



**Nature Savers
Reel in Line**
PAGE 3

**Blue Angels Headline
California Capital
Airshow Next March**
PAGE 4



AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

**SEE
INSIDE**

**EAGLE RESCUE
HEROES SALUTED**



PAGE 2

**COWBELL
CLASSIC RETURNS**



PAGE 8

**CONNECTOR
PAVES PATH TO
OPPORTUNITY**



PAGE 10



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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



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

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

Continued on page 8

FORPD Board Approves Cost-of-Living Increase

By Shaunna Boyd

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - During the Aug. 21 Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District (FORPD) Board of Directors meeting, Parks and Facilities manager Sean Ventura discussed efforts to address safety concerns at the Miller Park disc golf course.

The concerns were spurred by recent incidents involving discs not staying within the designated course and hitting other park users. Ventura said the district contracted with a disc golf designer, who walked the course, and will issue a report with new safety recommendations. Updates could include engineering fixes such as natural or manmade barriers, as well as possible course restructuring.

"The district is ready and willing to fund changes needed to make a safer space," Ventura said.

District Administrator Mike Aho suggested scheduling a public meeting to share the report findings and to get public input.

The board considered the final revised offer for the sale of the district's cell tower lease at Miller Park. Aho described a few changes to the sale contract reached during negotiations, such as changing a 99-year lease on the land to a perpetual lease with no designated end date and the land remaining under district ownership.

A price reduction was requested of \$54,000 (from \$2,055,000 to \$2,001,000), which Aho said "primarily is due to Dish Network," which is a "co-locator" on the tower. "They are actually a liability right now."

Aho explained that Dish Network is currently "not financially secure," so the sale price has been adjusted accordingly to cover that liability.

"It's based on a reduction in revenue that they're going to see because more than likely, in their estimation, Dish Network will no longer be on that tower," Aho said.

After fees and closing costs, the district is expected to receive \$1.879 million from the sale. With approximately \$904,935 of that revenue already allocated to new seating at the Amphitheatre, Aho said the remaining funds will be strategically invested for "potential revenue enhancements."

The board voted 4-0 to approve the sale to TPA VII, LLC, with Vice-Chair Delinda Tamagni

Continued on page 8

VFW Post 6158 Commemorates National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Story and photo by Sheila LaPolla

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - Amid all of today's drama and controversies, we mustn't forget those who valiantly served our nation and were prisoners of war (POW) and those who are still missing in action (MIA), as well as their families.

The United States' POW/MIA Recognition Day is observed annually across the nation on the third Friday of September.

This year, National POW/MIA Recognition Day will be observed on Friday, Sept. 20.

This is a day to remember the sacrifice and service by our courageous POW and MIA service members to help ensure the freedom that we cherish today.

Every American



Pictured is the Remembrance Table at the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 6158, Fair Oaks.

president since President Carter has issued proclamations for this solemn observance.

Ceremonies and events

are held across the country honoring and remembering the sacrifices and service of those Americans who were prisoners of war and those

who served and never returned home, and their families.

Not far from the third

Continued on page 8

Eagle Rescue Heroes Saluted

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Two professional tree climbers have been recognized for their heroism in rescuing a fallen bald eaglet last April.

Sacramento County Supervisor Rich Desmond last week presented resolutions to Placerville residents Kiover Lara and Gabriel Cuevas. The ceremony also saluted the career of Fair Oaks-based wildlife rescue specialist Ben Nuckolls, who supervised the mission that saved the three-week-old eaglet.

"It's just great that people like Kiover and Gabriel used their skills and courage to save our national bird from a situation that seemed like mission impossible," Desmond said. "And Ben Nuckolls is an incredible asset to the safety of wildlife on our American River Parkway."

Co-operating in the perilous rescue that made national news, the heroes gained brief celebrity. The foothills arborist company that employs Cuevas and Lara got a welcome business boost.

On April 27, climber Lara, 45, and 'ground man' partner Cuevas, 42, were enjoying a quiet Saturday off. Their boss, Mauro Rios, was doing godfather duties at a Quinceañera party. A nephew relayed a desperate call from a nest site observer: a bald eaglet known as Diecinueve (Spanish for 19) was dangling 100 feet up. The nest tree topped a ravine and firefighters deemed the terrain too steep and dangerous for ladders.

Sierra Pacific Tree Care owner Rios told his best climbers that an eagle needed rescuing.

"Kiover never says no," reported the boss. "He does anything we ask of him."

Rios OKed the use of company equipment and help was quickly dispatched.

Baby Diecinueve had



The heroes are joined by Sierra Tree Care co-workers, family members, fire fighters and volunteers who assisted the bald eaglet rescue. Supervisor Rich Desmond (back row right) commended the group.



Safe in a dog carrier, the 3-week-old eaglet reaches safety after its rescue.



The nesting tree tilts over an American River canyon. With ropes, harnesses and spikes, Kiover Lara made the perilous climb last April.

alternated between frantic flapping and exhaustion for at least 10 hours before the rescue. Supervising efforts, Nuckolls warned the climbers that they would be unpaid and must work at their own risk.

Lara responded that he had retrieved plenty of cats from trees but, he conceded, "Eagles, no."

He and Cuevas scrambled

downhill to the tree base. Above, circling eagle parents shouted outrage.

"The lean on that tree worried us," Lara said. "We were also concerned the mother eagle might come at us. We said a prayer and figured it would be all right."

With Cuevas manning safety ropes, up Lara scrambled. Hearts thumped below.

"We were all scared," admitted an onlooker. "Not just that Kiover might fall; the higher he climbed, the closer the baby's mama circled."

Lara quickly reached and untangled the three-pound bundle of feathers.

"He was bigger than I thought," he recalled. "He felt soft and fluffy, like a stuffed toy. He looked at me bravely. I told him: you'll be OK, baby."

With precious cargo, descent was slower. When climbers and a cage appeared over the canyon ridge, firefighters cheered. Volunteers firefought back tears.

In minutes, Nuckolls and fellow rescuer Leslie Ackerman spirited the dehydrated eaglet to Gold Country Wildlife Rescue in Auburn. This facility operates in conjunction with the Lincoln-based Bird of Prey Health Group.

Diecinueve was given fluids and anti-inflammatory medication. Otherwise undamaged, Diecinueve was later moved for rehab at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care in South Lake Tahoe. When fully grown, his release would be managed by this agency.

"My family and I love eagles. We were relieved the little guy was safe and would one day fly free. Supervisor Desmond's award makes us proud," said climber Lara.

"I'm thankful that Kiover and Gabriel and other volunteers were on hand and we could all work together. Rescuing wildlife has always been my passion. Because this nest site is close to my home, I had an extra interest in the situation. Like many people, I'd watched this beautiful family for years. I felt a special responsibility to help them," added rescue specialist Nuckolls.

For the safety of the eagles, the American River nest location is not included in this report. Learn about Sierra Pacific Tree Care company services at www.sierrapacifictree.com

Learn more about Gold Country Wildlife Rescue at www.goldcountrywildliferescue.org. ★

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Nature Savers Reel in Line



Project Pick Up Fishing Line volunteers join activist Jann Nichols (center, in black) at Mather Lake in Rancho Cordova. In one year on the job, they have bundled and bagged many miles of discarded line.

Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)

- A volunteer team has taken on a mission to clear miles of abandoned fishing line from local rivers and waterways.

Calling themselves “Project Pick Up Fishing Line,” 10 nature lovers are leading other helpers to comb riverbanks for an almost invisible danger.

“Fishing line causes suffering and death to birds and a host of other river inhabitants,” explained Jann Nichols,

the group founder. Nichols, a photographer, has documented many situations of animal entanglement.

“In some cases, rescuers have freed birds from hooks and line,” she reported. “In tragic cases, animals don’t survive. Pets can also come to grief on trails through similar accidents.”

Nichols acknowledged that lines get snagged and accidents happen.

“But usually, our volunteers are easily able to free and dispose of fishing gear,” she said. “If we can do this, so could anglers. We’re also collecting hundreds of items

of trash left in fishing spots. Litter is not abandoned by accident.”

Project Pick-Up has successfully lobbied for county agencies to place receptacles and signage in fishing spots.

“We want people to be aware that a careless act can endanger lives,” Nichols said. “We also want them to know there are people you can call to save a trapped or injured creature.”

Nichols and friends were recently on hand when a swan died after ingesting fishing line at Cameron Park Lake in El Dorado County. Its organs were so damaged and the bird in such distress that euthanasia was the rescuers’ only resort.

“He’d swallowed so much line that his intestines were accor-dioned,” explained rescue expert and Project Pick-Up volunteer Leslie Ackerman. “It was heart-breaking. A beautiful bird’s agony is something you never forget. The incident inspired us even more to continue our cleanup efforts and to educate people.”

In their spare time, the volun-teers address areas that they say

are most abused. Mather Lake in Rancho Cordova, the American River at Watt Avenue, Cameron Park Lake and Willow Creek in Folsom are top trouble spots.

“We come back from these places with grocery bags filled,” Nichols said. “Fishing lines, hooks and lures from the ground or from trees and grasses,” Nichols added. “Honestly, the stuff is all over the place. For many people, it’s invisible. To our eyes, line catches the light like spider webs. Often, we need long grabbers to reach it. Sometimes, divers find line tangled underwater. They help us dispose of it. Fishermen sometimes help us, too. Along with the careless culprits, many responsible people use the river.”

The volunteers keep their harvest as evidence of how pervasive the problem is. They assembled more than 2,000 hooks and sinkers for a recent Mather Lake display. The haul also included dozens of bulging bags of lines.

“Aquatic birds are often drawn to anglers in the hope of a feed,” Nichols noted. “They can swallow a lure or get snagged. If a hook is lodged on their body, feeding and mobility is threatened. Suffering and death often follow.”

“I started this project last year when I saw a young osprey

tethered to the nest,” she recalled. “Its parents had brought in a branch entangled with fishing line. The baby was snarled for a week, close to fledging time. I couldn’t sleep for worrying. It took some time for rescuers to access the nest but the baby was saved.”

“Around that time, several cygnets died from line entangle-ment at Cameron Park Lake,” Nichols continued. “I decided to do whatever I could to prevent this from happening again. I started picking up line wherever I saw it.”

Nichols was soon joined by friends who wanted to help.

“They’d also seen injured wildlife in situations they could not forget,” Nichols said. “Seeing animal suffering is a powerful motivation.”

The volunteers fund their own activities. Equipment includes gloves, clippers and long-handled retrievers. Sunscreen is another essential.

“It’s hard work but it’s also nice to be out in nature,” Nichols said. “You know you’re helping wildlife and pets have a safer environment.”

Visit Project Pick up Fishing Line on Facebook or visit www.tanglefreewildlife.com.

To report wild animals in need of rescue, contact Wildlife Care Association at 916-965-9453. ★



Thousands of discarded lures and hooks are among dangerous items retrieved by Project Pick Up Fishing Line volunteers.



Exhausted and near drowned by a hook and line encounter, a gull is rescued at Sailor Bar in Fair Oaks.

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Blue Angels Headline California Capital Airshow Next March

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Capital Airshow, presented by Sacramento County in partnership with the City of Rancho Cordova, on Sept. 6 announced its 19th annual Airshow will return to Mather Airport on March 22 and March 23, 2025.

The two-day traditional event will be headlined by the U.S. Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels.

"We are so excited to have the

Blue Angels back!" said California Capital Airshow Executive Director Darcy Brewer. "Their return to Sacramento has been highly anticipated and we're proud to be one of the team's first stops following their winter training."

The Blue Angels last performance at the California Capital Airshow was in 2019. The team's performance at the 2025 Airshow marks their 79th season, during which they will perform 64 demonstrations at 32 locations across the country.

In addition to the Blue Angels,

fans of all ages will enjoy a dynamic lineup of top military and civilian performers, plus miles of exhibits on the ground.

Become an Airshow Insider to save up to 50% on tickets, receive exclusive updates on performers and more. Sign up for free at CaliforniaCapitalAirshow.com. ★

The Blue Angels return to next year's California Capital Airshow at Mather Airport on March 23 and March 23. The renowned Blue Angels, pictured here, performed at the California Capital Airshow in 2019.
Photo courtesy of Mark E. Loper Photography





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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.

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! ★



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Ballot Initiatives Become Pawns in Democrat Schemes



Commentary
by Ted Gaines

The shocking national political events have rightfully dominated the news of the past few weeks. But in relative obscurity, governments everywhere are still working, and the California political establishment has been busy waging a war of deception and disempowerment against our citizens. This time, they're targeting the ballot initiative process, an important form of direct democracy.

First is the death of the Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act (TPGAA), a voter-rights initiative aimed at putting the brakes on runaway taxes and fees plaguing our famously expensive state.

The Taxpayer Protection and Government Accountability Act would have put the tax- and fee-increase reins in voter hands, as summarized by the Wall Street Journal: "The initiative would require a majority of voters to approve taxes adopted by the Legislature. Both the Legislature and voters would have to approve regulatory action that increases state revenue. Charges for specific government services or products like fishing licenses would have to reflect the actual cost of providing the service or product. The initiative would also raise the threshold for localities to pass all special taxes to two-thirds."

When the initiative qualified to be placed on the ballot this November, what did Governor Newsom, the man who supposedly

represents all 40 million Californians, do? He sued to get it removed from the ballot, and a hyper-partisan California court sided with the Governor and removed the measure. The Governor and Legislature can't let anything disrupt their endless taxing and spending. The people won't even have a chance to tighten the reins on government growth. So much for democracy.

Next up are two cynical, pro-crime smokescreens floated by the Legislature and Governor Newsom to cloud the result of an actual tough-on-crime initiative on the November ballot.

The initiative, Prop. 36, would undo some of the infamous Prop. 47, which essentially legalized shoplifting under \$950 and gave blessing to open-air drug markets, turning California into a criminals' paradise and pushing retailers to the brink.

Prop. 36 will put some teeth back into the criminal justice system, protect businesses and families, punish criminals for a change, and mend the social fabric weakened by rampant crime and drug-den takeovers of our public spaces.

But the California Legislature is sadly and shockingly pro-criminal. To them, "the system" is always the problem, never the people who are filling up shopping carts and walking out of stores in broad daylight, with no fear of punishment.

So, they sprang into action by drafting a package of bills that sounded tough-on-crime but included "poison pills," meaning the bills would be voided if Prop. 36 passed. Voters reading the ballot summary for Prop. 36 could have been confused, thinking they were weakening law enforcement by voting for the measure.

Thankfully, this shameful deceit eventually collapsed

under a massive outcry by law enforcement and a public weary of crime.

After the bills failed, Governor Newsom floated another initiative to compete with Prop. 36, again to soften and undermine the commonsense changes found in the people's initiative. That last-minute effort cratered as well because even legislative Democrats refused to support a competing proposition to Prop. 36, leaving the people with an honest chance to change the course of the state this coming November.

Sacramento Democrats also understand that having Prop. 36 on the ballot hurts their chances in November. Their efforts to thwart the reforms in the initiative are as much political as they are philosophical.

Instead of obsessive politicking, the Democrats should look at their own policies and try to understand why a measure that punishes criminals, creates safe neighborhoods and businesses, and closes drug markets is considered an electoral threat to them.

The capitol is the people's building, not a walled fortress to protect incumbents and special interests, and voters are not an inconvenience to be shooed away by the courts or by trickery.

Despite the worst efforts of Sacramento Democrats, the people still have a chance to support Prop. 36 in November and build a brighter future for our state. *Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) was elected to represent the Board of Equalization's First District. He is a leading taxpayer advocate, defender of Prop. 13, and is committed to providing trustworthy and transparent representation for nearly ten million constituents in 34 counties of northern, eastern, and southern California. For more information, visit www.boe.ca.gov/Gaines.* ★

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 acquires 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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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.

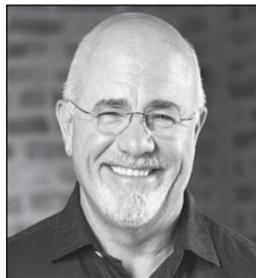
Before adjourning its 2024 session, the Legislature approved a bill that would direct state agencies that administer homelessness programs to annually file reports on spending and outcomes to Newsom's interagency council, which then would be required to make the information available to the public.

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. ★



Dave Ramsey

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.

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. ★

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FORPD Board Approves Cost-of-Living Increase

Continued from page 1 abstaining.

Administrative Service manager Jennifer Larkin brought forward a recommendation for a Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) of 3.9% for full-time staff. The adjustment would increase the operating budget by \$53,000 and Larkin said there is enough existing funding to support the request.

Larkin also suggested the district issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to conduct a comprehensive salary study, because a cursory review showed large variations, with some positions at market rate and others well below or above. The cost of a salary study could be approximately \$100,000 but the benefit would be to “make sure we’re using our resources appropriately,” Larkin said.

If they defer a compensation study, Director John O’Farrell said, they run the risk of falling far behind in setting reasonable salaries, which can then hurt the budget in the long run.

Chair Ralph Carhart said that they wouldn’t be obligated to immediately act upon the results of a salary study but it would help them see what adjustments are needed and which ones could reasonably be made.

The board voted unanimously to approve the Cost-of-Living Adjustment and to request proposals for a salary study.

The board then considered whether to add Juneteenth as a recognized holiday for district employees. Currently, staff have 13 paid holidays, which includes one floating holiday. Director Raymond James Irwin said he wouldn’t support adding another paid holiday, since the district was already in line with other agencies on total holidays.

Irwin suggested adding Juneteenth to the list of approved holidays for the floating paid holiday or allowing employees to take it as an unpaid holiday.

“I think it’s really important to recognize Juneteenth,” O’Farrell said.

O’Farrell would support adding Juneteenth as a paid holiday and said, “It’s not a matter of money, at least in my opinion.”

Carhart said the “floating holiday is there for whatever is dear to your heart.” He suggested revisiting this issue after the salary study.

Irwin made a motion not to add a holiday at this time and to revisit the item at a later date, which passed 3-2, with Vice-Chair Tamagni and O’Farrell dissenting.

Arts and Entertainment manager Jen Schuler brought forward a proposal for a new full-time technical supervisor position to work in the Arts and Entertainment Division. With Measure J renovations in the Village nearing completion, there will be a need for a dedicated technical supervisor for the Amphitheatre’s new Fair Oaks Performing Art Center. The position would also oversee entertainment operations throughout all district facilities.

Sacramento County allocated \$130,000 in its federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the district, which will be used to support operational costs and sustainability of the new Performing Arts Center. Staff proposed using \$88,500 of these funds for the technical supervisor’s first year of salary. In subsequent years, the salary should be supported by revenue from ticket sales, facility fees, venue rentals and sponsorships.

The board voted unanimously to approve the new position.

With funding secured for the new Amphitheatre seating, the district considered the implementation of a Chair Dedication Policy, through which patrons can dedicate a chair with an accompanying plaque within the venue for a five-year term for \$500. The program is anticipated to generate significant financial support for the Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center.

The board unanimously approved the Chair Dedication Policy, with Carhart adding that he would like to see a range of dedication opportunities (such as plaques, benches, trees, etc.) available for various levels of donation.

The board also considered a Tree Protection Policy to be implemented immediately within the district. The goal of this policy is to restrict activities that could harm the long-term health and safety of trees on district properties.

The guidelines were adopted from the Sacramento Tree Foundation, the International Society of Arboriculture and generally-accepted best practices for protecting existing trees. District staff and contractors working on district properties will be required to follow the guidelines regarding fertilization, irrigation, pruning and root protection.

The board unanimously approved the new Tree Protection Policy.

The next Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for Sept. 18. ★

Chicken Festival Roosters Up



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

Continued from page 1

Oaks 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. ★

VFW Post 6158 Commemorates National POW/MIA Recognition Day

Continued from page 1

Friday in September this year, on Sunday, Sept. 22, Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post 6158 welcomes the public to join in commemorating National POW/MIA Recognition Day at 8990 Kruitof Way (off Hazel Avenue) in Fair Oaks, between 1 and 6 p.m.

There will be presentations, live music and food banks.

Join us in honoring and recognizing those who have sacrificed so much for our freedom and American way of life.

On POW/MIA Recognition Day, awareness of the plight of our POW and MIA service members is heightened but we should never forget them.

At Military.com, it reads, “YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN – that’s the central phrase behind the POW/MIA Remembrance movement...Many of our service members suffered as prisoners of war during several decades of varying conflicts. While some of them made it home, tens of thousands never did.”

A POW/MIA Remembrance or Missing Man table assures our service members are not forgotten, not just on POW/MIA Recognition Day, but every day.

According to Wikipedia:

The missing man table can be a permanent display in or close to military dining facilities.

The POW/MIA Remembrance or Missing Man table consists of the following elements: ★

A small table set for one, symbolizing the isolation of the absent service member.

A white tablecloth symbolizes the pure intentions of the service members who responded to the country’s call to arms.

A single rose in the vase symbolizes the blood that service members have shed in sacrifice to ensure the freedom of our beloved United States of America. This rose also represents the family and friends who keep the faith while awaiting the return of the missing service members.

The red ribbon represents a love of country that inspired service members to serve the country.

A slice of lemon on the bread plate represents the bitter fate of the missing.

Salt sprinkled on the bread plate symbolizes the tears shed by waiting families.

An inverted glass represents the fact that the missing and fallen cannot partake.

The candle is reminiscent of the light of hope which lives in our hearts to illuminate their way home, away from their captors to the arms of a grateful nation.

The chair is empty – they are not here.

The annual POW/MIA Recognition Day event honors prisoners of war and our missing and their families and highlights the government’s commitment to account for them.

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN.

Let us honor our prisoners of war, those still missing in action, and all our veterans, past and present, for their dedication and love of country. ★

Cowbell Classic Returns: Casa Roble Rams Defeat Bella Vista



Casa Roble scores a touchdown against the Bella Vista Broncos at the Cowbell Classic. Photo by Tim Engle

By Mary-Anne Povey

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - Casa Roble emerged victorious in the third annual Cowbell Classic on Sept. 7, defeating Bella Vista 22-14 in the scorching September heat.

The rivalry game, which had been on hiatus for five years, returned with a vengeance as both teams faced off in front of an electric crowd. Despite early momentum from Bella Vista, who took a quick lead, Casa Roble fought back, showing resilience in the face of intense heat and injuries to key players.

Bella Vista’s early lead kept fans on edge, but Casa Roble’s younger, less experienced players rose to the occasion. Their offensive and defensive lines took control in the second half, and their



Team captains prepare for the coin toss at the Cowbell Classic Sept. 7. Photo by Tim Engle

ground game eventually wore down Bella Vista’s defense. The hard-fought battle was marked by turnovers and key plays that ultimately swung in Casa Roble’s favor, securing their victory.

Head Coach Chris Horner praised both teams’ efforts, stating, “Bella Vista came out and played hard, and we were fortunate that

a few plays went our way enabling us to come out with the win.”

Casa Roble’s season record now stands at 1-1 as they prepare to face Twin Bridges at home on Sept. 13. The game will be streamed on Orangevale Live Facebook and YouTube. Fans can get tickets at gofan.com.

Go Rams! ★

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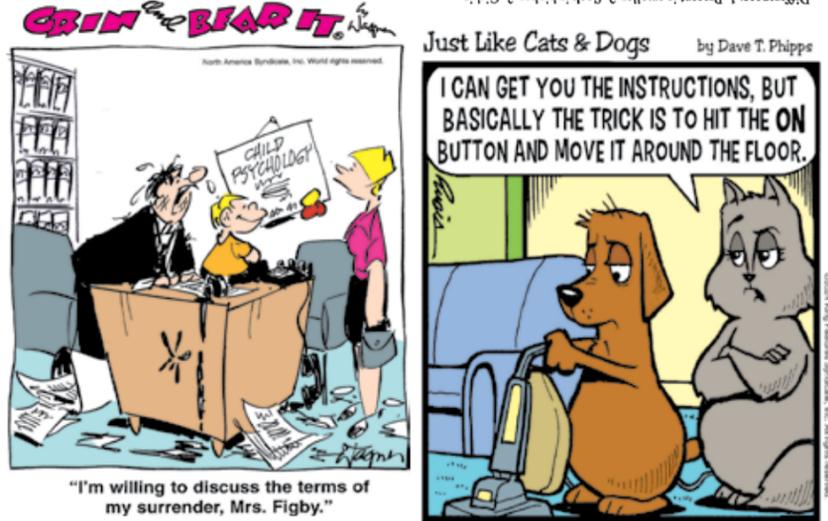
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



Election Information

November 5, 2024 – Presidential General Election

Vote Early and Vote by Mail.



Oct 7 Ballots begin to arrive by mail. Ballot Drop Boxes are now open.



Oct 21 Close of registration. Register today!



Oct 26 11-Day Vote Centers open through Election Day.



Nov 2 All Vote Centers open through Election Day.



Nov 5 Election Day! Last day to turn in your ballot.

Vote Early! Don't wait for Election Day

Take advantage of early voting and avoid the lines! You can return your ballot in the mail, at any Ballot Drop Box, or at any Vote Center. No postage is necessary.

Track your Ballot

Sign up for "Where's My Ballot?" with Ballottrax, a free ballot tracking and alert system. It is available to all voters who wish to track the status of their Vote by Mail ballot - from printed to accepted. This provides additional transparency to voters on the status of their ballot.



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Saluting Labor: SouthEast Connector Paves Path to Opportunity

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



While the Capital SouthEast Connector will make travel safer and greatly improve traffic flows on local highways, it also has enormous social benefits as a ladder of career opportunities.

“This project creates opportunities and pathways for second-chance individuals,” said Laborers Local 185 Business Manager Doyle Radford Jr. during a recent event. “People who don’t typically get opportunities will get a chance to work in the trades and learn valuable skills to improve their lives.”

His organization has a robust apprenticeship program for inexperienced or experienced workers in many fields including concrete placement, pipe

laying, asphalt paving, erosion control, and the building of fences, bridges, and buildings.

Thousands of workers on the Connector, from heavy equipment operators to welders, plumbers, electricians, carpenters, and virtually every trade, will literally pave the way to a better future for the region.

The Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway, stretching from Elk Grove to Highway 50 in El Dorado County, is more than just a roadway project. It is a transformative initiative designed to

widen and upgrade a historically dangerous route into a modern, efficient, safe corridor to help meet the transportation needs of our growing population.

This expressway project stands as a testament to how public infrastructure can create equitable opportunities for individuals and enhance the region’s quality of life. By providing jobs and opening doors for career-seeking individuals, the Connector is building pathways to better lives.

The laborers who bring these projects to life do so with skill, dedication, muscle and sweat. Their work is about more than just laying asphalt and concrete; it is about creating opportunities, enhancing safety, and producing economic prosperity.

According to a 2022 economic study, the

completed Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway will generate \$1.8 billion of increased regional economic output, and \$770 million of new labor

income. It will save commuters between \$500 million and \$1.5 billion in travel time over 20 years compared to using current roadways.

The Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway is a shining example of what can be achieved through collaboration, determination, and hard work.

The project’s importance was highlighted recently when it received a \$25 million federal RAISE grant. The RAISE program—Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity—recognizes projects that contribute to evenhanded outcomes, especially for communities that have historically

been underserved.

The RAISE funds will be used to reconstruct a section of Grant Line Road and correct deadly curves and elevations that obstruct the view of oncoming traffic. Longstanding drainage issues that currently cause flooding and hinder first responders during emergencies will also be fixed.

From an environmental standpoint, the SouthEast Connector Expressway has been designed from its inception to avoid negative environmental impacts where possible, and the modern design will eliminate many negative environmental impacts from the roadway’s current structure.

In partnership with the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan, the project is designed to ensure the long-term viability of area plant and wildlife species while

preserving agricultural and ranch land.

When completed, the Capital SouthEast Connector will reduce greenhouse gases, pollutant emissions, vehicle miles traveled, and regional congestion. The project has obtained environmental permits and has agreed to purchase lands to replace impacted agricultural land or vernal pools.

From every perspective, the Capital SouthEast Connector is a winning proposition. Your support is vital to the project’s successful completion. To express your support or if you have questions, please email us at ConnectorSupport@saccounty.gov.

Derek Minnema is a civil engineer, and the 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

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

specifically to construct a new expressway connecting I-5 and Hwy 99 in the Elk Grove area to Hwy 50 in El Dorado County, now known as the Capital SouthEast Connector. Since the vote, the tax has generated about \$2 billion. To date, the Capital SouthEast Connector has received about \$58 million of those funds, which were paired with federal and state funds to complete 11 miles of the 34-mile project.

Q Where have the transportation tax funds not allocated to the Capital SouthEast Connector been used?

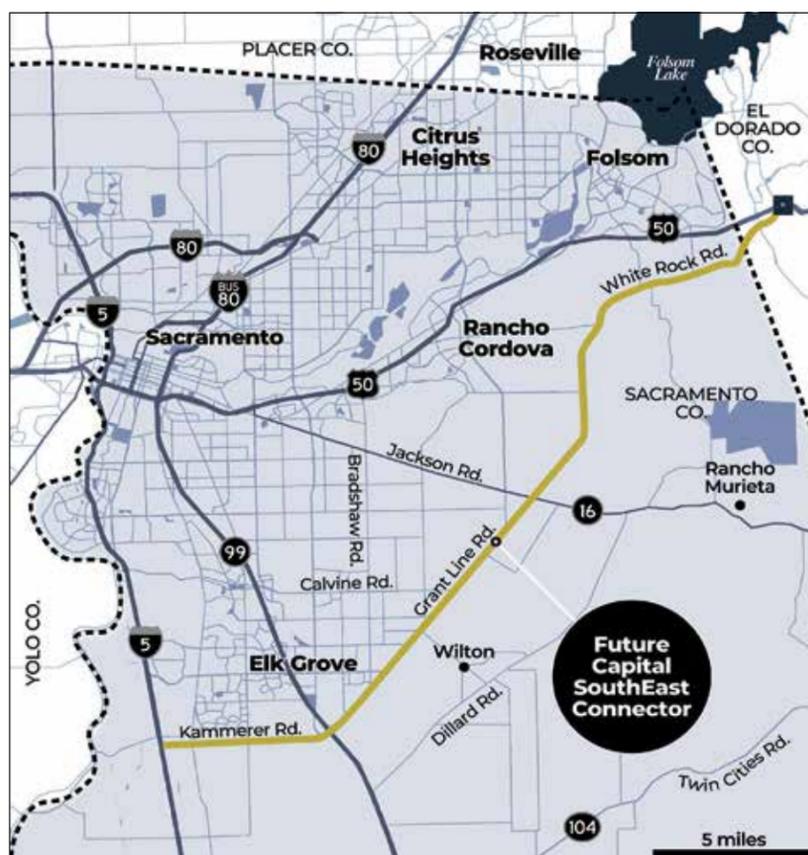
A The transportation sales tax funds are allocated according to a formula voters approved when they approved the tax. The largest single recipient of the funds since the tax began is the Regional Transit Authority (38%, amounting to \$709 million) for operating and maintaining light rail and bus services; and providing transportation options to seniors and individuals with disabilities. Street and road maintenance projects have received 29.4%, amounting to \$545.5 million. Overall, capital improvement projects have received 20.4%, amounting to \$377.4 million. The rest of the funds went to smaller projects, and less than ¼ of one percent is spent on program administration.

Q What has the Sacramento Area Council of Governments’ role been in the Capital SouthEast

particularly Hwy 50, and from fewer toxic fumes spewing from thousands of vehicles stuck in traffic. Southeastern Sacramento County residents will have a safe new route to avoid Hwy 50 congestion and bypass downtown traffic. Businesses, companies, farmers, and ranchers will also be able to receive supplies and send products to market more safely and quickly. Most importantly, the modernized roadway will be safe to travel, unlike current conditions that endanger lives.

Q Who approved building the SouthEast Connector Expressway?

A In 2004, by a 3-1 margin, voters agreed to tax themselves for 30 years for transportation maintenance, road improvements, mass transit, mobility for seniors and people with disabilities, and



Map showing the location of the future Capital SouthEast Connector

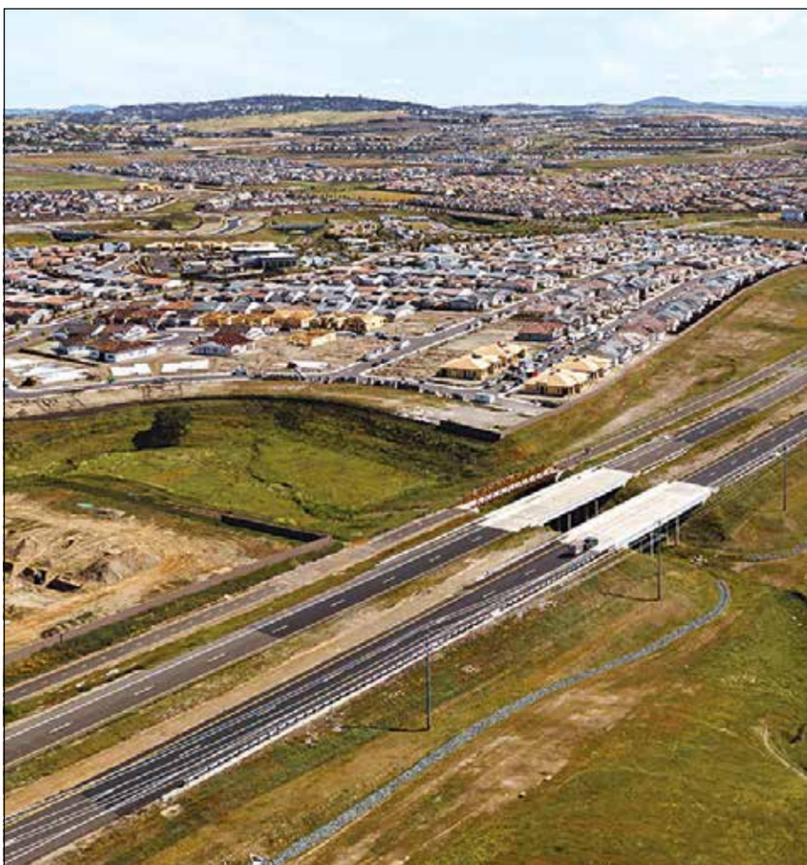
Q What is the Capital SouthEast Connector Expressway?

A The planned Connector is an expressway that will link Interstate 5 and Highway 99 near Elk Grove to Highway 50 in El Dorado County. The new expressway will relieve congestion by directing commuter and commercial traffic around the city on a safe expressway. 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 also features a parallel bike and pedestrian trail.

Q Who will benefit from the SouthEast Connector Expressway when completed?

A The entire region will benefit from reduced congestion on area highways,

Connector’s White Rock Road Improvement



Connector’s construction.

A The Capital SouthEast Connector is part of the “Sacramento Blueprint,” adopted over 20 years ago by SACOG’s board of directors and still consulted today. The Blueprint’s goal is to integrate land use and transportation planning to improve the region’s quality of life. It was SACOG’s idea to create the Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority to manage the design and construction of the expressway. Over the years, SACOG has been mostly supportive of efforts to advance the project, and SACOG recently determined that constructing a segment of the project was the region’s number one transportation priority, greatly enhancing a successful project application for federal funding.

Q What environmental impacts will the SouthEast Connector Expressway create, and how will they be mitigated?

A Like any road project, the Capital SouthEast Connector will affect the environment during and after construction, but all federal, state, and local regulations to protect the environment are being followed. After construction, the environment will be greatly enhanced due to a design that controls and channels damaging groundwater that currently floods the roadway and adjacent lands. The Connector Joint Powers Authority is a member of the South Sacramento Conservation Agency (SCCA) that oversees compliance with

the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan and its rules for road construction. The Connector project has obtained environmental permits and has also agreed to purchase lands to replace impacted agricultural land or vernal pools in accordance with the conservation plan’s vision.

Q How will the Capital SouthEast Connector affect bike and pedestrian traffic in the area?

A Bicyclists and pedestrians who currently face grave danger will be able to avoid traffic entirely by using a paved, Class 1 bike trail that will be built separate from the expressway along its entire length. The bike trail is designed to enable residents to walk or ride their bikes to visit friends in neighboring communities; or peddle to work, local restaurants, stores, parks,

and entertainment venues; or simply to exercise and enjoy the outdoors.

Q How can residents support construction of the Capital SouthEast Connector?

A Your support is vital to our successfully applying for funds to complete the project. Telling your local, state, and federal elected representatives that you support the project is very helpful. You can also learn more about the project or sign up for our newsletter on our website at www.connectorjpa.com. Alternatively, you can use the QR code on this page, visit our Instagram page at www.instagram.com/connectorjpa or our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/@SouthEast-connectorexpressway Please send questions or comments to ConnectorSupport@saccounty.gov.

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