, Devin no doubt will be eagerly awaiting his opportunity to show the Sacramento fans why this 22-year-old was drafted #13 overall.

Get ready Kings fans, for a season that will rival any you've seen so far, and as always if you have comments, please send them to vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com. All the best! ★

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**ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
CHANGE OF NAME**

SUPERIOR COURT OF CALIFORNIA
COUNTY OF SACRAMENTO
ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE
CHANGE OF NAME
#24CV017265

Melissa Leah DeKellis has filed a petition with this court for a decree changing the name(s) of Melissa Leah DeKellis to Melissa Aleeya.

IT IS ORDERED that all persons interested in the above-entitled matter appear before this court on January 14, 2025, at 1:30 p.m. in Department 53, located at 813 6th Street, Sacramento, CA 95814, and show cause, if any, why the petition for Change of Name should not be granted.

Dated: August 28, 2024
Richard K. Sueyoshi, Judge of the Superior Court
Publish: Sept 13, 20, 27, Oct 4, 2024
ALEEYA 10-4-24

**NOTICE OF PETITION
TO ADMINISTER ESTATE**

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF LELIA AMANDA GUERRERO
CASE NO. 24PR001541

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, and contingent creditors of and persons who may be otherwise interested in the will or estate, or both, of Lelia Guerrero.

A Petition for Probate has been filed by Nakaiya Guerrero, in the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, requesting Nakaiya Guerrero be appointed as personal representative(s) to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the executor to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the executor will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived

notice or have consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows September 25, 2024, 1:30 p.m. in Dept 129; Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, William R. Ridgeway Family Relations Courthouse, 3341 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, CA 95826.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. The name, address and telephone number of the Petitioner is: Nakaiya Guerrero, 3741 Floral Drive, North Highlands, CA

95660; 279-209-1514
Publish: August 30, Sept 6, 13, 2024
GUERRERO 9-13-24

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF GLEN ROY VAN DEN BROEK
CASE NO. 24PR002339

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, and contingent creditors of and persons who may be otherwise interested in the will or estate, or both, of Glen Roy Van Den Broek.

A Petition for Probate has been filed by Kiana Courtney, in the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, requesting Kiana Courtney be appointed as personal representative(s) to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the executor to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the executor will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or have consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows September 24, 2024, 1:30 p.m. in Dept 129; Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, William R. Ridgeway Family Relations Courthouse, 3341 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, CA 95826.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative

appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. The name, address and telephone number of the Petitioner is: Kiana Courtney, 5945 Ehrhardt Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95823; 916-877-1386
Publish: August 30, Sept 6, 13, 2024
BROEK 9-13-24

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF JOHN MARTIN BROWN JR.
CASE NO. 24PR002467

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, and contingent creditors of and persons who may be otherwise interested in the will or estate, or both, of John Martin Brown Jr.

A Petition for Probate has been filed by Matthew Brown, in the Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, requesting Matthew Brown be appointed as personal representative(s) to administer the estate of the decedent.

The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the executor to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain

very important actions, however, the executor will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or have consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court as follows September 26, 2024, 1:30 p.m. in Dept 129; Superior Court of California, County of Sacramento, William R. Ridgeway Family Relations Courthouse, 3341 Power Inn Road, Sacramento, CA 95826.

IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the deceased, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

The name, address and telephone number of the Petitioner is: Matthew Brown, 1460 65th Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95822; 916-224-5378
Publish: September 6, 13, 20, 2024
BROWN 9-20-24

**STATEMENT OF
ABANDONMENT OF
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME**

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO. FBNF2021-00008

The following person(s) has/have abandoned the use of the FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME of: JMR Concrete Construction, 7213 Kari Ann Circle, Sacramento, CA 95824. Jesus Morones Romo, 7213 Kari Ann Circle, Sacramento, CA 95824.

The Fictitious Business Name Statement was filed on 1/4/2021 in the County of Sacramento. Filed with the clerk of Sacramento County: 8/12/2024.
Publish: August 30, Sept 6, 13, 20, 2024
JMR 9-20-24

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME
FILE NO. FBNF2020-03170

The following person(s) has/have abandoned the use of the FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME of: Storming the Castle, 1000 Fulton Avenue, APT 42, Sacramento, CA 95825. Neil Randall, 1000 Fulton Avenue, Apartment 42, Sacramento, CA 95825.

The Fictitious Business Name Statement was filed on 5/14/2020 in the County of Sacramento. Filed with the clerk of Sacramento County: 8/2/2024.
Publish: September 6, 13, 20, 27, 2024
STORMING 9-27-24



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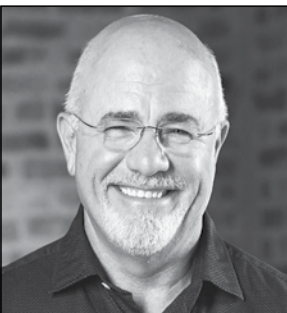
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Dave Ramsey

Dave Ramsey Says Time to Make Something Happen!

When I went broke a few decades ago, I had to re-think who I was in my own mind. I'd lost my business, and in many ways, I looked at that company as who I was. My identity was suddenly gone, and lots of guys go through that very same thing with a job loss.

If he's not willing to listen to you, I think you two need to sit down with a good, objective marriage counselor, because he's confused as to why he works. There are two reasons we work. One is to provide for our families. That's our primary job. The second reason is to exercise our calling—the reason we were put on this planet. But you can't accomplish the second one when you're not doing the first one. You've got to make sure your family has a place to live and food on the table.

Four months of a guy sitting on his butt like this is unacceptable. I don't want to hear about being over-qualified, or anything about a career path. Get a job and take care of your family! I don't care if it's cutting grass, shoveling snow or delivering

pizza. In situations like this, you have to stand up, be a man and take care of your responsibilities.

I'm sorry if that sounds harsh, but it's the truth. Believe me, I get it. Sometimes people go through problems, and they need a break of some kind to work through the pain. I did a little of that when I went broke. But at the end of the day, we didn't lose our home because I was sitting around doing nothing. Even when I'd lost all my self-confidence, I still went out and tried to get things started again.

It's time for your husband to stand up, brush himself off and make something happen!

— Dave

Dave Ramsey is a national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 20 million listeners each week. 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. ★

Dear Dave,

My husband lost his job four months ago, and we're close to losing our home. I'm working three jobs trying to keep our heads above water, while he's "waiting for the right opportunity." I understand his feelings, but at the same time I've been encouraging him to find a job like delivering pizzas to help out. Should we continue this way, or should I quit my really hard job, and just let him take responsibility? I love my husband, and I hate the idea of losing the house, but this is driving me crazy.

— Janet

Dear Janet,

Many guys are task-oriented, and if they're not careful, they can start defining themselves by what they do rather than who they are. So, when a guy, in particular, loses a job it can be a huge deal in his life and a massive blow to his ego.



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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Amber Waves

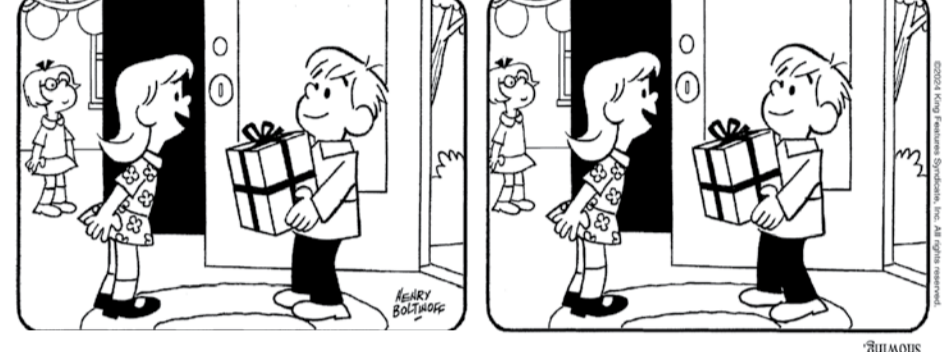
by Dave T. Phipps



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



GRIN AND BEAR IT



Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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CLUES

ACROSS

- Furry bamboo consumer
- Cuban dance syllable
- 100-meter race, e.g.
- S-shaped moldings
- Excessively theatrical actor
- Chap
- Will alternative
- Sailor's affirmative
- At full speed
- *Cause for fall celebration
- *Apple-related game
- European Union, acr.
- Hawaiian tuber
- Pen on a farm
- Color of a bruise
- *Pumpkins and squash, e.g.
- "Give me your tired, your _____"
- "Free," movie about lions
- Disdain
- Caribbean color
- Shiny suit
- Spaghetti aglio and _____
- Peevish
- Half a round, in golf
- ____-do-well
- Battles royale
- Change for a twenty
- Banned insecticide, acr.
- "Back-to-School event
- Hermey the Dentist
- *Apple sauce
- *_____ weather
- Call phone bill item
- Bar association
- Wombs
- Begin, began, _____
- Cut grass
- Romanov rulers
- Command with "at"
- Stiff grass bristle
- "Hobby" animal

DOWN

- Beckham of "Spice Girls"
- Turkish honorific
- Not far
- Look into
- In the Land of Nod
- Online conversation
- *Cushion for certain seasonal ride
- Naked protozoa
- Obtuse, as in person
- _____ bowl, frozen dish
- Largest human organ
- Precedes Kong
- Hindi courtesy title, pl.
- Modern-day aqua-lung, acr.
- Domain
- Wood-eating house hazard
- Involuntary contraction
- Chef's headgear
- Phil Collins' "_____ Be in My Heart"
- *Maze plant
- Upward and onto
- Wide-_____ notebook
- *Like leaves in fall
- Stall call
- *Much-used fall garden tool
- Not any
- Extend subscription
- Unquestioning ones
- Fraternity house

CROSSWORD

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Chicken Festival Roosters Up



Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District staff are with Rocky the Rooster at last year's Fair Oaks Chicken Festival. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

By Judy Andrews

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Start practicing your chicken calls because it's almost time to celebrate the 19th Annual Fair Oaks Chicken Festival from 12 to 6 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 21 at Fair Oaks Park (11549 Fair Oaks Blvd.).

Presented by the Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District, this year's event promises to be bigger and better than ever, with activities and entertainment the whole family can enjoy.

"The Fair Oaks Chicken Festival is a beloved tradition that celebrates the culture and charm of Fair Oaks and brings the community together in a fun and unique way," said Recreation supervisor and festival chair Sabrina Bernardo. "The family-friendly atmosphere promotes a sense of pride that keeps people coming back year after year."

With attendance numbers ranging between 9,000 and 10,000, organizing an event this size is no small feat. According to Bernardo, festival planning begins a year in advance and requires an extensive network of volunteers.

"Our volunteers help make the Fair Oaks Chicken Festival happen," said Recreation supervisor Mary Stoakley. "Whether assisting in the kid's park, helping out with parking, or welcoming event attendees at the entrance, they make a huge difference!"

The Fair Oaks Youth Advisory Board is one of the many volunteer service groups participating.

"The youth group serves in an advisory capacity to the Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District's Board of Directors and assumes responsibility for certain activities throughout the year, including the Fair Oaks



Rocky poses with last year's Cluck n' Crow Winner Brian Maker. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District



Last year's festival attendees enjoyed watching the Cluck n' Crow Contest. Photo courtesy of Fair Oaks Recreation & Park District

Chicken Festival," Stockley said.

"The students will sell cold water bottles at the event for \$2. The funds raised will support their activities throughout this year's term," Stoakley added.

Other participating organizations and long-time community partners include the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce and the Rotary Club of Fair Oaks.

"We started hosting the Cornhole Tournament three years ago and enjoy watching the event grow into a friendly and fun competition," said Chamber of Commerce CEO Kimberley Pitillo. "It's a great

opportunity for the chamber to be out in the community, building awareness of who we are and what we do."

Said Rotary Club President Keith Walter, "The Rotary Club has been a cornerstone of the festival since its inception. In recent years, the club has hosted the popular beer and wine garden, raising approximately \$15,000 yearly for local causes. The funds we raise are vital in providing scholarships, assisting the food bank and supporting youth, seniors and veterans' programs."

Beer and wine are donated by the Fair Oaks Community Foundation and local breweries. ★

Veterans Community Center Holds Fourth Hawaiian Luau Fundraiser



Luau volunteer Tamara Barbu's and her guest's lei dried out nicely, following the unexpected downpour, which sent everyone headed for cover indoors. Photo courtesy of Laurie Thornton

By Elise Spleiss

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - Guests at the annual Luau fundraiser at the Veterans Community Center on Sylvan Road on Aug. 24 experienced a traditional Hawaiian afternoon in more ways than one.

There is nothing more exciting at a traditional Hawaiian luau fundraiser that has been temporarily washed out, shaken up, gently set down in its new venue and ready to go again within 10 minutes. Thanks to the fast work and determination of many volunteers and early guests, a short "gully washer" did not dampen the spirits and enjoyment of the partygoers.

Volunteers had just been putting the finishing touches on the original outside decorations when Mother Nature had other ideas with tropical-like rain and wind hitting the Veterans Center patio.

From the weather to food, dance and resilience, the Hawaiian tradition was evident. This day also reinforced the veteran's "just do it" approach to life of "pick up, clean up and move forward."

The main event eventually got under way with emcee Tim Whalen, a veteran who works at "the other" vet center, the Citrus Heights Vet Center at 5650 Sunrise Blvd., which works with veterans experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) from their service.

After welcoming all inside, Whalen thanked all who had spent the many hours creating and then recreating the Hawaiian atmosphere inside.

Honored guests were introduced, including City Council Vice-Mayor Jayna Karpinski-Costa and her husband, City Councilmember Jane Taff, and City Manager Ash Feeney and his wife.

Center owner Jean Rounsavell was recognized and center manager Laurie Thornton, facility manager Vince Robles and building engineer Perry Montalbano were thanked for their work at the center.

The traditional barbecue buffet was prepared by Chef Emma, a center volunteer, and her daughter, Julia, and included cooked spam, slow-cooked kalua pig, chicken teriyaki, tropical fruits, including star and dragon fruit, a sweet Hawaiian macaroni salad, Hawaiian salad and

pineapple meatballs. Dessert was pineapple-upside-down cake and macadamia nut cookies.

For three years, the music of Nativ Sun, accompanied by traditional Hawaiian dancing by Ka Pa Hula Kalama O Ha'aheo Dance Troupe, has added to the Hawaiian atmosphere. The atmosphere was also enhanced by emcee Whalen, band leader Marc Asuncion and band members.

Nativ Sun is comprised of family members. A highlight occurred when Asuncion's son, Christian, also a bandmember, performed a hula dance using his hands and arms to depict a river and the paddling of a man in a canoe.

Whalen also led a live auction and put bidders into the bidding mood with many intriguing and humorous stories of his military time and living in Hawaii.

If misfortune teaches lessons, attendees, performers and volunteers were reminded that veterans are a family no matter the occasion or event.

"It was a beautiful luau, we had to fight the rain, all was soaked but everyone got everything in order in the building. But we have a lot of volunteers," Rounsavell said about the event's preparations.

This luau is the main fundraiser for the year and all proceeds go toward providing a free "Safe Room" for all military veterans who visit. The center, run entirely by volunteers, is funded solely by donations and fundraisers. One-hundred percent of the proceeds supports the mission to serve veterans through various resources, activities and midday meals four times a week.

The center's "safe space" provides veterans with a place to talk about their war traumas with each other.

The center events also preserve the memory and vision of co-owner Jim Rounsavell who, with his wife Jean, founded the center in 2013.

To contact the Veterans Community Center, call 916-806-4852 or email info@veteranscommunityctr.org.

Center hours are 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

For more information about the Citrus Heights Vet Center, call 916-535-0420. There are four satellite locations from Sacramento to Solano and the East Bay. ★

Election Information

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