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is for
Everyone**

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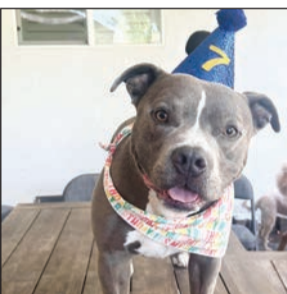
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SEPTEMBER 13, 2024

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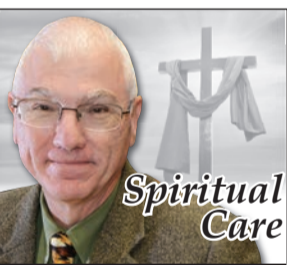
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**KINGS KORNER
BY V.G. HARRIS**



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



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Partnership Creates Livability Strategy



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

**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 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

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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

Continued on Page 2

Project Pickup Reels in Fishing 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

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Blue Angels to Headline Capital Airshow Next March



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

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 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. ★

Call 988 to Save a Life

Continued from Page 1

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 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.

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,

"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

SAVE THE NUMBER SAVE A LIFE CALL OR TEXT 988

988

SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

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nimh.nih.gov/suicideprevention

Graphic courtesy of the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline

emotional or physical pain Talking about being a burden to others Withdrawing from family and friends Giving away important possessions 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, get help as soon as possible, particularly if the behavior is new or has recently increased. ★

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UC Students Push for A Place to Get — And Stay — Sober on Every Campus

By Mikhail Zinshteyn
CALMatters.org

A small collegiate recovery program at half of the University of California's 10 campuses holds regular weekly meetings for students in some stage of battling drug and alcohol addiction or some other form of self-harm.

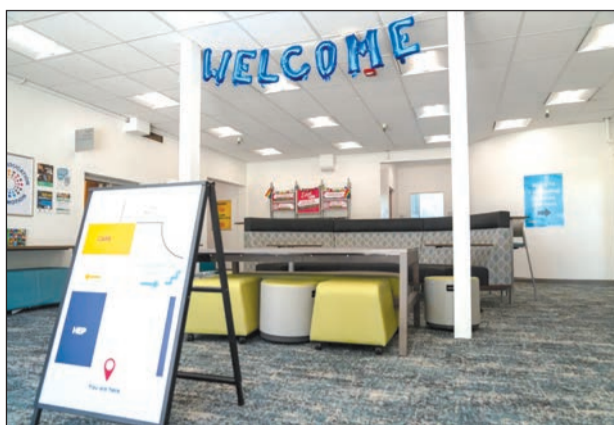
The University of California Student Association, which represents the system's 233,000 undergraduates, is mounting a campaign to bring the program and university funding to every campus. After almost a year of advocacy, the student organization brought the program to UC's largest stage, the UC Regents meeting, in July. Student advocates want a full-time coordinator at every campus, ongoing funding for each program and a private, dedicated meeting space at every UC.

The University Office of the President maintains that every campus has some kind of drug prevention, intervention and treatment program. But student advocates say the collegiate recovery programs are unique and provide an important outlet for students who need a nuanced approach to vanquishing their drug dependencies. The first was founded at Brown University in 1977. Today, scores exist on campuses across the country.

The Need for Drug Recovery Centers

The university system estimates that the existing programs served 4,000 students last year. A 2023 national survey indicates that 1.6% of UC undergraduates are in some form of drug or alcohol recovery.

But likely many more could benefit from a drug recovery program. The same 2023 survey showed that, depending on the campus, around 50% to 70% of undergraduates reported drinking at least once and a third to half have tried cannabis. Smaller, but still notable, shares of students have



The lobby of the Cowell Building at UC Davis, which also provides access to the Center for Advocacy, Resources, & Education and Health Education and Promotion student services, serves as the general meeting area for Counseling Services. Photos by Louis Bryant III for CalMatters



Stephanie J. Lake, M.Ed., LAADC, reconfigures the lobby space in the Cowell Building to showcase its setup for providing Counseling Services to UC Davis students

used other drugs at least once: roughly 3% to 10% used cocaine; as much as 2% tried meth. Among UC Berkeley students, nearly 1% had tried heroin.

What the Program Does

Often with few dollars and no full-time staffer, these programs foster a community of peers who together navigate their sobriety through the thicket of tempting or illicit substances that are often rife on their college campuses.

The programs serve multiple purposes: group meetings, more targeted support from a campus coordinator who may also refer the students to mental or medical help on or off campus, and if there's money, social events. Some, like the one at UC Davis, distribute fentanyl test strips and Narcan, an overdose-reversing nasal spray, for free.

Unlike more familiar substance recovery programs such as Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous, collegiate recovery programs don't demand abstinence from all substances when a person pursues recovery from one in particular.

The program's "harm reduction" approach is meant to appeal to more students who aren't ready to fully abstain from all substances but need help quitting or dialing back from a substance that's personally destructive.

"What I've seen for a lot of people is, once they get involved in the (college recovery program) and they see people that are totally sober, they're like, 'Oh, I can still have fun being totally sober,'" said Stephanie Lake, the coordinator at UC Davis's college recovery program, Aggies for Recovery, and a full-time substance abuse therapist on the campus. "A lot of them do eventually get to total sobriety but harm reduction at least gives them a way where they're reducing the harm of their drugs so that they're able to function in a better capacity."

Lake said that harm reduction is a newer practice that became more common in the past five years. One of the weekly meetings uses an Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous speaker format to give students a sense of how those meetings look, she added.



Stephanie J. Lake, M.Ed., LAADC, in her private office on the second floor of the Cowell Building, where Counseling Services support the 40,000+ UC Davis student body.

Still, students hooked on certain hard drugs struggle to moderate their consumption. Lake described one student she counseled a few years ago who wanted to continue using heroin on weekends. She told the student to see if he could limit his usage after three weeks. He couldn't but also didn't want to quit. A few months later, he came back to her, ready to get sober. Lake then referred him to treatment.

Collegiate recovery programs are located on campus, another benefit, UC officials wrote in an agenda item to regents last month. That's because not all students have the transportation means or time to seek services that are off campus, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, intensive outpatient services and Suboxone treatment.

Need for Full-Time Coordinators

The UC Student Association stresses that each campus needs a full-time coordinator. At UC Davis, Lake officially spends 5% of her time in that role, on top of the four to six students she sees daily for counseling. The campus intends to hire a full-time coordinator this fall, which she says couldn't come soon enough.

She couldn't apply for outside grants to fund the recovery program because she was busy with her full-time therapist job. The recovery program sponsors events on weekends, making it hard for her to attend after a full week's work seeing other students.

She also guides two student facilitators who work part-time leading the group meetings. They include Ashlyn Reed, an incoming fourth-year student. The program has been

instrumental in helping her remain off the substance that she has struggled with the most: nicotine. It's her fourth time quitting; this six-month stint has been the longest she has gone without smoking. She said the group meetings helped her examine why she relied on nicotine as an emotional crutch. "What am I hiding from or trying to avoid?" she said.

But she also feels the limits of the program without a full-time coordinator. "We're the best kept secret on campus, and we don't want to be," she said. Without a full-time coordinator, there's no one to market the program on campus, where hundreds of student and community groups compete for attention from the campus's 40,000 students through leaflets, live events and other outreach.

Students pushing for a recovery program on every campus insist on ongoing university funding to support them as well as dedicated space for the meetings.

Aditi Hariharan, a UC Davis student who has advocated on behalf of the UC Student Association for these centers, expressed concern that some regents at the July meeting encouraged campuses to seek county health grants to fund the programs. Navigating county bureaucracy is difficult, she and other student advocates said, and even if the funding comes through, it's not a guaranteed ongoing source.

"County grants are also temporary and need to be reapplied and reapplied, and don't assure that CRPs should have," said Hariharan, who recently was elected as the student association's president.

Ryan King, a

spokesperson for the UC Office of the President, wrote that each "campus sets priorities within its budget and must balance competing priorities." He added that the system is exploring additional funding through the California Youth Behavioral Health Initiative and the recently passed Proposition 1, a state initiative to raise billions of dollars for housing and treatment facilities for mentally ill Californians. The UC maintains a \$50 billion budget and about a fifth of that is for its main education mission, including student services.

"If there was a space where they could just hang out during that day, there wouldn't be so much temptation to relapse," Lake said. The campus's program relies on temporary meeting spaces, including the lobby of a student health services building.

UC Berkeley's center just received its own space. Previously, students attending meetings in an administrative building would need to sometimes enter the police department to gain access to the building — an awkward encounter for individuals trying to confide to each other about substance abuse. Other times, campus deans would cross the communal space during group meetings.

"The fentanyl crisis and everything else, it's a scary time for me as a counselor," Lake said. Having the collegiate recovery program "is just super, super important."

Mikhail Zinshteyn reports on higher education for CalMatters. His coverage tackles state legislation, financial aid, labor issues, student demands, campus housing and college affordability.

★



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Sac Metro Fire Chiefs Discuss Latest Innovations

Story and photos by Annie Kerr

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - It's not every day that you get to eat lunch with a fire chief.

On Sept. 5, the Tri-Communities Lunch Bunch of North Highlands, Rio Linda and the Sacramento area hosted Sacramento Metro Fire Chief Adam House and Battalion Chief Scott Perryman as its guest speakers at Brookfield's Restaurant on Madison Avenue.

Meeting once a month for nearly 50 years, the Lunch Bunch is a wide group of community members who are interested in networking, meeting new acquaintances and hearing a variety of prominent guest speakers, all while enjoying a delicious lunch.

House was introduced by Edward Jones Financial Advisor and Lunch Bunch host Patrick Magnani, who gave a brief background on both House and Perryman's careers.

According to Magnani, House is a Sacramento native and graduated from Cordova High School in 1987. He has a 36-year tenure in public service, including four years in the Army serving as a firefighter. In 2000, he joined Sacramento Metro Fire and was named fire chief in August 2023.

House began his speech by saying, "I couldn't be more proud to say I am a Sacramento native." Calling Metro Fire a "fine organization," he provided a background of the fire department, the work they do and the advancements they are making toward providing 24/7 safety for all Sacramento residents.

According to House, Sacramento Metro Fire is the seventh largest fire department in the state of California.

"In the last 10 years, our call volume has doubled," he said.

In fact, House stated that in 2023, the fire department received more than 100,000 calls to 911. The department is expecting 110,000 calls by the end of 2024.

"So, we have to look at doing other things, having other capabilities and providing additional services because today's population demands that," House said. "We have to evolve. We have to have a

higher degree of capability."

House emphasized that Sac Metro Fire must adapt to the growing demand of its services, predominantly concerning the fentanyl, mental health and homelessness crises. Those issues must now be addressed.

"I've made it a priority to get involved with every single player in Sacramento County and ask, 'How do we think outside the box and get our resources together so we're not working on islands?'" House said. "We're collaborating like never before, and with the help of Supervisors Rich Desmond and Sue Frost, we've been able to exercise outside the normal funds of the fire department to get additional funding to incorporate help into the sensitive areas of today's communities," he said.

The result: Mobile Integrated Health, which is the first of its kind in the nation.

The premise behind the program is to make the emergency process easier, quicker and more affordable for all parties involved. Or, in House's words, "Getting the right resource to the right call to have the right outcome to get them (the caller) to the right place."

"You should be proud of your fire department," House concluded.

The fire chief then introduced Battalion Chief Perryman to elaborate on the program, saying, "As firefighters, we need to be good human beings first. This (Perryman) is a good human being all the way around."

Perryman began his career in 2002 as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) and paramedic before joining Metro Fire in 2006 as a firefighter, according to Magnani. He was promoted to captain in 2013 and then battalion chief in 2022.

Perryman spoke further about the Mobile Integrated Health program, which was his creation.

"I'm really passionate about this project I've been working on because it affects so much," Perryman said.

First, not every medical issue calls for a trip to the ER, according to Perryman. By utilizing Mobile Integrated Health, an on-scene nurse practitioner/physician's assistant can treat, diagnose, write medications and communicate with the patient's



Battalion Chief Scott Perryman, left, Metro Fire Department Director Cindy Saylor and Metro Fire Chief Adam House attended the Sept. 5 Lunch Bunch.

primary care provider, therefore saving both the first responder and the patient a lengthy (and often unnecessary) ER visit. This also allows officers to spend more time patrolling the streets rather than waiting in the ER with someone.

Perryman shared several stories of 911 callers that were repeatedly sent to the ER but found no solutions for their issues until the Mobile Integrated Health professionals were able to "go in and dig and find out what's going on."

"The person's care is elevated," Perryman said about Mobile Integrated Health.

"Think of the bills," Perryman said, referring to the price of an ambulance, an ER visit, medications and more. Mobile Integrated Health is saving not only patients', but insurance companies' money, as well.

According to Perryman, the program is currently funded by the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and grant money, with funds to open another unit in South Sacramento. The existing one is located in North Sacramento.

The next step for Mobile Integrated Health would be the signing of SB1180, a bill awaiting Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature that would allow Mobile Integrated Health to bill for its services. According to Perryman, Mobile Integrated Health can currently only charge for the equivalent of a physician's visit, which ranges from \$100 to \$150. Perryman emphasized that Mobile Integrated Health is "not here to make money" and they just want to "cover their costs."

House joined Perryman to reiterate a few final points and ended by saying, "We have to be adaptable visionaries that just can't sit around on our heels and say all we do is fight fires. We have to be better than that."

The Lunch Bunch meets the first Thursday of each month and welcomes anyone who is interested. The next meeting will be at 11:30 a.m. Oct. 3 at Brookfield's Restaurant, 4343 Madison Ave, Sacramento.

For more information about Sacramento Metro Fire, visit <https://metrofire.ca.gov>. ★

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Risk of West Nile Virus Continues



The Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District urges residents to prevent mosquito bites as West Nile virus is still a risk. Photo courtesy of the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District

Sacramento Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - While Labor Day is the last holiday of the summer, mosquito activity and the risk of West Nile virus continue for all area residents.

On Aug. 30, the Sacramento-Yolo Mosquito & Vector Control District reminded the public to protect themselves from mosquitoes, especially as many would be at

outdoor activities for the long holiday weekend.

“Mosquito samples and dead birds are still testing positive for West Nile virus,” said District Manager Gary Goodman on Aug. 30. “While we have been enjoying the cooler weather, temperatures are expected to climb back up next week. This means mosquitoes will be out and there is still a possibility of being bitten and becoming sick with West Nile.

“Stay protected by always using an effective

repellent when spending time outdoors,” Goodman added.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention recommends using an insect repellent that contains the active ingredients DEET, Picaridin, IR3535 or the plant-based Oil of Lemon Eucalyptus. Be sure to always follow label directions when applying repellent.

This season, virus activity has been steady and widespread in both Sacramento and Yolo counties.

“We still have a few weeks before the summer season officially ends so it’s very important for everyone to do their part and protect themselves,” Goodman said.

While West Nile virus is the main concern, the invasive mosquitoes, *Aedes aegypti* and *Aedes albopictus* continue to spread throughout both counties.

Invasive mosquitoes are a public health threat because they are capable of transmitting debilitating diseases such as Zika, dengue and chikungunya.

Invasive mosquitoes were detected for the first time within district boundaries in 2019 and since then have been spreading quickly, according to the district.

To report a mosquito breeding source or for current information about any treatments planned within Sacramento or Yolo counties, visit www.FIGHTtheBITE.net. ★

Partnership Creates Livability Strategy

Continued from Page 1

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 Turner 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 Downtown Sacramento Livability Strategy 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 published report is available at <https://www.downtownsac.org/about/reports-publications/downtown-sacramento-livability-strategy>. ★

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 pre-season for the Sacramento Kings.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Get ready Kings fans, for a season that will rival any you’ve seen so far, and as always if you have comments, please send them to vgharrisingsfan@gmail.com.

All the best! ★

ABOUT TOWN

Kennedy High 1969 Reunion Oct. 19

The John F. Kennedy Senior High School Class of 1969’s 55-year reunion is set for Saturday, Oct. 19 from 6 p.m. to 11 p.m. at Dante Event Center, 2330 Fair Oaks Blvd.

Registration is \$75.69; after Sept. 19, \$85.69. Includes dinner, no-host cocktails.

Questions? Text or call Ruth Trubschenk Lundsten, 916-718-8826.

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 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, weekend 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.

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.

For more information about upcoming activities offered by Sacramento area museums, visit SacMuseums.org.

Elks 6 Volunteer Opportunities

PM Crew - We welcome anyone willing to work but especially if you have experience in mechanical, electrical, general contracting, painting, or plumbing the lodge really needs you.

-Wednesday Night Dinners - Help or adopt a night one time or once a month.

- Join the membership committee. Attend events and be available to give tours

If any of the above sound like something you would enjoy doing, please text Kathy Smith, 916-606-9313. ★

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Beloved Land Park Pitbull Celebrates Birthday with Neighbors

This article appears in response to "Pitbull Attack a Lesson for Dog-Walkers," which appeared in the Aug. 23 East Sacramento News.

By Paul Shapiro and Toni Shapiro

On March 19, 2020, we received an urgent email from Front Street Animal Shelter: "We just learned that our shelter may shut down. We need to get dogs out immediately while we still can."

As animal lovers who six months earlier had bought a South Land Park home that still had no animals in it, we figured we may as well pitch in during the pandemic and foster a dog in need. The situation at the shelter was so dire, we learned, that unlike the normal process, there'd be no application and no orientation; you just showed up that day and had a dog placed in your car.

So began our relationship with a friendly but nameless stray pitbull with no known backstory.

About two years old and athletic, with a

physique that resembles a certain former California governor, Eddie — named after Paul's late, quite muscular, grandfather — was a perfect 50-pound gentleman. He was house-trained, friendly to all people and animals, and had a primary mission in life simply never to be alone.

Ironically, we met more of our neighbors in the first couple weeks of pandemic isolation — all while walking Eddie through the neighborhood — than we did the first six months since moving in. Yes, there were some people with irrational fears of pitbulls who crossed the street when Eddie strutted by, but many neighbors purposely stopped to pet this new canine entrant to the community.

The American Temperament Test Society ranks pitbulls as one of the most affectionate and least aggressive dog breeds. Once known as "nanny dogs" in the early 20th century due to their gentle nature around children, Eddie proved to embody this history. He quickly became a beloved fixture in our neighborhood.

So when we decided to become

foster-failures and make Eddie a permanent part of our family, many in South Land Park rejoiced. Quickly he had dog dates set up at neighbors' houses, pool parties and even gifts from strangers. Our neighbors were now our friends.

Fast forward 4.5 years, and we just threw Eddie his seventh birthday party, hosting 11 of his canine friends and 20 of their human companions at our home. With no dog fights — and no human fights either — Eddie, proudly wearing a birthday hat, was the center of attention, surrounded by dog cake and toys.

It's hard to overstate how much happiness Eddie's brought to our life, and how much more he's made our house feel like a home. Whether walking in the neighborhood, at the dog park or along the Sacramento River, Eddie routinely runs into people who know and love him, enriching our lives and making our community a little more tight-knit.

Paul Shapiro and Toni Shapiro live in South Land Park. You can follow Eddie on Instagram: @eddiethepittie



Eddie the pitbull at his seventh birthday party. Photo courtesy of Paul and Toni Shapiro.

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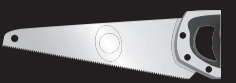
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Don't Tell it to the Chaplain

I 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.

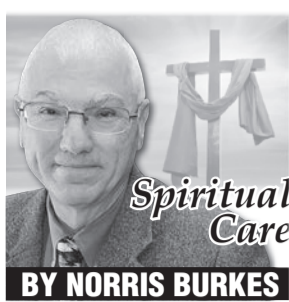
My title refers to certain phrases people use that cause me to jokingly reply, "Don't ever say that to a chaplain."

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."



BY NORRIS BURKES

"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. ★

California's Water Workforce Is Aging

Promoting Next Generation of Workers Is Essential

Commentary by Travis Hinkle
CALMatters.org

A career building and maintaining California's water and wastewater treatment systems may be unglamorous, failing to spring to mind — at least it did for me — when young people contemplate their future careers.

However, the state faces a looming shortage of workers in these critical roles. It is imperative to support local, state and federal policies that help fill them.

Some 17 million workers will be retiring from infrastructure jobs during the next 10 years, taking their skills and institutional knowledge with them, as the workforce ages. According to a US Water Alliance report, approximately one-third of water utility operators are eligible to retire during the next decade. In 2018, Brookings projected that water utilities must fill 9,200 water treatment positions annually.

While President Biden and Congress agreed to spend \$1 trillion on thousands of infrastructure projects, including \$50 billion alone on water resilience projects in the West, California needs to ensure that there are enough workers equipped with the know-how and sweat equity to build and operate these projects.

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

career, good pay and solid opportunities for advancement.

Infrastructure work pays 30% more to lower-income workers and those just starting their careers, relative to all jobs nationally.

I got my own start after high school by joining my brother's remodeling business — kitchens, bathrooms and the like — in San Jose, where I grew up. But a friend in Sacramento stumbled into wastewater collections for Sacramento County and encouraged me to visit his plant. There I discovered the range of jobs available: electricians, control technicians and treatment and distribution operators.

Even though I pursued online specialty courses, it took a few years for my first job in the water industry to come together.

My work requires lots of on-the-job training, but all of it is teachable and learnable. Once hired, workers can bid through labor unions for other available positions they're qualified for. Even if they decide to go elsewhere, they'll leave the department knowing how a water distribution system works.

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



Environmental scientist Mackenzie Miner, from the California Department of Water Resources Division of Integrated Science and Engineering Aquatic Ecology and Estuarine Science and Synthesis teams, performs routine water sampling on the Sacramento River in Yolo County on June 18. Photo by Andrew Nixon, California Department of Water Resources

widen doors to infrastructure jobs, especially for disadvantaged workers.

When I entered this field, serendipity was my guide. Today, there are resources such as the EPA report "Making Water a Career of Choice," with case studies of utility-worker pathways to encourage more people to consider working in water systems.

In the years ahead, tens of thousands more workers will be needed to meet California's water delivery and other infrastructure needs, and more effort required to attract new talent into this crucial industry.

While work in the water industry may seem obscure, it is rewarding, meaningful and essential for the wellbeing of communities throughout our state. Promoting

community college, state university, private sector and state and federal programs designed to inspire and train the next generation of water infrastructure leaders is vital for California's future.

Encouraging more young people to enter this career field will not only help California meet its mushrooming needs, but will provide important, well-paying work for those who don't mind rolling up their sleeves to keep California's water pipelines flowing.

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. He has worked in the water industry for 13 years. ★

County Rezones Aim to Boost Affordable Housing

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted Aug. 20 to adopt a series of resolutions and ordinances to rezone sites throughout the county, a move aimed at addressing the shortfall of 2,884 units in the county's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) for the lower-income category (households with incomes less than 80 percent of area median income; income levels less than \$69,050).

The plan will rezone 74 infill sites across the county to allow for the construction of housing units for a range of income levels. By rezoning these parcels, the county hopes to encourage developers to build more multi-family units and subsidized housing projects.

"This rezone project is a significant step toward addressing the critical housing shortage in Sacramento County and we have certain sites that already have developer interest," said Todd Smith, Sacramento County planning director.

"By prioritizing the development of lower-income housing units, we are not only meeting our immediate obligations but also laying the groundwork for a more inclusive, equitable and green future," Smith said. "These rezones will create opportunities for families and individuals who need it most, ensuring that our communities remain vibrant and diverse while also reducing vehicle miles traveled, meaning lower greenhouse gas emissions."

The 74 rezoned sites are located

within 10 community planning areas: Antelope, Arden-Arcade, Carmichael/Old Foothill Farms, Cordova, Fair Oaks, North Highlands, Orangevale, Rio Linda/Elverta, South Sacramento and Vineyard.

These rezones take effect on Sept. 19.

While the Regional Housing Needs Allocation obligations have now been met, the county remains committed to increasing residential capacity in furtherance of section A1 of the County's Housing Element with a goal of rezoning additional sites in 2025. ★

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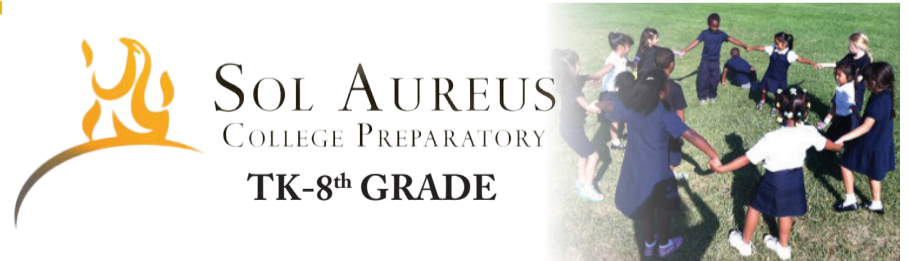


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Project Pickup Reels in Fishing Line



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

Continued from Page 1

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 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



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.

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. ★

Board of Supervisors Adopts Infill Program

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted Aug. 20 to adopt the County’s Infill Program Update and directed staff to implement certain actions identified in the plan to accelerate the program.

In July 2021, Sacramento County received a Local Early Action Planning (LEAP) grant for an update to the 2008 Infill Program with the purpose of identifying current barriers to infill development and developing a strategy to address these barriers.

Informed by the prior effort, stakeholder engagement and recent Board direction resulting from the Development Review

Process Improvements Review and the Board’s Housing and Infill Workshop, the Infill Program Update is a roadmap to facilitating policy and procedural changes and increasing and accelerating housing production in the county.

The Program Update identifies seven barriers to infill development and provides an implementation program consisting of 13 actions intended to address these barriers.

Barriers to infill include:
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 construction of infill development.

Infrastructure – Many of the

traditional commercial corridors in the county were built and designated for cars rather than people and have aging utility infrastructure that may now be equipped to handle new higher-density development.

High development costs – Another major barrier to infill can be the high cost associated with acquiring urbanized land, project application fees and development impact fees for improvements in the public right of way.

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

Permitting process – Longer and more difficult paths to approval can dramatically add to project costs and timelines.

Development regulations – Strict and complex zoning standards and design guidelines that do not allow for flexibility can present barriers to successful infill development.

Coordination – The number of departments and agencies in the county necessitates time-consuming coordination among internal departments and divisions and external agencies.

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

To stay up to date on the County’s infill efforts, check out our Infill Development website at <https://sacramentocountyinfill.com>. ★

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Chalk Art is for Everyone

Story and photos by Mitch Barber

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.

A square costs \$250 to sponsor. The money goes to schools and organizations that provide field trips, easels and paintbrushes, after-school mentorship programs and more.

According to the Chalk It Up website at chalkitup.org, "Chalk It Up's mission is to empower and support the next generation of Sacramento artists through targeted art grants for young artists and the programs that inspire them."

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.

This year, Christy Jourdan ran the Chalk It Up! Festival; it is her fifth year as executive director and 11th as a volunteer. She said that 150 volunteers at the park "make it happen."

When asked what is new for this year, Jourdan answered, "We're super-stoked about our sponsor Taco Bell Cantina." The



Yixin Huang is a 17-year-old St. Francis High School student from Singapore.

restaurant is at 900 K St. and owned by Dave Smith, dubbed "Taco Dave."

"This event has a \$90,000 price tag on it," Jourdan said. "Somebody like Taco Dave comes in, wants to know how he can help."

Jourdan said Smith's contribution went toward a big tent for the beer garden and a picnic area.

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

All ages came out to illustrate with chalk on the sidewalk squares.

Mason, 12, was in his second year drawing at the event. With his family urging him on, Mason drew a character named Satoru



Mason shows off his artistic talents.

Gojo from the anime (Japanese animation) called "Jujutsu Kaizen."

Yixin Huang from Singapore, a 17-year-old

St. Francis High School student, had an art square sponsored by Girls Rock Sacramento, and she was encouraged by the



Sidewalk chalk awaits its retrieval by artists at Chalk It Up at Fremont Park.



Alani shows off her finished work.

presence of her parents from China.

Sisters Alani, 8, and Alaysiya, 11, worked on adjacent squares. 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 squares drawn within it with sweet edible treats

represented.

Alaysiya worked on "virtual singers," including Hatsune Miku.

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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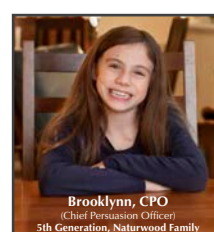
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