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is for  
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# Arden Arcade News

VOL 01 • ISSUE 09 *Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years* SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

**SEE  
INSIDE**

**STATE'S WATER  
WORKFORCE  
IS AGING**



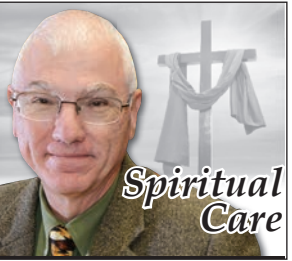
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**KINGS KORNER  
BY V.G. HARRIS**



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**DON'T TELL IT  
TO THE CHAPLAIN**



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## Project Pickup Reels 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 *Continued on Page 2*

## Fair Oaks Chicken Festival Sept. 21

**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 kids' 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 *Continued on Page 3*



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



Calling or texting the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at any time of the day, any day of the week, could help save someone's life. Suicide is the 12th leading cause of death overall in the U.S. Graphic courtesy of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline.

**Call 988  
to Save  
a Life**

**By MPG Staff**

**NORTHERN CALIFORNIA (MPG)** - September is Suicide Prevention Month, a time to raise awareness and discuss this urgently increasing crisis, according to NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness).

NAMI has sobering statistics: Suicide is the second leading cause of death among those aged 10 to 14, the third leading cause of death among those aged 15 to 24 and the 12th leading cause of death overall in the U.S.

Or, as the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services reports, more than 49,000 people in the United States died by suicide in 2022. That's one death every 11 minutes.

And millions more experience suicidal thoughts.

Suicidal thoughts can affect anyone regardless of age, gender or background, according to the NAMI website at nami.org. While suicidal thoughts are common, however, they should not be considered normal and often indicate more serious issues.

Many events and activities promoting suicide prevention awareness will be held locally, regionally and nationally throughout September.

During Suicide Prevention Month, NAMI and numerous other mental health organizations stress that all of us can help prevent suicide by reaching out to those who need help.

The National Institute of Mental Health lists five action steps to help someone having suicidal thoughts.

The first step is **Ask** "Are you thinking about suicide?" It's not an easy question to ask but it can help start a conversation.

The second step is **Be there:** Listening without judgment is key to learning what the person is thinking and feeling.

The third step is **Help keep them safe:** Reducing access to highly lethal items or places can help prevent suicide.

The fourth step is **Help them connect:** Connecting the person with the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (call or text 988) and other community resources can give them a safety net. You *Continued on Page 2*





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

# Project Pickup Reels in Line

Continued from Page 1

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 accordioned," explained rescue expert and Project Pick-Up volunteer Leslie Ackerman. "It was heartbreaking. 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 volunteers 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 entanglement 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



Volunteer leader Jann Nichols hauls line retrieved from Mather Lake in Rancho Cordova.



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

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](http://www.tanglefreewildlife.com).

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

# Call 988 to Save a Life

Continued from Page 1

can also assist by reaching out to a trusted family member, friend, spiritual advisor or mental health professional.

The fifth National Institute of Mental Health step is **Follow up:** Staying in touch with the person after they have experienced a crisis or been discharged from care can make a difference.

Studies show that supportive, ongoing contact can play an important role in suicide prevention.

**How You Can Help**

The advocacy groups say to educate yourself and others about suicide prevention by checking out the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline at [www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988](http://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988).

And visit the Suicide Prevention Resource Center at <https://sprc.org/>:

Each year, the resource center creates many ways to get involved in Suicide Prevention Awareness Month.

The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration invites residents throughout the country to participate in 988 Day on Sept. 8. 988 Day is a national initiative dedicated to raising awareness about the federal agency's 988 resource and emphasizing the importance of mental health and suicide prevention.

According to the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline website at [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org), "We can all help prevent suicide. The 988 Lifeline provides 24/7, free and confidential support for people in distress, prevention and crisis resources for you or your loved ones, and best practices for

professionals in the United States."

The National Institute of Mental Health website at <https://www.nimh.nih.gov> lists warning signs that indicate someone might be considering suicide. During National Suicide Prevention Month, the institute reminds residents that warning signs include the following:

Talking about wanting to die or wanting to kill themselves

Talking about feeling empty or hopeless or having no reason to live

Talking about feeling trapped or feeling that there are no solutions

Feeling unbearable emotional or physical pain

Talking about being a burden to others

Withdrawing from family and friends

Giving away important possessions

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It could save a life later.

[nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention](http://nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention)

Graphic courtesy of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

Saying goodbye to friends and family

Putting affairs in order, such as making a will

Taking great risks that could lead to death, such as driving extremely fast

Talking or thinking about death often.

Other serious warning signs that someone might be at risk for attempting suicide include:

Displaying extreme mood swings, suddenly changing from very sad to very calm or happy

Making a plan or looking for ways to kill themselves, such as searching for lethal methods online, stockpiling pills or buying a gun

Talking about feeling great guilt or shame

Using alcohol or drugs more often

Acting anxious or agitated

Changing eating or sleeping habits

Showing rage or talking about seeking revenge.

According to the National Institute of Mental Health, suicidal thoughts or actions are a sign of extreme distress and should not be ignored.

If these warning signs apply to you or someone you know, the institute urges you to get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has recently increased. ★

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# Blue Angels Headline Capital Airshow Next March

## California Capital Airshow News Release

**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 its 79th season, during which the team 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.

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](http://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

# Fair Oaks Chicken Festival Sept. 21

Continued from Page 1

of Directors and assumes responsibility for certain activities throughout the year, including the Fair 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.

**Pancake Breakfast**

The Orangevale Grange is hosting a special pre-event Pancake Breakfast from 7:30 to 10 a.m. at the Grange Hall, 5807 Walnut Ave., Orangevale.

A hearty breakfast costs \$10, a regular breakfast costs \$8, and a child’s breakfast (ages 8 and under) costs \$5.

The first 100 attendees receive a free Chicken Festival promo bag.

**Contest Highlights**

The following contests require pre-registration and an entry fee.

Prizes are awarded to the top winners.



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

Registration details are at [forpd.org/chickenfest](http://forpd.org/chickenfest).

There will be a Cluck n’ Crow Contest presented by Kiwanis Club Orangevale/ Fair Oaks, a Cornhole Tournament presented by Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, the California Cornhole Association and OVCornhole, and a great Chicken Decorating Contest.

**More Activity Highlights**

Rocky the Rooster will greet and mingle with kids. Bring your camera for photos.

Kids will enjoy Rocky’s Roost Kids Park areas, featuring free and pay-to-play activities.

Visit more than 70 craft and community vendor booths.

Adults over 21 can visit the Watering Hole (beer/ wine garden) presented by the Fair Oaks Rotary Foundation.

Take a food break at the Feed Court (food trucks) presented by SactoMoFo.

Strut to live band music from 12:30 to 6 p.m.

For parking and general event information, visit [forpd.org/chickenfest](http://forpd.org/chickenfest). ★

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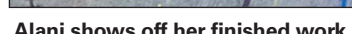


**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - More than 200 sidewalk squares were sponsored in the 34th annual Chalk It Up! Festival this past Labor Day weekend at Fremont Park on the border of downtown and midtown between 15th and 16th, and P and Q streets.

According to the Chalk It Up website at [chalkitup.org](http://chalkitup.org), “Chalk It Up’s mission is to empower and support the next generation of Sacramento artists through

Established in 1991, the nonprofit organization promotes and supports youth arts by offering small grants to kindergarten through 12th-grade classrooms, and youth arts projects throughout the Sacramento region.

When asked what is new for this year, Jourdan answered, "We're super-stoked about our sponsor Taco Bell Cantina." The restaurant is at 900 K St. and owned by Dave Smith.



The Chalk It Up! Festival included live music, food trucks and vendors all three days.

Yixin Huang from Singapore, a 17-year-old St. Francis High School student, had an art square

Alani said of her art, which included a rendition of the character Strawberry Shortcake, "I love strawberries. It's a sweet treat theme." Her sidewalk square had multiple

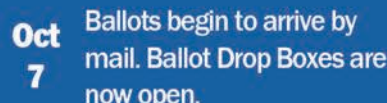
An adult artist from the Cordova High School Class of 2018 was at Chalk It Up for his third time and said about his art, "I just use my imagination. It's a concept based around nature and nurture. It's introspective." ★



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# Don't Tell it to the Chaplain

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.”

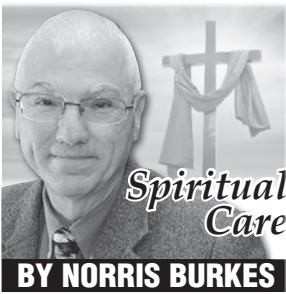
When they cock their head in search of an explanation, I tell them that I’m a retired healthcare chaplain and I may inject a totally different meaning into common sayings.

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 December 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.”

*For an autographed copy of “Tell It To The Chaplain,” order on my website or send a \$20 check to 10566 Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. (\$70 will get you all four books.)*

*Email comments to comment@thechaplain.net or by text or voicemail to (843) 608-9715.* ★

## 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 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](mailto:vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com). All the best! ★

## ABOUT TOWN

### Wine Stroll Oct. 12 Benefits Holy Cross

The Wine Stroll is back! Come join us for an evening of wine tasting featuring local wineries all in one location under our beautiful outdoor pavilion. Enjoy hors d'oeuvres as you sample wines from several local regions.

The fundraiser is from 5 to 8 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12 at Elevation of the Holy Cross Orthodox Church 9000 Jackson Rd., Sacramento, 95826.

Tickets are \$45 pre-sale and \$50 at the door. Proceeds benefit the Building Fund to help build our future house of worship.

Email [holycross.oca@gmail.com](mailto:holycross.oca@gmail.com) or contact Claudia at 916-704-0264 to purchase tickets.

### Elks Lodge Calendar of Events

**Oktoberfest**, 5 p.m. to 9:30 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14. Grand Isle Fire Brigade Street Band, German food, beer and drinks. \$15 advance, \$20 at the door.

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

**Elk's Lodge Sunday Breakfast**, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday.

Bring your friends and family; \$15 tax included. Best deal in town. Made to order Omelets or eggs any way you want. Bacon, sausage, potatoes, biscuits and gravy, pancakes, waffles, coffee large parties should call for reservations.

Guests are VERY welcome!

### Water Aerobics

Monday and Thursday 10 am, Wednesday 2 pm, Friday 10 am

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

**Martial Arts**, Monday 5 pm

**Pickleball**, Multiple days each week. Noon Monday, 3:30 p.m. Wednesday

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

To sign up or confirm schedule, join playtimescheduler.com

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

**Wednesday Night Dinner**, 5:30 to 7 pm. See [elks6.net](http://elks6.net) for weekly menu.

**Sactown Swing**: lessons 7 p.m.; swing social 8 p.m.

**Karaoke** 7 p.m. Thursdays and Saturdays

**Friday Happy Hour**, Friday 4-7 pm

### Sacramento Area Museums Offer Plenty of Experiences

The Greater Sacramento region is rich with museums and popular destinations that offer plenty of must-see and must-do experiences to explore. The community is encouraged to show support for local museums by making plans to visit favorite locations (or discovering new ones).

A sampling of must-see and must-do experiences and special activations offered by local museums include the following:

**California State Railroad Museum & Foundation** – Always a favorite experience, the California State Railroad Museum & Foundation are proud to offer the only train ride experience behind an authentic, historic locomotive in the Sacramento region.

Through the end of September, week-end excursion train ride guests delight in the sights, smells, and sounds of an authentic, historic locomotive as it rolls along the levees of the Sacramento River for a six- mile, 45-minute round-trip excursion.

Appealing to all ages, the experience offers guests the chance to enjoy train travel from an earlier era. For more details and/or to book a train ride, please visit [www.californiarailroad.museum](http://www.californiarailroad.museum).

**Sacramento History Museum** – Through Jan. 7, 2025., the museum is proud to present a limited-time exhibition titled “America’s Monsters, Superheroes and Villains: Our Culture at Play” from SuperMonsterCity. The engaging exhibition will be filled with 400+ vintage and original toys, comic books, games, posters, packaging, TV commercials, movie trailers and more. For details, visit [www.SacHistoryMuseum.org](http://www.SacHistoryMuseum.org).

For more information about upcoming activities offered by Sacramento area museums, visit [SacMuseums.org](http://SacMuseums.org). ★

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# What to Know About Valley Fever

## A Soil Fungus That Can Kill is on The Rise in California



Valley fever cases are on the rise in California, especially in Kern County. Several infections were traced to an outdoor music festival there. Photo by Julie Leopo for CalMatters

By Ana B. Ibarra  
CALMatters.org

It’s shaping up to be a bad year — possibly the worst yet — when it comes to Valley fever, a fungal disease marked by cough and fevers. More than 5,300 cases have been reported in California through June, that’s 63% more infections than the same period last year.

Valley fever is caused when people inhale microscopic spores of a fungus found in soil. This fungus typically affects the lungs. Many cases are mild and resolve on their own, but the infections, which are not contagious, can become serious enough to require hospitalization. About 80 Californians die every year from it. Moderate cases may last months and require antifungal medication.

Earlier this week the California Department of Public Health announced that at least a handful of people became sick with Valley fever after traveling to Kern County for an outdoor music festival at Buena Vista Lake in May. Three attendees were hospitalized, the department said. Health officials are encouraging people who attended the Lightning in a Bottle festival to contact their medical provider if they have been feeling sick and not improving.

Historically, the majority of

Valley fever cases have been reported in Kern County, but a significant number have also been identified in Los Angeles, Fresno and in Central Coast counties.

As cases rise across the state, here are four things to know about Valley fever.

### Valley fever fungus can travel long distances

A fungus known as *Coccidioides* is responsible for Valley fever. Fungus spores can be rustled from the soil and into the air by activities such as farming and construction, but winds also stir them. In rare cases, infection can spread from the lungs to other parts of the body, including the heart and brain.

Valley fever is most common in the dry, hot southwestern U.S. and northern Mexico. In California, the majority of cases have been concentrated in the San Joaquin Valley — in fact, the region is the disease’s namesake. However, cases have been reported throughout the state.

The fungus can travel quite far in the air. “So even if you don’t live in the region, you still might be exposed,” said Katrina Hoyer, an immunologist and professor at UC Merced.

Avoiding dust is the best protection, said Kimberly Hernandez, an epidemiologist and division director of health

services with the Kern County Public Health Department. That means avoiding going outside on especially windy days, if possible. People who have to be outdoors on a dusty day could benefit from wearing an N95 facemask.

### Valley fever cases in California tripled over the last 10 years

Just over 2,300 people were diagnosed with Valley fever in 2014, according to the state’s data. By 2023, annual cases had more than tripled to more than 9,000. And in just the first six months of this year, 5,370 people were reported to have contracted Valley fever. About a third of this year’s cases have been reported in Kern County.

This growing number of reported infections could be attributed to a few different factors, experts say.

“There’s a lot more construction happening up and down the San Joaquin Valley, as we continue to grow in this region. More roads, more solar panels, more homes, all of that is disturbing the soil,” Hoyer said.

Also, more providers and patients are becoming aware of the disease and testing for it.

“We are hopeful in Kern County, given our history of having lots of Valley fever, that our health care providers are really good at looking for it,” Hernandez said. “That’s sort of

the bright spot, even though we do have a lot of cases. We want people with Valley fever to get diagnosed, because if they need medication, we want them to be on that medication and to be monitored by their healthcare provider.”

### Symptoms may resemble COVID-19

Some people may never develop symptoms, but those who do may experience a cough, fever, chest pain, headaches and fatigue. A rash and night sweats also may develop.

Valley fever symptoms typically show up one to three weeks after exposure and may last for a month or more.

Because it shares many of the same signs as COVID-19, health officials recommend that people first test for COVID-19. If COVID is ruled out, a blood test can check for antibodies to the fungus that causes Valley fever. Unlike COVID-19, Valley fever is not contagious.

In Kern County, the disease has hit close to home for public officials. Last week, the county’s own public health director, Brynn Carrigan, shared her own struggles with Valley fever. The Bakersfield Californian reported that Carrigan’s case developed into meningitis, a swelling of the tissue surrounding the spinal cord and brain, that can be fatal if left untreated.

“I knew I was sick, but I was shocked to hear how sick I really was,” Carrigan told the newspaper.

### Climate change plays a role

Research has shown that cases of Valley fever tend to go up during dry seasons following a rainy period. “They call this the grow-and-blow hypothesis,” Hernandez said. “As a fungus, it likes moisture, and when it’s dark and it’s moist, that’s when it grows.”

“And then when we get the next summer months, when it’s dry, there is more Valley fever fungus that can go into the air.”

Hernandez said *Coccidioides* is a hardy fungus that can survive even in severe droughts.

Some research has linked the increasing number of cases to the growing incidence of dust storms in the southwest. As the Earth warms, the region is becoming drier and that means more dust storms blowing fungal spores into the air.

Ana B. Ibarra covers health care for CalMatters. Her reporting largely focuses on issues around access to care and affordability. She played a leading role in CalMatters’ coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic. She was part of a CalMatters team whose pandemic coverage was recognized by the California News Publishers Association in 2021. ★

## California Aims to Improve Ability to Measure How Much Water Is Flowing Throughout the State

### California Department of Water Resources News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - On Aug. 15, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced a new partnership opportunity to support the state’s ability to measure stream and river flows through the California Stream Gage Improvement Program (CalSIP) as climate extremes continue to impact the state’s water supply.

As part of the approximately \$7 million program, the Department of Water Resources is seeking to partner with public agencies to install, upgrade and/or reactivate existing stream gage stations. This effort will expand California’s ability to access critical data

that can inform important water management decisions during both flood and drought conditions.

“California can’t manage what we don’t measure. Expanding our network of gages in rivers and streams helps us all make better decisions about managing our precious water supply while protecting vulnerable communities from flooding and drought,” said Department of Water Resources Director Karla Nemeth.

“It also benefits our natural environment, improving our understanding of the needs of salmon and other native fish especially during drought conditions.”

A stream gage is a set of instruments installed along a river or stream that measures, records,

and transmits data on flow, water temperature, and dissolved oxygen levels. Water agencies and the public rely on the essential information these gages provide for multiple purposes including:

Planning, forecasting, and warning about floods and drought conditions

Managing and informing reservoir operations

Monitoring environmental conditions to protect aquatic habitats

Planning for safe and enjoyable recreational activities

Assessing groundwater and surface water interaction

Monitoring stream flow impacts due to long-term changes in weather patterns

While there are approximately 1,000 active stream

gages across the state sharing information publicly, many watersheds lack vital information on their surface water resources. Users of this data include emergency responders, water managers, environmental and transportation agencies, universities, utilities, recreators, researchers, and Tribes.

“Filling gaps in our stream gage network is essential for protecting life and property from flooding, improving water supply forecasting now and into the future amidst an ever-changing climate, and enhancing recreational opportunities like rafting and fishing,” said Teresa Connor, the California Stream Gage Improvement program manager with the Department of Water Resources.

The Department of Water Resources is now accepting interest forms, which will be reviewed and evaluated monthly to identify eligible projects through Dec. 31. The funding will allow approved entities to purchase and install stream gage equipment as well as operate and maintain stations through June 30, 2027. Local entities will need to operate and maintain the gage and can elect to perform the operations either with staff or hire an experienced consultant to perform the installation and operations of the gage if the operation is consistent with industry standards. Real-time stream data transmitted from these gages will then be publicly shared on the California Data Exchange Center website at <https://cdec.water.ca.gov>.

Applicants are encouraged to apply as soon as possible. Additional information on eligible agencies, how to apply, and application deadlines can be found in the program guidelines.

This work is funded by the Budget Act of 2023 and is part of a larger effort authorized by Senate Bill 19 to address gaging information gaps in coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, the California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the California Department of Conservation.

For more information about the program and how to apply for technical assistance, visit the California Stream Gage Improvement Program webpage. ★



# Downtown Sacramento Partnership Releases Comprehensive Strategy to Address Livability

Traci Rockefeller Cusack, T-Rock Communications News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Downtown Sacramento Partnership has published a document titled “Downtown Sacramento Livability Strategy.”

The 40-page document is composed of three sections, starting with an explanation of what a neighborhood needs from the community viewpoint as well as from the perspective of developers, listing out critical items that need attention and prevent progress.

The document then outlines a list of six urgent priorities that require immediate attention to create a livable, lovable downtown, before concluding with a call-to-action for elected and community leaders to take action on the items listed.

“The Downtown Sacramento Livability Strategy reinforces the significant progress being



Downtown Sacramento Partnership has released a strategy to improve livability in the area. Photo courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership

made at the local level and serves as a call to action for additional measures to address both the supply and demand sides of the urban neighborhood continuum,” said Scott Ford, Deputy Director with Downtown Sacramento Partnership.

“It challenges all of us to think differently about

the future of downtown, to double down on the production of housing at all levels of affordability, and to achieve livable amenities which support a highly desirable and sustainable mixed-use neighborhood in the heart of California’s capital region.”

A timely release, the Downtown Sacramento

Livability Strategy is published following a slew of headlines and comments over the last year on housing and building conversions.

U.C. Berkeley’s Terner Center for Housing Innovation recently published a research and policy piece on construction defect liability law and

slowing California condo development.

“Amongst the many successes downtown Sacramento must be, it must also be a great urban neighborhood with a lot more housing,” said Brent Toderian, co-author of the document and previous State of Downtown speaker.

“This strategy won’t sit on a shelf collecting dust, because Sacramento leaders and downtown champions can’t let it. It’s been crafted to tackle the toughest challenges with unusual bluntness, to ensure it provides the most important guidance in any future conversation about the downtown’s future. It’s specifically designed to be game-changing.”

Unlike similarly published documents, the Downtown Sacramento Livability Strategy is not meant to be a report. Rather, this document is intended to serve as a strategy for leaders, and shift mindsets to change the way people think about urban living.

“The sole intent is to be a transformational turning point for downtown. Anything less should be considered a failure,” added Toderian.

The report is at <https://www.downtownsac.org/about/reports-publications/downtown-sacramento-livability-strategy>. ★

# Gallagher Criticizes Undemocratic End of Session

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, legislators crammed through bills with little to no debate while multiple other proposals failed to meet the midnight deadline for passage.

View Gallagher’s letter at <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/ysjjs94vcs0bjkg12isc5/Request-to-Investigate-Floor-Actions.pdf?rlkey=5z2fwdk4fgxo406jflb6f-084p&e=1&dl=0> ★



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**Commentary by Travis Hinkle**  
**CALMatters.org**

These are jobs that get your hands dirty. It's work that makes a difference. It typically requires less formal education than many other jobs, but can offer a lifelong

I have noticed that more attention is being paid these days to proactively recruit water industry workers, helping them understand the training and skills needed to grow in the industry. Last fall, I even told my story to a joint session of the California Public Utilities Commission and the California Workforce Development Board, as the state seeks to



While work in the water industry may seem obscure, it is rewarding, meaningful and essential for the wellbeing

*Financial support for this story was provided by the Smidt Foundation and The James Irvine Foundation. Travis Hinkle is a distribution system supervisor for San Jose Water.* ★

***Sacramento County News Release***

Informed by the prior effort, stakeholder engagement and recent Board direction

**New growth areas** – Greenfield development in new growth areas is often seen as being more cost-efficient and easier than acquiring and assembling land for the

**Lot size and parcel assembly** – It is common for parcels in already urbanized areas to be smaller than in areas designated for greenfield development.

The actions identified to address these barriers range from actions that can be taken immediately to those that may take years to fully implement. ★

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