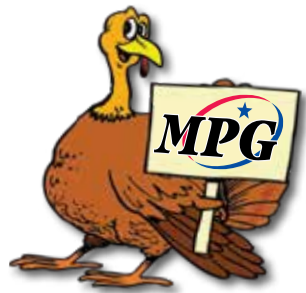




**Everyone
Can Light
the World**

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**We Wish Our
Readers A Happy
Thanksgiving**



Grapevine Independent

VOLUME 58 • ISSUE 47 PROUDLY SERVING RANCHO CORDOVA & SACRAMENTO COUNTY SINCE 1968 NOVEMBER 22, 2024

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CELTIC XMAS
ANNOUNCED**



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Honoring Diamond Investors



Attendees included Diamond Investors and representatives from the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG)

The Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce celebrated its 2024 Diamond Investors at a special reception Nov. 13 at Eezy Craft Winery. The event gathered business leaders and community stakeholders to recognize their significant contributions that play a vital role in the development and growth of the region.

Kristen Holihan, board chair of the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce, addressed the crowd, highlighting the importance of Diamond



Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce staff present at the event included from left, Alexandra Christi, Diann Rogers, Ashley Wilson, Cassandra Marcum, Celia Surridge and Pam Garcia. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan

Investors and their dedication to improving the local business climate.

“You guys are the ones that really help us make a difference in our business

community,” Holihan said. “You represent our business region, helping support our chamber, and embody the best that a business association can offer. We’re so thankful for everyone that supports our mission and goes above and beyond.”

The event recognized businesses that play a significant role in improving economic opportunities for companies of all sizes. According to the chamber, these investors are instrumental in creating a climate of growth and success, ensuring the long-term prosperity of

Continued on page 2

Council Honors Longtime Member

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG)

The Rancho Cordova City Council held its regular meeting on Nov. 18, where members bid farewell to one of their long-standing members, Councilmember Donald Terry, and made important appointments to the Measure R and Measure H Citizen Oversight Board.

The meeting began with a heartfelt recognition of Councilmember Donald Terry, who is retiring after 12 years of service. Terry, first elected in 2012, holds the distinction of being the youngest person elected to the City Council.

“As vice-mayor, I have the pleasure to give the proclamation to Councilmember Donald Terry. He has championed many causes in the city, including the Rancho Cordova Promise Program, championed the City Community Engagement Program and played a key role in the passage of Measure H,” said Vice-Mayor Siri Pulipati.

Terry’s contributions to the city were further praised by City Manager Micah Runner.

“I really appreciate all you have given to this city and personally all the things you did for me. Your commitment to the city and the community has been remarkable,” Runner said.

Councilmember Garrett Gatewood also reflected on Terry’s impact.

“He helped me understand what it meant to be a good council member. He is probably the best politician I have ever seen in my life,” Gatewood said.

Diann Rogers, president and CEO of the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce, also expressed appreciation for Terry’s support of the local business community.

“Your transparency and advice, both professionally and politically, have been invaluable,” Rogers said.

In his farewell remarks, Terry expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve the city.

“It’s been the honor of my life to serve this community. I will miss the people and the work but I’m excited for the trajectory of this city,” Terry said, thanking his family and colleagues.

The council also discussed Item 16.7, which authorized the city manager to procure Microsoft 365 G5 licenses utilizing a contract with the County of Riverside. The decision was pulled for further discussion after concerns were raised by the public.

Resident James Garcia
Continued on page 3

100 Days In

FCUSD Superintendent Shares Insights and Vision

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG)

Folsom Cordova Unified School District Superintendent Erik Swanson was the keynote speaker at the Rancho Cordova Area Chamber of Commerce and Cordova Community Council’s monthly luncheon on Nov. 15. Swanson, who began his role in July 2024, shared his vision for the district and the importance of educational excellence, equity, and community support.

James Robinson, senior vice president at Kaiser Permanente, introduced Swanson, emphasizing his extensive background in educational leadership.

“He brings a wealth and depth of knowledge in academic, social, and emotional programs. He is committed to empowering all students to thrive



Folsom Cordova Unified School District and Rancho Cordova Chamber representatives attended the monthly luncheon. From left are Angela Griffin Ankheily, Shelly Blanchard, Erik Swanson, David Reid, Jennifer Laret and Martha Campos. Photo by Omella Rossi

through educational excellence and fostering inclusive and equitable learning environments in which every student feels seen and safe,” Robinson said.

Swanson stressed the importance of preparing students for the future by ensuring they graduate

with a strong sense of agency and self-efficacy. Swanson also introduced the concept of “radical kinship,” which involves working side by side and caring for others in a way that extends beyond traditional notions of love, a core value that guides his leadership. He shared

his philosophy of being a “warm demander,” setting high expectations while providing the support necessary for students and staff to succeed.

“This isn’t a job; it’s so much more than that,” Swanson told the audience. “In my 25 years in
Continued on page 6



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Fall Art Show



Youth artists Axel Kirby won the third-place youth award with his watercolor artwork, "Veggie Palette." Photo by Rick Sloan



From left, Cheryl Gleason, Janelle Noam, Axel Kirby, Carolyn Cunningham, Michael Fritschi, Jennifer Coulter and Valerie Birkhoff. Photo by Rick Sloan



The first-place youth award went to Janelle Noam for "California Quail," a framed digital print. Photo by Rick Sloan



The first-place award was presented to Jennifer Coulter for "The Flower Bed." Photo by Rick Sloan



The best of show award went to Michael Fritschi for his oil painting titled "San Francisco Morning." Photo by Rick Sloan



Valerie Birkhoff earned the second-place award for her painted clay sculpture, "Peering Through the Veil." Photo by Rick Sloan

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - The Fall Art Exhibit, one of the largest and most anticipated shows of the year, is currently on display at City Hall showcasing a diverse range of artistic works by local talent.

The exhibit, which opened on Oct. 28, is the 49th show hosted at City Hall and features 106 pieces of artwork from 50 different artists, including four youth artists, all of whom either live or work in Rancho Cordova or are members of the Rancho Cordova Arts nonprofit.

The exhibit spans both the first and second floor of City Hall, with artwork featured throughout

the building hallways. The pieces range in medium, style and theme reflecting the creative talent of the community.

Cheryl Gleason, Art Director at the Mills Station Art & Culture Center (MACC), served as the juror for the show.

"Because this show is open theme, it's an opportunity for artists to bring out their best work and show what they are best at," said Gleason.

The coveted best of show award went to Michael Fritschi for his oil painting, "San Francisco Morning."

"The inspiration came from a weekend trip with my wife to San Francisco. The geometric patterns of the city were catching

my eye, and I wanted to get that on a canvas," said Fritschi. "I started doing oil paintings about a year and a half ago and it has been an explosion of wonderful work. I am very pleasantly surprised by this award; this is a passion that comes from my heart."

More of his artwork is currently on display at the Placerville Art Gallery, 352 Main St.

The first-place award was presented to Jennifer Coulter for "The Flower Bed," a piece created using torn paper monoprints from a gel plate.

"I became really enamored with gel printing, which is a monoprint technique done on a

jelly plate," said Coulter. "The torn pieces of paper I use are not painted, and I think that gives the work a unique texture. Winning this award means the world to me: it's a validation of my process. It's a complicated and meticulous technique but that's what makes it so fulfilling."

Valerie Birkhoff earned the second-place award for her painted clay sculpture, "Peering Through the Veil." The third-place award was awarded to Carolyn Cunningham for her mixed-media piece, "Placerville Patchwork." The First Place Youth award went to Janelle Noam for "California Quail", a framed digital print.

The exhibit will remain on

display until Jan. 25, offering ample time for art enthusiasts and Rancho Cordova residents to experience the show. Most of the pieces are for sale, with sales going directly through the artists. Each piece is accompanied by a tag that includes the artist's contact information, making it easy for potential buyers to reach out.

"I want to thank Rancho Cordova Art and the MACC for everything they do," said Coulter.

Rancho Cordova City Hall hosts four exhibits a year, allowing the community to enjoy a year-round rotation of art. Looking ahead, the first exhibit of 2025 will carry the theme, "The Golden Age." ★

Honoring Diamond Investors

Continued from page 1

the region. They also help keep local businesses connected to key issues that impact the economy and quality of life within the community.

"The vision of a Diamond Investor is one who leads in improving economic opportunities for all businesses, creates a climate of growth and success, and provides a platform for individuals and businesses to make a difference and prosper," Holihan said.

These honorees represented various sectors of the local economy, including the City of Rancho Cordova, SMUD, Elliot Homes, Inc., KP International Market, Marriott Rancho Cordova, Sutter Health, First Northern Bank, Goldenstone Wealth Management, Hyatt Place, Murphy Austin Adams Schoenfeld LLP, Republic Services,



Paul Scholl of Messenger Publishing Group receives a recognition from Kristen Holihan, Board Chair of the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce, alongside media sponsors Afisha Media, D'primeramano, and Russian American Media. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan

Clutch, AKT, Atlas Disposal, California American Water, Kaiser Permanente,

PG&E, Rancho Cordova FiberCity, Visit Rancho Cordova, AT&T, Golden

State Water Company, Hackard Law, Heritage Community Credit Union, McIlwain Mobility Solutions, Inc., MEDnRX, Residence Inn by Marriott, Western Health Advantage, and Woodside Homes.

Additionally, media sponsors for the event included Afisha Media, D'primeramano, Grapevine Independent and Russian American Media.

Throughout the evening, guests enjoyed a selection of food and drinks while networking with fellow attendees. The chamber presented leadership certificates to Diamond Investors, marking their continued commitment to the community.

For more information on the Rancho Cordova Chamber of Commerce or inquires about Diamond Investors opportunities, visit rancho cordova.org/ ★

River City Concert Band Presents Holiday Show



The holiday concerts are both free of charge. Photo courtesy of the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band

Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band News Release

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - The Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band (RCCB) presents "Holiday Harmonies" on Sunday, Dec. 8 at the Cordova Performing Arts Center, Rancho Cordova, with special guests Voices of California and The C.O.D. Barbershop Quartet.

The concert begins at 3 p.m. A special encore performance with just the band will be presented at Koreana Plaza on Saturday, Dec. 14, also at 3 p.m. Both concerts are free.

Under the direction of Tom Seaton, the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band will perform special arrangements of holiday favorites, including The Canadian Brass Christmas Suite, Sleigh Ride, Feliz Navidad, Cowboy Christmas, and Fantasia for Christmas (based on the Ukrainian Bell Carol). A special fanfare written especially for the band by member and French horn player Michael Kitchens will open the show.

At the Dec. 8 show, special guests Voices of California and C.O.D. Barbershop Quartet will perform their own holiday selections and join the band for a few special arrangements, as well as leading the audience in a Holiday Sing-Along.

The band is pleased to be sponsored by the Rancho Cordova Community Council. Performing an average of 10 concerts a year, Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band remains true to the American Community Band tradition - all of their concerts and performances throughout its yearlong season are free to the public; therefore, there is no admission charge.

Any monetary donations received will go to the Dennis Gray Memorial Scholarship Fund. The band is also collecting non-perishable food donations for the Rancho Cordova Food Locker.

The Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization made up of approximately 50 volunteer musicians who donate their time and musical talents to



"Holiday Harmonies" will feature special guests Voices of California and the C.O.D. Barbershop Quartet. Photo courtesy of the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band

present concerts with a broad audience appeal. The band's motto is "Love Music. Share Music. Make Music." Their love of music is what brings them together, and it is the band's desire to share music before audiences of diverse backgrounds, foster musical interest among children, and provide performance opportunities for

skilled community musicians. The band strives to provide a rich social environment to those seeking enrichment through making music with other adult musicians and the community.

The band can be followed on Facebook and their web page can also be visited at www.rccconcertband.org. Videos of live and virtual performances can be

viewed on the band's YouTube channel.

Come join the Rancho Cordova River City Concert Band on Sunday, Dec. 8 at 3 p.m. at Cordova Performing Arts Center, 2239 Chase Drive, Rancho Cordova, and on Saturday Dec. 14 at 3 p.m. at Koreana Plaza, 10971 Olson Drive, Rancho Cordova. ★

Planning Commission Approves New First Responder Training Facility

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - At its Nov. 13 meeting, the Rancho Cordova Planning Commission approved a design review for a first responder training facility and decided to continue deliberations on a proposed supportive housing project.

The commission unanimously approved the design review for the Zinfandel First Responder Training Facility, a new 23,190-square-foot training center to be built on a 53-acre site at 3801 Zinfandel Drive. The site has been owned by the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District since 2007.

A previous conditional use permit was approved in 2011, allowing the site to be used as a public safety command training center. This approval included the construction of 48,000 square feet of office space, specialized training areas for fire fighters, such as a trench rescue area, tower training area, river rescue area, and other venues designed for emergency response training.

The new facility will feature office space, classrooms, a fitness room, an apparatus bay for emergency vehicles, and various support spaces. The proposal includes landscape improvements, both internally and along the Zinfandel Drive street frontage.

Although the design received general support, some commissioners raised concerns about the use of metal for the building.

"As a general rule, metal buildings don't age well," said Vice-Chair Lee Frechette. "It's a very slippery slope when we start making exceptions for metal buildings."

Commissioner Leroy Triplette added, "What concerns me about the metal building is the glint and glare situations with the flight path. It can't be a risk for pilots."

Doug Davis, the architect, confirmed that the project is undergoing an FAA-required review, which includes a glare analysis.

Jeff Frye, Chief Development Officer for Metro Fire, assured the commission that additional buildings will be constructed throughout the property using different materials. He emphasized that a dedicated maintenance team would be assigned to oversee the upkeep of the project.

Despite the concerns, the project was approved unanimously, with commissioners acknowledging the facility's role in supporting

first responders.

The commission also discussed a proposal for a 100-unit single room occupancy facility at the existing Comfort Inn & Suites on Folsom Boulevard. The applicant, Lao Family Community Development, Inc., intends to convert the hotel into supportive housing for low-income individuals, offering services such as career counseling, health resources and job training.

Several commissioners expressed concerns about the project's location and its potential impact on the surrounding area. Commissioner Triplette questioned whether the facility would prioritize Rancho Cordova residents.

"I'm curious to see how this doesn't become transitional housing for the city or county of Sacramento," Triplette said.

Some commissioners raised concerns about the project's design and suitability for families. Vice-Chair Frechette worried about the lack of recreational amenities for children, while Commissioner Dave Huhn expressed concerns about crime.

"I don't want to see an increase in crime," Huhn said. "I'm in favor of the intent of the project. I just fear some of the outcomes I have seen in the past."

Commissioner Tegan Knifton also brought up the site's lack of nearby services.

"I appreciate the intent of the project, and there's no doubt the city needs something like this. I have concerns about the location. The nearest grocery store is three miles away and there's not much public transportation. It just feels like it isn't the right fit for Rancho Cordova."

In response, the project's proponents reassured the commission about their rigorous tenant-screening process.

"When individuals apply, all family members need to be at the interview. We look at their background, and income, references and do an in-depth analysis to ensure they will be a good member of this community," said Kathy Chao Rotherberg CEO of Lao Family Community Development, Inc.

The commission ultimately voted 4-3 to continue the discussion to a future meeting, allowing the applicant more time to address questions and concerns.

The next Planning Commission meeting will be held at 5:30 p.m. Dec. 11 at Rancho Cordova City Hall, 2729 Prospect Park Drive. ★

Council Honors Longtime Member



Councilmember Donald Terry stands alongside his wife, Angela Terry, and their two sons. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova

Williams, a Rancho Cordova resident and business owner, expressing his desire to contribute to the community.

The council selected Williams, along with Hua Vang, for the two-year term citizen appointments.

"Hua Vang has lived here for 11 years and it seemed to me that having someone with a bit more familiarity with the community enhancement fund might be beneficial,"

Continued from page 1
voiced opposition to relying on Riverside County's enterprise agreement instead of having the city manage its own agreement.

"We would have more direct control over the process rather than relying on a third party like Riverside County for tech support," Garcia said.

Resident Helen Beshaw echoed Garcia's concerns, suggesting that using Riverside's agreement made the city appear inexperienced.

Rita Gass, the city's Chief Technology and Innovation officer, explained that the Riverside County contract is a standard agreement used by special districts, including the city.

"We cannot purchase Microsoft government cloud licenses on our own. We must go through a third-party vendor, and Riverside is the best option available," Gass said. She emphasized that the city would not interact with Riverside County directly, only using the contract for pricing.

The council ultimately approved the item unanimously after clarification, with Councilmember



Council member Donald Terry received a proclamation from his fellow councilmembers at the City Council meeting. From left, Micah Runner, Donald Terry, Siri Pulipati, Garrett Gatewood, Linda Budge and David Kwong. Photo courtesy of City of Rancho Cordova

Gatewood noting, "This contract does allow us to go directly to Microsoft without needing to go through a third party for access."

The council also appointed two new members to the Measure R and Measure H Community Enhancement & Investment Fund Citizen Oversight Board, which ensures transparency in how funds from these voter-approved measures are spent.

Six applicants were confirmed as eligible for the board, with Jason

Councilmember Linda Budge said.

The appointments were approved by a majority vote, with Councilmember Gatewood adding, "It's all about showing up in this community and you have certainly shown up," in reference to Williams.

The council also appointed two student representatives to the board. Isabela Tang, a sophomore at Pleasant Grove High School, and Vraj Thakkar, a student at Folsom Lake College, were selected for the one-year term student positions. ★

SF Market Opens with Grand Celebration



City officials Linda Budge and Garret Gatewood, along with Chamber of Commerce President Diann Rogers, joined SF Market representatives in celebrating the grand opening of their new location. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan



City officials and SF Market representatives participated in a ribbon-cutting ceremony during the store's grand opening on Nov. 15. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan



A vibrant dragon dance performance was among the many attractions at the grand opening of SF Market's new location. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan



Samples were available for customers to enjoy while they shopped. Photo courtesy of Rick Sloan

By Omella Rossi

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - Shun Fat Supermarket, an Asian grocery store, opened its newest location in Rancho Cordova, Nov. 15.

The grand opening, held at 2738 Sunrise Blvd. in the former Sam's Club building, drew large crowds eager to experience the supermarket's new products.

The event kicked off with a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by city officials and local business leaders, followed by a lively dragon dance performance, which is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity in many Asian cultures. The festivities also included live music, product demonstrations and special giveaways.

The celebrations continued through Nov. 17, with shoppers

enjoying free gifts and special promotions. The first 300 customers each day received a complimentary 10-pound bag of jasmine rice. In addition, customers could receive a gift with their purchases that included a free Zero Degree Lemon Green Tea when spending \$25, a free Vina Café Chat or Cholimex Superhit Chili Sauce when spending \$50 or a free 10-pound bag of rice when

spending \$100.

"Freshness and variety are the cornerstones of the Shun Fat Supermarket group because we constantly strive for the highest possible level of customer satisfaction, our focus is on quality, innovation, and continuous improvement in product selection, customer service and convenience," as stated on the supermarket's website.

Shun Fat Supermarket is

known for its extensive selection of imported grocery items offering a diverse selection of products from around the globe, including China, Taiwan, Japan, Vietnam, Thailand, the Philippines and Mexico. The Rancho Cordova location is part of the supermarket chain's expansion across California, Nevada, Oregon and Texas, with a total of 18 stores in operation. ★

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New Republic FC Stadium Back on Track

By Daniel Canfield

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A project that was on life support had some much-needed life injected into it on Tuesday, Nov. 12, when the Sacramento City Council voted unanimously to approve the framework for a \$321 million downtown railyards soccer stadium and entertainment venue. A long-awaited development needed to provide a permanent home for the Sacramento Republic Football Club (FC).

According to the information provided by council staff in support of the proposal, the projects being approved include a soccer stadium with supporting infrastructure occupying approximately 31 acres, as well as a new 3600-seat live entertainment venue that would occupy existing historic buildings in the railyard.

The agreement, albeit non-binding, does include information regarding project costs, economic impact and anticipated public and private funding sources. The estimated \$321 million price tag breaks down to, \$175 million for the new stadium, \$56 million for the new live entertainment venue and \$90 million for associated



Here is an architectural rendering of the new Sacramento Republic FC stadium to be built in the historic Sacramento Railyards district. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Republic FC

infrastructure. The projects together are expected to generate more than 1,500 jobs for the Sacramento region. The agreement includes a provision by which the city would waive reimbursement for municipal services for off-site police, fire, emergency medical services, traffic control and code enforcement for stadium events for up to a maximum of \$300,000 per year for a ten-year period.

The official press release from the city indicates the new stadium will be supported and privately financed by the Wilton Rancheria Tribe which became majority owners of Sacramento Republic FC on Nov. 7. The press release includes a quote from Mayor Darrel Steinberg on the importance of the council's vote.

"We are breaking barriers and making history here in Sacramento," said Mayor

Steinberg. "Wilton Rancheria is the first tribe to own a professional men's sports team in North America, and the projects in The Railyards will double the size of the central business district—what an incredible opportunity! This is the foundation for something beautiful today that will become even more beautiful in the years and decades to come."

In a Nov. 7 press conference, in advance of the Nov. 12

council vote, city officials joined together with representatives of Sacramento Republic FC, Downtown Railyards Venture LLC and Wilton rancheria Tribe members to celebrate the new energy being pumped into the soccer stadium/railyard development. At the press conference, Wilton Rancheria Chairman Jesus Tarango commented on the importance of the project.

"I am deeply proud to witness this moment, which stands as a profound testament to the resilience and determination of the people of Wilton Rancheria," said Chairman Tarango. "In just over a decade, our Tribe has transformed from landless to becoming a significant economic force in the region. The opportunity to drive a project of such scale and importance, on land where our ancestors once walked, is deeply meaningful. This is not only a chance to honor our history and uplift our community, but also to envision a future where we are not only part of Sacramento's past, but an integral part of its future as well."

According to the city, the stadium project is scheduled for completion by late 2026, and the entertainment venue by 2027. ★

Sac State Tennis Doubles Duo Reach Semifinals



Sacramento State doubles duo of Maddy Ferreros and Irene Riva showed well at last weekend's ITA Conference Masters event in Rome, Ga. Photo courtesy of Sac State Athletics

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento State doubles duo of Maddy Ferreros and Irene Riva showed well at last weekend's ITA Conference Masters event in Rome, Ga., reaching the main draw semifinals and falling just one win shy of a berth into the 2024 NCAA Individual Championships.

Facing teams from across the nation, the Hornet tandem opened their run with a straight-set victory over Emilia Valentinsson and Sara Zalukar from Miami University, 7-5, 6-3, then outlasted Bryant's team of Caitlyn Munson and Natalia Vela in three sets, 5-7, 6-4, 10-4.

Ferreros and Riva continued to roll on day two, easing past the Naval Academy's Emily Tannenbaum and Parvathi Shanker, 6-2, 6-0, before suffering their first loss of the tournament in the semifinals to Appalachian State's Savannah Dada-Mascoll and Isabella

Romanichen, 6-3, 6-1.

With the top three doubles teams earning a spot in the NCAA Tournament, Ferreros and Riva faced off against Celia-Belle Mohr and Sophia Webster from Vanderbilt for third place, winning the first set in a tiebreaker, 7-6 (5), before falling by the scores of 6-0 and 10-5 to finish fourth.

In singles, sophomore Lou Baudoin fell in her main draw opening round match to Charleston Southern's Marina Skegro, 2-6, 6-4, 6-2, but rebounded in the consolation draw defeating Illinois-Chicago's Mayu Ushio, 4-6, 6-1, 6-2, and advancing to the semifinals with a walkover against South Carolina State's Sofiya Chursina.

In the semis, Baudoin was finally subdued, falling to South Dakota's Beata Havlickova, 6-0, 6-4.

The Hornets have wrapped up the fall portion of the team's schedule and will open the spring championship season on Jan. 26 at home against the University of the Pacific. ★

Hornet's Goalkeeper Sierra Sonko Earns Player of the Week Honors

Sacramento State University Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Redshirt freshman goalkeeper Sierra Sonko came up aces not once, not twice, but three times in penalty kicks for the Sacramento State women's soccer team last week during the Big Sky Conference Tournament, stopping a pair of attempts in all three contests to earn National Player of the Week honors from Top Drawer Soccer on Tuesday, Nov. 12.

It's another award added to the mantle for the Seattle, Wash., native, who was named the Big Sky Tournament Most Valuable Player for her performance in net as the Hornets claimed their first league tournament championship, and the automatic NCAA berth that goes with it for the first time since 2010.

Having appeared in one match and playing in only five minutes during the regular season, Sonko answered when called upon for No. 5-seeded Sacramento State, stopping a pair of penalties following a 2-2 draw against No. 4-seeded Northern Arizona and repeating the feat against regular season champion, host, and top-seeded Montana after the Hornets and the Grizzlies played to a scoreless draw.

Two days later, it took eight rounds of penalties to finally decide a winner, but Sonko stopped defending tournament champion Idaho on its fourth attempt as the Hornets drew even and then denied the Vandals on what turned out to be their final attempt of the day to secure the victory.

Following the match, Sonko became the third Sacramento State women's soccer player to be named the Big Sky Tournament's MVP, joining Katie McCoy (2007) and Elece McBride (2010). She was one of six named to the all-tournament team along with teammates Teysha-Ray Spinney-Kuahuaia, Ellie Farber, Sydney Sharts, Dalen Lau, and Izzy Palmatier, matching the most selections in school history along with the 2007



Hornet's redshirt freshman goalkeeper Sierra Sonko earned National Player of the Week honors from Top Drawer Soccer on Tuesday, Nov. 12. Photo courtesy of Sac State Athletics

and 2010 squads.

Riding a nine-match (3-0-6) unbeaten streak dating back to their last loss on Sept. 29, the Hornets open the 2024 NCAA Tournament against top-seeded and host USC on Sunday, Nov. 17 at 2 p.m. at Dignity Health Sports Park Track Stadium in Carson, Calif.

Broadcast information for the match has not yet been finalized, but tickets are now on sale via the link posted on the women's soccer schedule page at HornetSports.com. ★



River Cats Earn Gold, Three Bronze Medals from GOAL

Sacramento River Cats News Release

WEST SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Thanks to the continued implementation of sustainability practices, the Sacramento River Cats have been awarded four medals from Green Operations & Advanced Leadership (GOAL) for their work on Waste Reduction, Diversity & Inclusion, and Sustainable Partnerships.

For efforts throughout the 2024 season, the River Cats were awarded one Gold Medal as a Partner with Sustainability Solution-Focused Brands, and

three Bronze Medals in the following categories: Measure & Report Waste Data, Engage & Participate with Community, and Activate Partnerships to Support Community Impact Initiatives.

The GOAL Medals are an opportunity to recognize leadership in a variety of sustainability-related topics from Environmental, to Social, to Governance topics. The ESG categories are

broken into to topics that GOAL Members



bronze (good), silver (better), or gold (best) level.

"It is such an honor to be recognized by GOAL as leaders in sustainability, and all in great company with many other fantastic sports venues," said Sacramento River Cats Vice President of Facilities and Events Brittney Nizuk. "We are only getting started at Sutter Health Park, and we look forward to continuing the path towards greening

and environmental resiliency through new operating procedures, partnerships, and education."

GOAL provides their members with sustainability support including quantitative data collection, qualitative sustainability storytelling, sustainability validation, and a network of like-minded leaders. GOAL's First Annual Venue & Event All Stars Award Ceremony was held on the evening of Monday, Oct. 14 after the day's GOAL Invitational. This event celebrated best practices in global venue operations, including a spotlight on sustainability. ★

Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



The Sacramento Kings were 2-2 in the past week, but that doesn't begin to tell the tale.

Beginning with a disappointing 116-96 loss to the San Antonio Spurs and concluding with a thrilling 121-117 win over the Utah Jazz, the Sac Town ballers had an up and down week that ended on a high note.

Sadly, injuries played a role, sidelining big man Domantas Sabonis and newcomer all-star DeMar DeRozan, both with lower back issues.

In between the Spurs and the Jazz, saw the Kings take a tough overtime loss to a talented Minnesota Timberwolves team, and win decisively over the Phoenix Suns by the score of 127-104.

The real story of the week was none other than the offensive show put on by point guard DeAaron Fox, who scored a total of 109 points in back-to-back games against the Timberwolves and the Utah Jazz.

Setting a Sacramento Kings scoring record, DeAaron put the team on his back against the Timberwolves, scoring 60 points and shattering his previous personal record. Just one game later, with Malik Monk, DeMar DeRozan, and Domantas Sabonis sidelined with injuries, Fox backed up his 60-point performance with 49 more, this time in a win over the Jazz.

Thanks to the offensive explosion of DeAaron Fox, the Kings now have a player in the top ten in scoring. DeAaron is currently #6 in the NBA in scoring, and remarkably the Kings are the only team in the NBA to feature three players with a scoring average of 20 points or higher per game.

In addition to raising his scoring average, DeAaron is fifth in the league in steals, averaging 1.8 per game. I look for Fox to challenge the top spot in steals as the season wears on.

Overall, the Kings are off to an 8-6 start, and most pundits and fans alike are well aware that their record could be decidedly better.

It took a few games for DeRozan to become completely comfortable with his teammates, and that should be taken for granted.

Since the first few games, DeMar has been the perfect fit, and teams are having

a difficult time trying to figure out who the go-to player is going to be. The Kings are spreading the boy to everyone on the court including Keegan Murray, who has had an up and down start to the season as it relates to scoring.

Keegan has made a noticeable move forward as he has focused on rebounding and improving his defensive efficiency.

Domantas continues to rebound with ferocity, and the rebounding champion of the past two seasons, is currently #2 in the NBA behind big man Nikola Jokic.

Nursing a sore back, Sabonis is on the sidelines, and with nothing definite coming from the Kings organization, Domantas is day to day.

So, what kind of a report card should the Kings receive as they play in their 15th game against the Atlanta Hawks on Monday night.

I give the team a solid B, considering the addition of DeMar DeRozan and understanding it takes time for a starting five to jell.

Let's not forget the energy and scoring punch that Malik Monk brings to this team, and the sooner we see Malik back in action, the better off the Kings will be. Reportedly, Malik has a week to go before he'll be ready for any hardwood action.

Sadly, after witnessing what I consider to be one of the worst officiating seasons in the past 50 years last season, the zebras were back to their old ways Saturday night and were it not for Kings ability to challenge two horrific calls by the referees, the Kings would have likely lost to the Utah Jazz.

I have no answer for what the NBA needs to do, but clearly the officiating is sadly lacking in quality, and this has not always been the case.

I credit the NBA with putting challenges into the mix, but there is still more that needs to be done.

Meanwhile, keep the faith Kings fans. This team is showing a lot of bright spots, so let's get everyone healthy and see if the Sac Town boys can get on a winning streak!

*All the best Kings fans!
Your thoughts are always welcome at
vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com.* ★

100 Days In

Continued from page 1

education, my role as a leader is to support a school experience where each student and each staff member feels seen, safe, connected and included in their school experience and workplace."

With a district serving more than 22,000 students, Swanson highlighted the diversity within Folsom Cordova Unified as one of its greatest strengths. In his first 100 days as superintendent, Swanson visited all the district's schools and auxiliary sites, meeting with staff and engaging with the community.

"What I learned is that we truly care for our students, for each other and for the work we're committed to," Swanson said. "Our team has worked diligently to ensure our schools are set up for success. But we still have room to grow. There are students who are behind in English and math, and some who don't feel connected to their school experience."

Swanson also addressed bond Measures R and S, which were on the ballot this year and will fund the renovation of schools in Rancho Cordova.

"I don't want to speak too soon but I feel good about the results on the passage of the bonds," Swanson said. "This community deserves it; our students deserve it. Thank you to our voters."

Another major initiative Swanson mentioned at the luncheon is the Rancho

Reads program, which aims to improve literacy rates among students, particularly those from low-income families.

"There are many students in our district living in poverty, and we want to make sure that talent is ubiquitous," he said. "All of our students come to us with gifts but opportunity is not equally distributed."

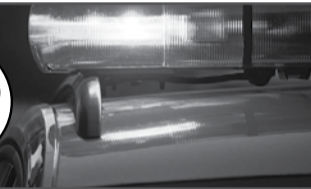
The program is a collaboration with the City of Rancho Cordova and the Sacramento County Office of Education aimed at bridging the gap so that students don't start out behind. One of its key components is providing free books to children every month until they are five years old through a partnership with the Dolly Parton Foundation. Swanson also highlighted the importance of community involvement with the return of community readers.

"It's an opportunity for a solution," Swanson said. "We're focused on reading because it's where socioeconomic status impacts children the most."

In closing, Swanson emphasized that these efforts are part of a broader goal to ensure that every student has the opportunity to chase their dreams.

"When our students cross that stage, I want them to know they had a school experience where adults in their lives cared about them, held them to high expectations, and gave them the tools to succeed," Swanson said. ★

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Forest Health Grant Funding Aims to Restore and Protect Thriving Forest Ecosystems



California landscape damaged by catastrophic wildfire. Photo courtesy of CAL FIRE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) is announcing the availability of up to \$70 million in funding for projects aimed at improving forest health across the state. CAL FIRE is soliciting applications for projects that work to proactively prevent catastrophic wildfires and restore forests to healthy, functioning ecosystems while also sequestering carbon and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Applications will be accepted

from Nov. 13 and are due by no later than 3 p.m. Jan. 15, 2025.

“We know this work makes a difference both in forest health and wildfire resilience and that is why CAL FIRE is proud to have awarded over \$700 million in Forest Health grant funding since 2017,” said Chief Matthew Reischman, Deputy Director of Resource Management. “This Forest Health grant funding supports sustainable land management practices, reforestation efforts, promotes a healthier ecosystem, and ensures that future generations can enjoy and benefit from California’s natural resources.”

The Forest Health Program

funds active restoration and reforestation activities aimed at providing for more resilient and sustained forests. This ensures the future existence of forests in California while also mitigating climate change, protecting communities from fire risk, strengthening rural economies, and improving California’s water and air.

A virtual pre-recorded workshop will be made available to explain the grant process and requirements. Please check the Forest Health webpage at www.fire.ca.gov/what-we-do/grants/forest-health, to view the

workshop. Any questions can be directed to ForestHealth@fire.ca.gov.

Projects that receive funding from the Forest Health grant program are designed to complement the California Forest Carbon Plan, California’s Natural and Working Lands Implementation Plan, California’s Wildfire & Forest Resilience Action Plan, California’s Strategic Plan for Expanding the Use of Beneficial Fire, and AB 32 Climate Change Scoping Plan.

The Forest Health grant program is part of California Climate Investments, a statewide program that puts billions of cap-and-trade dollars to work reducing greenhouse gas emissions, strengthening the economy, and improving public health and the environment, particularly in disadvantaged communities.

Projects will reduce the risks to California’s forests from extreme disturbance events including catastrophic wildfires, drought, disease, and pest mortality. ★

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California's Transition Off Carbon Fuels Could Upset Gasoline Supply, Prices



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

California motorists buy and consume a billion gallons of gasoline each month and are very sensitive about pump prices, which are markedly higher than those in other states. Naturally, they are a political football.

Gov. Gavin Newsom has repeatedly characterized refiners as price gougers, even though most of the differences are caused by taxes, fees and regulatory mandates. Recently, he persuaded the Legislature to pass a watered-down version of his proposal requiring refiners to maintain higher reserves to avoid price spikes.

However the gasoline situation is far more complicated than Newsom's approach, and California may be facing a period of volatility on both supply and price as it attempts to wean itself from combustion-powered transportation, its largest single source of greenhouse gas emissions.

The California Air Resources Board is on the verge of expanding its program of reducing the amount of carbon in the current gasoline recipe, regarded as an interim step before completely converting vehicles to electricity or some other non-polluting power.

Last year, CARB published an analysis of the proposed Low Carbon Fuel

Standard to provide "the economic incentives to produce cleaner fuels like electricity, hydrogen and biofuels that are needed to displace fossil fuels and reduce transportation sector emissions."

The report estimated that adoption could immediately increase gas prices by 47 cents a gallon and then, "on average, from 2031 through 2046 the proposed amendments are projected to potentially increase the price of gasoline by \$1.15 per gallon, the price of diesel by \$1.50 per gallon and fossil jet fuel by \$1.21 per gallon."

The cost estimate generated a storm of media and political attention and CARB backed off, continuing the adoption process but refusing to put a number on the potential pump price. Last week, the board's top official conducted an electronic press conference in which he stressed positive impacts, but continued to sidestep questions about consumer impacts.

"It's a win-win," executive officer Steven Cliff insisted. "We get public health benefits, we reduce health costs, we see lower costs of driving and we help turbocharge those investments in clean energy infrastructure that helps drive our zero emissions future."

CARB now intends to act on the policy three days after Election Day, without offering any estimate of consumer costs — a potential signal that those costs will be hefty.

While Newsom wants to be remembered as someone who tried to reduce gasoline prices, his governorship probably will be one that substantially increased them.

The other uncertainty is whether California will have

enough gasoline, even a variety with less carbon, over the next two decades as it transitions away from carbon fuels altogether.

California once had dozens of refineries producing the state's unique fuel blend, but in recent years just nine. After the Legislature gave Newsom the new laws on gasoline reserves, one refiner, Phillips 66, announced that it would shutter its plant in Southern California that's no longer profitable. The company said the closure had nothing to do with politics.

Very quickly, Valero, which has two refineries in the state, hinted that it may follow suit. CEO Lane Riggs said during a conference call that "all options are on the table" for the company's two California refineries, one in Benicia and the other in Wilmington, because of increasing state regulation of operations.

"Clearly the California regulatory environment is putting pressure on operators out there and how they might think about going forward with their operations," Riggs said.

Transitioning transportation to non-carbon power — while maintaining sufficient and reasonably priced supplies for gas-powered cars until they're replaced — was destined to be a fraught process.

If poorly managed, it could be a monumental disaster.

Dan Walters is one of most decorated and widely syndicated columnists in California history, authoring a column four times a week that offers his view and analysis of the state's political, economic, social and demographic trends. ★



Gobble Gobble

When you're digging into that scrumptious Thanksgiving meal and settling in to watch umpteen football games, are you thinking back to that first Thanksgiving? Well, I got the scoop from historian Ken Davis, the author of the "Don't Know About" series. The feast was more like surf and turf with venison, turkey, mussels, and scallops. Makes sense since they were close to the ocean. And the turkey was not a fat platter turkey filled with stuffing, but wild turkey (the critter, not the libation). And no pumpkin pies, just pumpkins. Dessert was most likely

commel breads and puddings. By the way, the Pilgrims actually had a true day of thanksgiving with a day of prayer and fasting, not feasting. And the Pilgrims did not call themselves by that name. They referred to themselves as "saints" and "First Comers." Only later did William Bradford call them Pilgrims. And here's one for you. Of the 102 people on board the Mayflower, only 50 were so-called Pilgrims. The others were members of the Church of England who had signed on simply as laborers, soldiers, or those who were looking to gain property in the "New World." The Pilgrims actually called them "Strangers."

Remember all those pictures of Pilgrims and Indians sitting down for a peaceful meal? Okay, it worked for a generation, and then it was followed by fighting and bloodshed as relations with the Native Americans deteriorated when the colonists took land from the indigenous people. You'll love this one. What we call Thanksgiving was, in fact, a harvest festival and celebrated in Octo-

ber, not November 1621. They were just grateful to be alive. After their first bleak winter, half of their company died.

Did you dress up as a Pilgrim for Halloween in black with clunky shoes and buckled hats? Well, they didn't even wear black. But I bet you looked great! So when was the modern day Thanksgiving born? It was first celebrated as an official holiday in 1777 to mark the patriot victory at Saratoga

in the Revolutionary War. When Washington tried to proclaim a Thanksgiving Day, Congress complained that he had no right to make such a proclamation.

Presidents routinely proclaimed the day but the custom died out at the beginning of the 19th century. But 1837 came around and so did Sarah Joseph Hale (She wrote the poem "Mary Had A Little Lamb") and initiated a campaign to reinstate the holiday. Lincoln finally proclaimed a national holiday in 1863. Suffice to day, our day of indulging, watching games and shopping came lots later and remains to this day. Let's just remember that we might go back to the beginning with a prayer for all we have to be thankful for. Reach out to someone alone or hurting and share. It doesn't have to be a feast, just a simple taste and a kind word.

There is some sadness in my heart as I lost my beloved Rick, my husband of nearly 53 years last December, but I am thankful for the beautiful years we had together! Hopefully, you are blessed with loving family. Much happiness to you all. ★

HAPPY THANKSGIVING!
Image by Print On Demand from Pixabay



California's Climate Rules Leave Working Class Behind



Ted Gaines
Commentary by Ted Gaines, Board of Equalization Member

The next time Governor Newsom puts on his detective hat and tries to get to the bottom of the "price gouging" that is supposedly driving absurdly high gas prices in California, he should start with the most obvious culprit in the state: himself.

Earlier this month, Newsom's California Air Resources Board (CARB) voted to approve changes to the state's Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS), potentially

adding \$.65 cents a gallon to the already punitive cost of gasoline. Although consumers may be recoiling at the thought of even higher prices, political leaders must be relishing the opportunity to make it more difficult to own and operate an internal combustion vehicle.

It's obvious that California Democrats and their national counterparts are pushing the state and nation into a rapid Electric Vehicle (EV) future that is having dreadful consequences for families and workers.

Of course, this leftist project is under the guise of "doing something" about climate change, regardless of practicality or without any cost-benefit analysis.

Newsom, for example, issued an executive order mandating that by 2035, all vehicles sold in California are zero-emission, a standard met only by plug-in electric vehicles. Although nobody, including the governor, can say with any precision how an all-electric vehicle fleet would change global climate, if at all, it's easy to see how current EV policies are

harming consumers today.

EV subsidies are forcing lower- and working-class fuel consumers to pay for wealthy folks' expensive electric vehicles. "Greening" the electricity supply in California has been a major driver of skyrocketing electricity rates. After all, what good would it be to run electric vehicles on coal power? This has pushed up rates nearly 4-times faster than the national average over the past decade. Pacific Gas & Electric's residential electricity rates are double the national average.

As reported in The Wall Street Journal, "California households owed \$2.1 billion in unpaid utility bills at the end of 2023, more than four times the amount in 2019." While climate effects may be tough to predict, policy makers should have seen this outcome from a mile away.

That's not even counting economic pain caused by the never-ending attacks on the petroleum industry here, which cost jobs and add around \$1.50 in government costs to a gallon of gas, before the LCFS bump earlier this month.

Soon, Californians could be paying more in taxes and fees for every gallon of gas than some states pay for an entire gallon.

Elitist Progressives put unpredictable and microscopic changes in potential future weather ahead of blue-collar jobs and affordability today. It's no wonder that the Republican party is making huge inroads among working class voters.

These policy-induced high energy costs are one of the reasons why, when adjusted for cost of living, California has the highest poverty rate in the nation.

Between California's highest-in-the-nation gas taxes and stealthy taxes such as the LCFS, California is banking profits from oil that would make John D. Rockefeller blush. Poorer Californians, who already spend more of their incomes on basics such as transportation, are paying the price.

California is also about to ban Diesel RV sales in the state in a few weeks, choking off another practical, affordable living and travel option for our citizens.

It never ends. Just for once, I'd love to see a more balanced approach from our politicians that acknowledges California environmental policy is creating the nation's worst poverty. If that is a price the dominant political class is willing to inflict on our citizens, so be it. It would be nice to at least hear it.

But I stand with the working-class families who are struggling to get by and the many companies who are trying to survive in this hostile state. I support American sovereignty and American jobs. The government gas price gouging and reckless push towards electric vehicles must stop.

Senator Ted Gaines (Ret.) was elected to represent the Board of Equalization's First District. He is a leading taxpayer advocate, defender of Prop. 13, and is committed to providing trustworthy and transparent representation for nearly ten million constituents in 34 counties of northern, eastern, and southern California. For more information, visit www.boe.ca.gov/Gaines. ★

Former Foster Parent Sentenced 30 Years to Life

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Honorable Ernest Sawtelle sentenced Kevin Barker to 30 years to life in prison. On Oct. 7, Barker pled no contest to four counts of committing lewd acts upon a child and possession

of child pornography. Barker also admitted to allegations of befriending children for the purpose of molestation, abusing a position of trust and multiple victims.

Barker is a serial child molester with known conduct from 2008 to 2018. He frequented a skate park in Sacramento County to befriend

children. He lured those victims to his residence and groomed them with gifts, money, alcohol and marijuana in order to molest them. He also met a child victim at a homeless shelter. Barker took the victim in to live with him, groomed him with cash and gifts and molested the child for several years.

Barker became a Sacramento

County foster parent in 2011. In 2018, Barker's former neighbor saw images of Barker placing a camera to capture pictures of the children in his care and reported him to law enforcement.

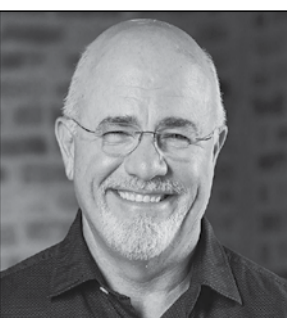
The Sacramento Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) Task Force served a warrant at Barker's Rancho Cordova residence. During the investigation,

detectives located images of a child being abused by Barker.

Under current California law, Barker (age 43) will become eligible for release at an Elder Parole hearing once he reaches the age of 50 and only serves 20 years of his 30-years-to-life sentence. With his in-custody credits, that will be in approximately 14 years. ★

Dave Ramsey Says Social Security Matters

When You Hit Rock Bottom Older Veteran Asks about Special Social Security Credit for Military Service



Dave Ramsey

Dear Dave,

I'm 20-years old, and I'm in a bad spot. I've been a jerk for the last year, not listening to my parents about anything. Now, I've got over \$10,000 in debt from running up bills on credit cards and writing some bad checks. Two weeks ago, I also lost my job and totaled my car. I'm about to lose my apartment, too, because I don't have the money for rent. A friend of mine said I could stay with him for a while, but I'm really scared. My parents say I created this situation all by myself, and I need to figure out a solution all by myself. Would you please give me some advice? I don't even know where to start.

– Justin

Dear Justin,

It sounds like you're about as close to rock bottom as a person can get. I know it's a scary situation, especially for a young person. I've done stupid stuff, too. And the

stupid things I did had lots more zeroes on the end than you're looking at right now. So, I've got some good news for you. There's hope! The simple fact that you're looking for help, and have realized the way you've been living is stupid, means you want to change. That's a good thing.

Still, when you do stupid things, you've got to pay what I call "stupid tax." I'm talking about the consequences of your actions. It sounds like you're going to have get two or three jobs, and find a really cheap car that will get you around for a while. If you do this for maybe 12 to 18 months, and live on a very strict monthly budget, you'll probably be able to pay off all that stupid tax you've accumulated.

I think you've also recognized the fact that you left your integrity and self-respect on the sidelines for way too long. That means doing the right things really needs to be a priority from now on. The cool thing about the practical issues you mentioned—finding an-

other permanent place to live, something to drive and paying off the debt—is that all this will get better because you've made a conscious decision to be better.

You might want to think about finding and regularly attending a good church, too. Any understanding and caring pastor would be honored to pray with you, and walk with you as you get your life back together and headed in the right direction.

God bless you, Justin. You can do this!

– Dave

Dave Ramsey is a national best-selling author, personal finance expert and host of The Ramsey Show, heard by more than 20 million listeners each week. He has appeared on Good Morning America, CBS Mornings, Today Show, Fox News, CNN, Fox Business, and many more. Since 1992, Dave has helped people regain control of their money, build wealth and enhance their lives. He also serves as CEO for the company, Ramsey Solutions. ★



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I served in the U S Army from January 1958 to Feb 1961. What increase should I receive for those years and who do I call and at what phone number?

Signed: Proud Veteran.

Dear Proud Veteran: First, thank you for your military service! I expect you are referring to the "special extra credits for military service" which are available to some who served in the US Military in earlier years. It is important to note that these "extra credits" take the form of an adjustment to your military pay record while serving and are not an incremental amount added to your monthly Social Security benefit because you served.

Military pay has been subject to deductions for Social Security since 1957. Thus, while serving between 1958 and 1961 you paid SS tax on your military earnings. But, for purposes of determining your Social Security benefit, your military earnings record would be increased by \$300 for each quarter you served on active duty,

up to a maximum of \$1,200 increase per year of service. That means for 1958 - 1960, when calculating your SS benefit, \$1,200 would be added to your military earnings record for each year you served. FYI, for those who served after 1967, this adjustment was automatically made by Social Security. But for service years prior to 1967 (as in your case) you would need to inform Social Security of your service when you claimed SS and provide a copy of your military form DD-214 (your discharge papers). SS would then make the appropriate adjustment to your military earnings record prior to calculating your benefit amount. And, for clarity, additional credits for military service are not available to those who served after 2001.

A key point to understand is that this adjustment to your military pay may – or may not – affect the amount of your Social Security benefit. Social Security determines your benefit amount based on your highest earning 35 years over your entire lifetime (adjusted for inflation). If, after you served in the military, you had at least 35 years of civilian employment where you earned more than your military pay, it is probable that your military pay is not included when calculating your Social Security benefit. If that is the case, it is likely that the "special extra

credits for military service" would have no effect on your Social Security payment. If, however, your military pay (including those special extra credits) for any year is more than you earned in civilian life, then you can contact Social Security (1.800.772.1213), provide them with a copy of your DD-214, and ask that they recalculate your Social Security benefit to include the extra credits for your years of military service.

Again, thank you for your service to our country, and please do not hesitate to contact us again if you have any further questions. FYI, you may also find the "For Veterans" section of our AMAC Foundation website interesting (www.amacfoundation.org)

This article is intended for information purposes only and does not represent legal or financial guidance. It presents the opinions and interpretations of the AMAC Foundation's staff, trained and accredited by the National Social Security Association (NSSA). NSSA and the AMAC Foundation and its staff are not affiliated with or endorsed by the Social Security Administration or any other governmental entity. To submit a question, visit our website (amacfoundation.org/programs/social-security-advisory) or email us at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org. ★

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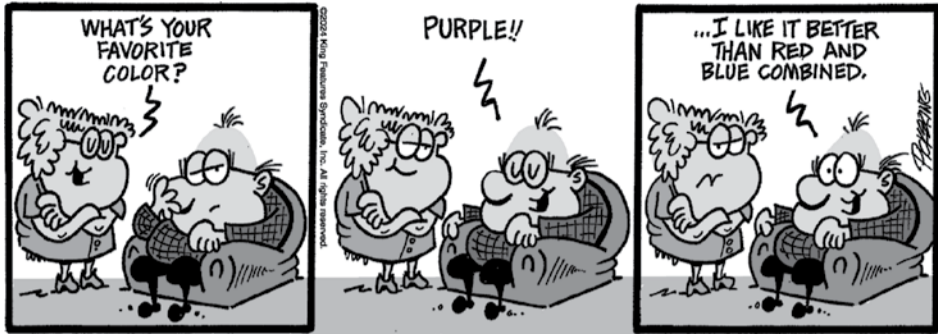
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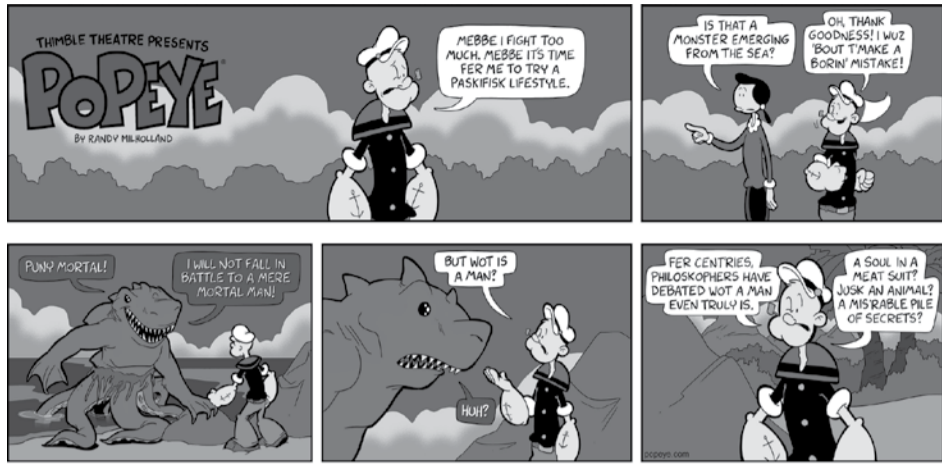
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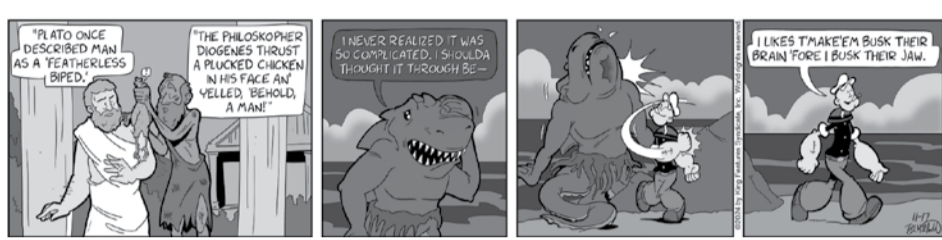
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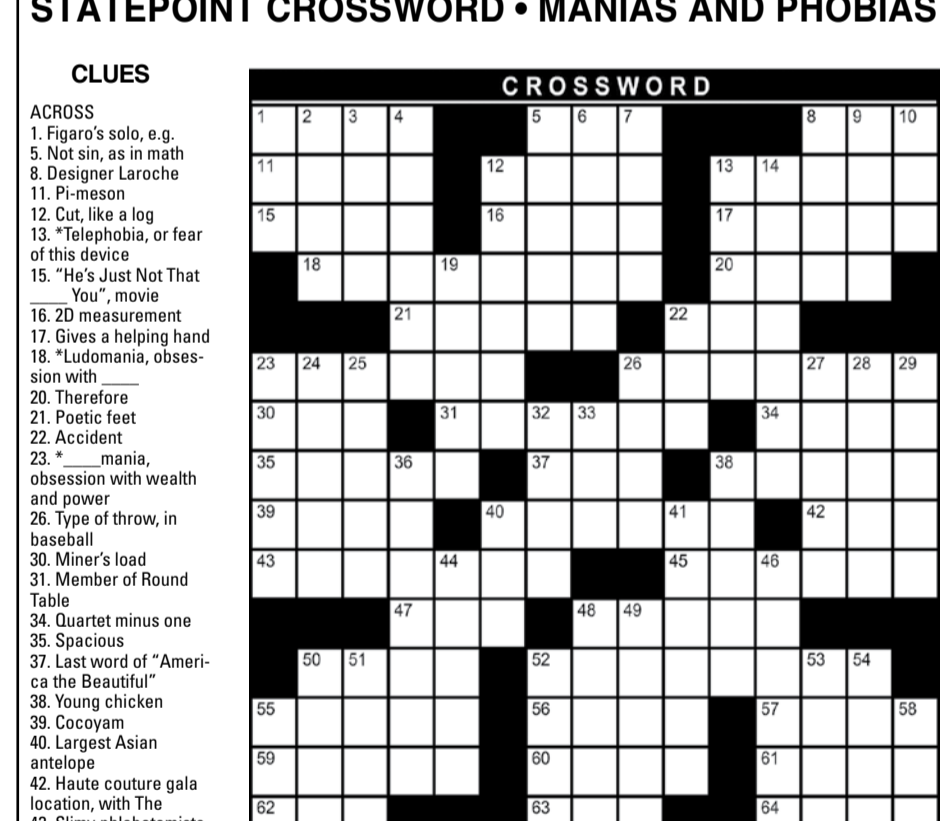


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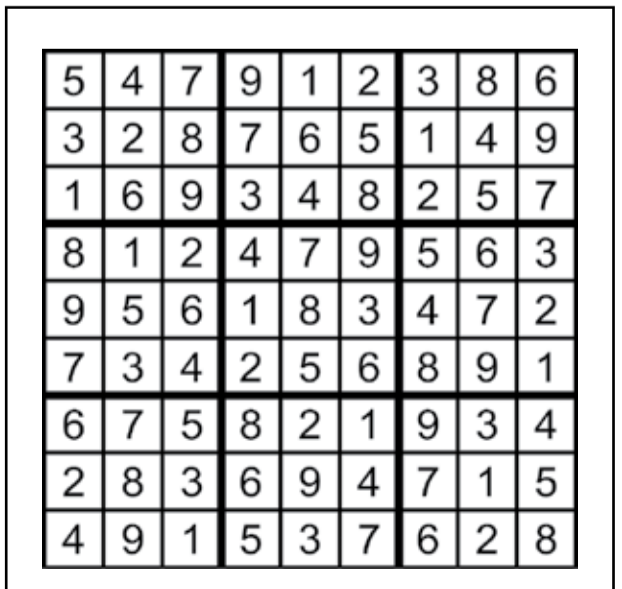


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Everyone Can Light the World



Light the World images dazzle Times Square visitors during the Christmas season. Photo courtesy of Gary McFadyen

By Danny Wells

You might have noticed the press coverage last year for the Light the World images that filled the large screens of Times Square in New York City. Visitors to Times Square were in for a surprise when its famous billboards became a larger-than-life tribute to the true reason for Christmas: Jesus Christ.

Instead of the usual array of promotional brand logos and marketing graphics to entice viewers to purchase more products, the screens were filled with images of the baby Jesus, lying in a straw-lined manger, with a new star in the heavens luminating his face.

The billboard takeover at Times Square in New York City was part of Light the World initiative, an annual movement from The

Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints to bring people from all over the world together to share the light of Jesus Christ during the Christmas season.

The beautiful nativity scene that emerged from the blackout was a tender reminder of the Savior's birth and why we need His light and love in our lives. The event was truly a Silent Night surprise as thousands of people stood in awe

Watching the miraculous events of the first Christmas on the mammoth screens overhead.

The good news is that one does not have to travel to Times Square to embrace the Light the World experience. Following the doctrine of all faiths to "love our neighbors as ourselves," everyone this holiday

season can do something to light the world for another, such as donating cans to your local food bank, leaving a kind note for your mail and package carrier, visiting an elderly neighbor, texting someone a note that says "I'm so grateful for you," paying for the person behind you in line, asking a co-worker how you can lighten their load and leaving a small gift at a neighbor's doorstep.

You can download a list of 50 ideas for Lighting the World at www.lighttheworld.org. Or visit www.JustServe.org, enter your zip code, and find dozens of volunteer service opportunities within a couple of miles from your home.

There is a plethora of variety in these community service prospects for individuals, couples, families,

or large groups.

One of our holiday family favorites is to prepare gift bags for children living in the margins. Our family, including children and grandchildren, numbers 26, and each of us has an assignment to bring something to add to the gift bags.

We set up a couple of large tables near our Christmas tree and have an assembly line to fill the bags, tie with ribbons and deliver to one of the several organizations that support needy children. It is a joy watching our grandchildren delight in filling these gift bags for others.

Another part of Light the World is the Giving Machines, vending machines with a twist. The Giving Machines have become known

internationally for offering livestock that charities distribute to families to help them feed themselves or start small businesses. In a single year, gives purchased 41,000 chickens, 25,000 ducks and 3,800 beehives. Chickens, goats, piglets and beehives provided through the Giving Machines have benefited 20,000 families in Kenya and Tanzania over three years.

One year a family in Kenya received three chickens. Three years later, those three had grown to a flock of over 7,000 that provided food and income to support not only their family but the entire village. Giving Machines partner each year with both global charities and local nonprofits to allow people to donate items to people in need and have raised more than \$32 million

since 2017.

The Giving Machines will be back in Northern California this year. The big red vending machines will again be at the Westfield Galleria Mall in Roseville and at the Vintage Fair Mall in Modesto as two of the 106 global locations.

Learn more at <http://givingmachinesgreaterameratomodesto.org>.

In a time of a most polarized society, embracing Light the World brings people together, helps us to focus on others, and begets joy to both the receiver and giver. Now that you are aware of the possibilities, one question remains: What are you going to do this year to help Light the World?

Danny Wells is a Vacaville resident and can be reached at danny@dannywells.com. ★



The Giving Machines have become known internationally for offering livestock that charities distribute. Photo courtesy of Gary McFadyen

Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration Announced

Winterdance News Release

CARMICHAEL, CA (MPG) - A joyful and cherished holiday tradition returns this December, marking the 18th Annual Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration.

Angelic singing, instrumental wizardry and championship Irish step dancing combine to lift your hearts this holiday season.

At 7 p.m. Dec. 13, the Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration will be held at St. Michael's Episcopal at 2140 Mission Ave., Carmichael. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m.

This year's show welcomes back the soaring vocals of San Francisco's Amelia Hogan, Molly's Revenge fiddler John Weed, and the banjo and mandolin artistry of rising artist, Tyler Weed. Making his Winterdance debut on guitar, mandolin and vocals, we're honored to share the stage with Wake the Dead's Paul Kotapish.

All Ireland champion Irish step dancers, Marisa Gilman and Cameron Carson Riddle, will bring a percussive and visually stunning element to this 18th year of Winterdance.

Many longtime fans of Winterdance and Molly's Revenge will notice that Stuart Mason is no longer part of the lineup. After 17 years, our lifelong musical partner and dear friend, "Uncle" Stuart Mason, will be stepping down from the Winterdance cast. Stuart's life is filled with fish to catch and a growing and abundant stack of pet portrait holiday orders that he and his Christmas elves are rushing to fulfill.

Almost two decades ago, Molly's Revenge began our Winterdance holiday celebration. Combining lively instrumental Celtic music with seasonal carols and Irish dance, the cast has evolved over the years but continues to offer a compelling and popular holiday show. We continue this tradition in the hopes that we can play a small part in

Winterdance Celtic Christmas Celebration will be held at St. Michael's Episcopal Dec. 13. Photo courtesy of Winterdance

nurturing community, unity and festivity through song, story and dance. We look forward to seeing familiar faces, making new friends, and hope to see you there!

Amelia Hogan is an impeccably authentic singer of Celtic music, and her "lilting, buoyant, distinctive voice" (AM Kennedy, Irish Music Magazine) comes through in honeyed tones on Irish, Scottish, British and American-styled vocals. She sings both contemporary and traditional music well versed in the Irish tradition of Sean-Nós, or "old style", a highly lyrical solo a cappella style. Amelia is a headliner at the SF Free Folk Festival since 2004; frequent host of the internationally known Starry Plough Sunday night session (Berkeley CA.) headliner at The Irish Club of Alaska's Galway Days Festival; a regular at the An Goilin Singers Club in Dublin, Ireland; a special guest and community partner with the

Consul General of Ireland, San Francisco; Ongoing partner with the United Irish Cultural Center in San Francisco, headliner and special guest performer and regular of Hyde street Pier NPS Maritime History Museum Sea Music Festival and concert series.

John Weed, fiddler for Molly's Revenge and New World String Project, has spent the last 30 years immersed in various fiddle styles. With an affinity for folk traditions, John's exploration has emphasized Irish, Scottish, Swedish, and Old-Time fiddle. While he holds a bachelor's degree of music from CSU Chico, the musical education that charted his path began through a long series of Irish sessions.

There, he learned the nuance of aural passing of melodies and the tradition of conversing in a deeply musical manner. John's passion for the vital expressiveness of the session lead to performing across the United States and internationally. In

addition to being a full-time performer and instructor, John is currently on faculty at Palenke Arts, a multicultural arts organization in Seaside, California.

Paul Kotapish Equally confident and inventive on every fretted instrument, Paul has distinguished himself on the stage for over 30 years. Most recently, Paul has made a name for himself with his concerts and recordings with Kevin Burke's Open House, a headlining act in Celtic and international folk festivals across the country. His blazing guitar and mandolin work also help drive The Hillbillies From Mars, Sylvia Herold's Euphonia, and other Northern California-based acoustic groups. Paul is also widely respected for his work as editor and feature writer at Acoustic Guitar Magazine.

Tyler Weed was raised in a musical family. His journey began on guitar which quickly led to earning money backing

his father on fiddle. He then discovered flat-picking melodies while also developing a passion for jazz. This allowed him to be equally comfortable playing in the old-world fiddle styles as well as using swing-accompaniment on Irish melodies.

Heavily influenced by Bay Area mandolin great Marla Fibish, he developed nuances traditional Irish tunes on mandolin — picking patterns for the different dance tunes, tone projection, and styling, which continues in his playing today. Tyler represented the next generation of mandolin players at his performance at 2023 San Francisco Festival of Mandolins. He has since journeyed into the world of tenor banjo. His banjo style can be characterized by ornate, percussive triplet stylings with a driving, yet hypnotic groove.

Tickets cost \$35 in advance or at the door. Children's tickets are \$20. To purchase in advance, visit mollysrevenge.com/shows. ★

New-Look Lancers Looking to Establish Themselves In 2024

By James Damell

RANCHO CORDOVA, CA (MPG) - Entering this season, the Cordova Lancers varsity basketball team are finding themselves as a group in transition, and not just when on a fastbreak.

After making the playoffs and winning first round games each of the past two seasons, the Lancers will take to the court this season facing new obstacles. At the forefront figures to be adjusting to a new head coach, as Kevin Bridgeforth has taken over as head coach. Bridgeforth, a former varsity assistant head coach at St. Francis as well as the head freshman boys basketball head coach at Vista Del Lago prior to that, brings plenty of experience as a coach and former player. Bridgeforth played collegiately at Solano Community College, then went on to play two years at Virginia Wesleyan University where he would become an assistant coach after graduating. He also has spent several years as an individual skills trainer in basketball, developing players who have played professionally overseas, with a few making it to the NBA.

Now at Cordova, Bridgeforth shared that his expectations for his team in his first year at the helm go beyond wins and losses. "My expectations for the group are for them to continuously develop every time we see each other," he said. "For them to become first class young men, and then great basketball players after that."

Although the team just began formal practices a week ago, Bridgeforth is quickly seeing some talent develop. Juniors Echun Portis and Makkai Stewart, along with sophomore Kaeden McDaniels have been impressive during preseason workouts. Overall, the new Lancers coach is pumped up by what he's seen thus far from his group.

"Right now I feel very good about the potential that's being shown," Bridgeforth said. "We really were able to develop a bit of a pulse on the group throughout the early preseason. We had some open gyms, some conditioning sessions, and now that we're moving into a little bit more structure, I'm learning that this group really just needs to be taught."

Adding to the new challenges for Cordova this season will include moving into the latest form of the Metro League, after spending the past several seasons in the Greater Sacramento League. For Bridgeforth, it just adds another level of anticipation entering his first season at the helm.

"I'm super excited, we're up for the challenge," he said. "Going into it a little bit blind is exciting to me because we really get a chance to see how well we prepared, and how much of the work we put in will actually be able to be applied when it comes to playing in league."

The Lancers will see their first game action of the season in a tournament at Rio Americano High School beginning on Dec. 3. ★



New Lancers Head Coach Kevin Bridgeforth gives instruction during the first week of practice. Photos by Rick Sloan



The Lancers began formal preparations for the upcoming season in mid-November as practices got underway.

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HOUSEWARES

REG. \$7.99 \$5.99/ea BIG SPEEDY HAIR COLOR (REFILL ONLY) ELECTRIC BBQ GRILL	REG. \$19.99 \$14.99/ea ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (4 CUPS)	REG. \$19.99 \$14.99/ea ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (6 CUPS)	REG. \$19.99 \$14.99/ea ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (10 CUPS)	REG. \$29.99 \$29.99/ea MOCAMODA SHAMPOO 300 G	REG. \$19.99 \$14.99/ea WATERMELON SLICE KNIFE
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FROZEN & FISH DEPT

Dried Cod Fish 500 g REG. \$16.99/EA \$12.99/ea
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EUROPEAN DELI

Columbus Black Forest Ham REG. \$9.99 \$7.99/ea	Sicilian Style Olives REG. \$7.99 \$6.99/ea	Pined Green Olives REG. \$5.99 \$4.99/ea
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Advertised items good at KP International Market - Rancho Cordova location ONLY. We reserve the right to LIMIT QUANTITIES. Not responsible for TYPOGRAPHICAL OR PICTORIAL ERRORS. All advertised items are SUBJECT TO AVAILABILITY. Sorry NO RAINCHECKS. PRICES EFFECTIVE NOVEMBER 20 - NOVEMBER 26, 2024.