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# AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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Serving Fair Oaks, Orangevale & Sacramento County

DECEMBER 6, 2024

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## Marathoners Hitting the Road



Runners in the California International Marathon vanguard will hit the halfway mark in Carmichael on Sunday, Dec. 8.

**Story and photos by Susan Maxwell Skinner**

**SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - Fair Oaks Boulevard is one of many streets that will channel almost 10,000 California International Marathon athletes to Sacramento on Sunday, Dec. 8.

Cheered by thousands, runners will slog 26.2 miles from Folsom through Citrus Heights, Fair Oaks, Carmichael, Arden Arcade and Sacramento before hitting the killer home stretch to Sacramento's Capitol. In a dry weather forecast, spectators witness a fall pageant of male and female physiques: honed to the maximum and clothed to the minimum.

Carmichael's "Great Wall"



Pounding feet will close 17 streets along the marathon route.

is the halfway mark. After leaving Folsom at 7 a.m. Dec. 8, a lithe bunch of professional and amateur runners will reach central Carmichael about 8 a.m. Within 30 minutes, Fair Oaks Boulevard will be pounded by the field's thunderous bulk.

The symbolism of Carmichael's wall is not

lost on many runners. For many, the painful point where endurance is challenged to the max occurs at this landmark.

"I reached my own wall before I got there," said race survivor and Carmichael resident Susan Powers. "Seeing my husband and friends at the Landis Avenue intersection

made up for the pain. I knew I could complete the course for them."

Although the race is historically won in under 2.25 hours, many resolute athletes still slog the weary path, in restored traffic, hours later. These stragglers are traditionally encouraged by motorists' horn-blasts.

"Support from strangers is what keeps you going," Powers said. "I remember a sign that said, 'Pain Now - Bragging Rights Forever,' that helped me finish."

Traffic in 17 streets will be impacted on Dec. 8. Parts of Fair Oaks Boulevard will close from approximately 7 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. For full street closure details, visit [runsa.org/california-international-marathon/course-information/](https://runsa.org/california-international-marathon/course-information/). ★

## Sales of Intoxicating Hemp Products Prohibited

**Sacramento County News Release**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - On Oct. 22, The Sacramento County Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted an ordinance that will prohibit sales of certain products containing intoxicating cannabinoids derived from hemp.

The ordinance applies to businesses in the unincorporated county and became effective Nov. 21.

"Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of our community, particularly our children and adolescents," said District 3 Supervisor Rich Desmond. "By prohibiting the sale of these intoxicating hemp products, we are taking a proactive step to eliminate the risks associated with unregulated substances that can lead to health emergencies."

"This ordinance reinforces our commitment to protecting public health and ensuring responsible business practices in Sacramento County," Supervisor Desmond added.

Due to loopholes in the Farm Bill of 2018 and Assembly Bill 45, unregulated products containing intoxicating cannabinoids have been sold in locations such as smoke shops, gas stations and convenience stores.

Because people of any age could purchase those unregulated products, there was a subsequent rise in emergency room visits and hospitalizations due to ingestion and adverse events, particularly in young children and adolescents.

The amended ordinance of the code (Sacramento County Code Chapter 4.54 and adding sections 4.54.500 through 4.54.560) will prohibit sales of chemically or synthetically altered industrial hemp products with a concentration of higher than .3% of THC.

The ordinance will institute administrative penalties for businesses conducting these sales and allow for suspension or revocation of the business license, should the retailer not comply with the ordinance. Administrative penalties include: \$2,500 for the first violation; \$5,000 for the second violation within one year of the first violation; and \$10,000 for each

*Continued on page 5*

## Share Your Feedback, Shape Our Future

**Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation News Release**

**FAIR OAKS-ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG)** - The Orangevale-Fair Oaks Community Foundation has launched its 2024 Community Survey and your feedback is needed to make a lasting difference in the community.

Fair Oaks and Orangevale are part of an often overlooked and underfunded area of unincorporated Sacramento County. The foundation works to provide valuable programs, guide charitable giving to meet local needs, and act as a trusted leader in connecting resources and raising awareness on important issues.

This community survey aims to identify and prioritize the most important needs and opportunities in Orangevale and Fair Oaks.

By uniting community organizations and resources, the foundation hopes to create solutions that make a real difference for everyone.

Foundation representatives said that the survey results will help local leaders

collaborate and find ways to improve the overall well-being and quality of life for everyone who calls Fair Oaks and Orangevale home.

"We want to see our entire Orangevale-Fair Oaks community flourish," said Foundation

Founder and CEO Brad Squires. "This survey will help us understand what's working and missing and where we can make the greatest impact. It's a chance for everyone to have a voice and for us to come together to shape our future."

What issues do Fair Oaks and Orangevale face? What resources are most needed to help the community? These are just a couple of the questions that the survey seeks to answer.

By taking just five minutes to complete the survey, participants can influence decisions that will benefit everyone in Fair Oaks and Orangevale. As a thank you, survey participants will be entered into a drawing for a chance to win a grocery gift card worth up to \$100.

Don't miss your opportunity to make a difference. Visit [OVFOCF.org](https://OVFOCF.org) today to share your input. ★

# Santa Kicks Off Season of Giving with Charitable Vending Machines

By Gary Zavoral

**GREATER SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG)** - With a twinkle in his eye, Santa Claus cut the ceremonial red ribbon at the Light the World Giving Machines on Monday and then showed the world the joy of giving by selecting a few gifts for those in need in the Greater Sacramento Area.

This wasn't just any Santa. It was the global icon Santa J. Claus, who is a mega-influencer with 5-million followers around the world. He stopped by the Giving Machines in the Westfield Galleria at Roseville to kick off the season of giving and encourage all to give to the less fortunate.

"My mission is to light the world with giving and that's the same mission these charitable vending machines have," Santa said. "You, too, can play Santa for someone who really needs it by purchasing gifts in the Light the World Giving Machines."

Santa's visit highlighted a ribbon-cutting ceremony that also featured remarks from William Jessup University President John Jackson representing the interfaith community, mayors from cities throughout the region, and the local charities that will benefit from the Giving Machine purchases.

This is the third year that the Giving Machines are located in the Sacramento area, where they have been some of the most successful in the world. Area residents can make purchases now through New Year's Day.

Light the World Giving Machines, sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, are part of a global effort to promote the true spirit of the holidays by giving gifts to those in need. This holiday season, the Light the World Giving Machines are located in 106 cities internationally.

In addition to the Westfield Galleria at Roseville, the machines are located in Modesto's Vintage Faire Mall. Together, they are the



Santa J. Claus cuts the ceremonial ribbon of the Light the World Giving Machines with representatives of the charities, who have items for those in need in the charitable vending machines. Photo courtesy of Gary Zavoral

only ones this year in Northern California.

"These vending machines offer a unique and memorable way to light the world with love by serving and caring for others both locally and globally," said Bruce Anderson, director of the local effort. "For many parents, it offers an effective way to teach children about giving to good causes and the joy there is by helping others."

Each of the machines in Roseville contain 30 opportunities to give: 25 opportunities from local charities and five opportunities from global nonprofit organizations.

Among the many items that can be purchased are a winter coat for a homeless person in the region, a suicide prevention therapy session for a local youth and newborn essentials for a local young mother in need. Shoppers can even purchase two piglets for

a family in an economically challenged country to help them start a business and become self-reliant.

The global Giving Machines initiative first launched in a few U.S. locations in 2017. Since then, more than \$32-million worth of goods for those in need has been donated. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints covers all program operational expenses. This ensures that participating nonprofits receive 100% of the collected funds.

The local charities with items in the Westfield Galleria at Roseville Giving Machines are Al-Misbaah, Catholic Charities - Diocese of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova Food Locker, First Step Communities of Sacramento and Lighthouse Counseling & Family Resource Center in Placer County.

Helena Madera-Silmi with Al-Misbaah said many families want to give to local charities that

make a difference in the lives of those who are under-privileged but they don't know how to do it. The Giving Machines, she said, give them this opportunity while at the same time teaching children the importance of charity.

"A lot of youth love shopping at the mall and you're teaching them how to be empathetic, you're teaching them how to give back," Madera-Silmi said. "It's just an amazing way to give back."

Carrie Johnson, executive director of the Rancho Cordova Food Locker, is impressed with the Giving Machines concept and hopes they will help to stock the charity's pantries.

"This is the most incredible way to give people the opportunity to give back to their communities," Johnson said. "We're all familiar with vending machines. What a fun way to give a donation to someone in need."

Among the items that shoppers can purchase for Lighthouse Counseling and Family Resource Center of Placer County are gifts of counseling for those experiencing abuse, domestic violence and suicidal thoughts.

"The Giving Machines give an opportunity to take the greed out of Christmas and bring Christ back into the holiday," said Gary McDonald, Lighthouse's executive director. "It really is about service and giving to people in need. It's really touched my heart. It really gives people an opportunity to think about other people besides their own families during this holiday season."

To see the items that can be purchased and more information on the Giving Machines, visit the local Light the World Giving Machines website at [www.givingmachinesgreater-sacramento.org](http://www.givingmachinesgreater-sacramento.org). ★

**KP International Market**  
 10971 Olson Drive  
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95670  
 916.853.8000  
 Market: 7 Days: 8am - 9pm  
 Food Court: 7 Days: 11am - 3:30pm  
 Korean/Mex/Viet: 7:30pm last call  
 Chinese/Japanese: 7:00pm last call

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 12/15-12/25  
 10AM-8PM FOOD COURT

**HOLIDAY HOURS WE ARE OPEN**  
 Thanksgiving (11/28) 9AM-4PM  
 Christmas (12/25) 9AM-4PM  
 New Years (1/1) 9AM-4PM  
 KP Employee Party 12/11 Wed  
 Store Closes at 7pm

**FROZEN & FISH DEPT**

**Frozen Sardines** 5 lbs  
 REG. 16.99/EA  
**\$8.99/ea**

**Fried Rice** 3 kinds 540 g  
 REG. 9.99/EA  
**\$6.99/ea**

Kimchi, Shrimp, Bulgogi

**WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS**

Beef Rump/Bottom Round Roast - Brls **\$4.59/lb**

Beef T-Bone Steak **\$4.99/lb**

Boneless/Skinless Chicken Breasts **\$1.99/lb**

Pork Cushion Meat - Boneless **\$2.79/lb**

Pork Loin Chops Bone In **\$2.29/lb**

Pork Baby Back Ribs **\$3.99/lb**

**WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS**

Boneless/Skinless Chicken Breasts **\$2.19/lb**

Australian Lamb Chop Bone In **\$2.99/lb**

Beef Rump/Bottom Round Roast - Brls **\$4.59/lb**

**FRESH PRODUCE**

Bartlett Pear **\$1.29/lb**

Yukon Potato **89¢/lb**

Mini King Oyster Mushroom 250 g **\$2.99/ea**

Russet Potato 10 lbs **\$2.99/bag**

Seafood Mushroom 150 g **89¢/ea**

Yali Pear **\$1.19/lb**

Pomegranate **99¢/lb**

Butternut Squash **2lbs for \$1**

**AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY**

Zulka Pure Cane Sugar 4 lbs **\$4.69/ea**

Quaker Oats **\$4.99/ea**

Quaker Oats **\$4.99/ea**

Quaker Oats **\$4.99/ea**

Charmin Mega Bath Tissues 6 rolls **\$6.49/ea**

2 for \$0.99

Gold Medal All Purpose Flour 5 lbs **\$3.99/ea**

**ASIAN GROCERY**

Excellent Canton 16 oz **\$3.99/ea**

Hawaiian Lava BBQ Rings 4 oz **\$1.99/ea**

Chowh Nuts de Coco in Syrup 500 g **\$1.99/ea**

SPAM \$4.99/ea

SPAM \$4.99/ea

SPAM \$4.99/ea

Taste Nirvana Thai Tea Drink 16.2 fl oz **\$2.99/ea**

**EUROPEAN GROCERY**

Rabe Rose Water Food Grade 15 Ltr **\$7.99/ea**

Sofal Special Blend Tea w/ Earl Grey 100 t/b **\$11.99/ea**

Sofal Pickled Cucumbers in Brine 15.3 Ltr **\$7.29/ea**

Sesame Snack 100 gr **\$1.49/ea**

Son Sweet Corn Salsa 450 gr **\$4.99/ea**

**KOREAN/JAPANESE GROCERY**

Short Grain Rice 44 lbs **\$7.99/ea**

Huete Mix Jelly 320 g **\$3.99/ea**

Red Pepper 1 kg **\$9.99/ea**

Son Salt for Kimchi 2.5 kg **\$10.99/ea**

OK Tea Choco Cake 12 x 30 g **\$2.99/ea**

OK Food Lunchon Meat 340 g **\$2.49/ea**

Garlic Chips 25 g **99¢/ea**

Soy Canned Tuna 2 kinds 4 x 150 g **\$7.99/ea**

Koren Dried Seaweed 12x4g **\$3.99/ea**

HRD Ramen Noodles 4 x 128 g **\$1.49/ea**

Kakeyo Roasted Sesame Oil 22 oz **\$9.99/ea**

Honor Foods Vinahi 2.8 oz **\$2.99/ea**

Shirakiku Mayonnaise 500g **\$2.99/ea**

**HOUSEWARES**

MODAMODA SHAMPOO 300 G **29.99/ea**

BIGEN SPEEDY HAIR COLOR (REFILL ONLY) **\$5.99/ea**

ELECTRIC BBQ GRILL **\$39.99/ea**

ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (5.5QT) **\$49.99/ea**

ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (3.5QT) **\$54.99/ea**

ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (10QT) **\$59.99/ea**

**FROZEN & FISH DEPT**

Japanese Family Cake 16 pcs **\$3.99/ea**

**EUROPEAN DELI**

Columbus Roast Beef **\$13.19/ea**

Columbus Pastarm **\$12.09/ea**

Green Olives Stuffed w/ Feta **\$8.09/ea**

Green Cracked Olives **\$4.59/ea**

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 DECEMBER 04 - DECEMBER 10, 2024.

# Sac County Fentanyl Deaths Declining

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Sacramento County has made remarkable progress in the battle against the opioid crisis, reporting a 56% reduction in fentanyl-related deaths between 2023 and 2024.

According to the latest data, the Sacramento County Coroner's Office reported 180 fentanyl-related deaths so far this year, down from 406 in 2023.

"This reduction isn't necessarily due to fewer people using fentanyl but rather a direct result of the comprehensive support systems we've implemented," said Lori Miller, Behavioral Health Division manager for the Sacramento County Department of Health Services. "The coordinated efforts of local law enforcement, first responders, healthcare providers and community organizations are saving lives."

Sacramento County's approach includes an extensive network of partnerships and initiatives designed to combat the opioid crisis. Law enforcement agencies, including Sacramento County's Sheriff's Office and Probation Department and the Sacramento City Police Department, conduct



The Sacramento County Coroner's Office reported 180 fentanyl-related deaths so far this year, down from 406 in 2023. Courtesy photo

enforcement actions, make arrests and seize fentanyl supplies. The partnership with the Sacramento Fire Department and Sacramento Metro Fire's Mobile Medicine Teams have been instrumental in administering Narcan and providing medication-assisted treatment.

In addition, the Sacramento County Department of Child, Family and Adult Services, along with Sacramento County Public Health, has raised awareness about the dangers of fentanyl through education and distributing Narcan and fentanyl test strips.

The county's Adult Correctional Health Services has also played a role by expanded access to medication-assisted treatment in jails, while community-based organizations continue to provide prevention education, treatment options and harm reduction resources.

"By working together, we've built a robust system of care and support that is not only addressing substance use but also providing people with the tools they need to survive and recover," Miller said.

Maintaining this positive trend

requires a continued commitment to education, awareness and accessible resources. Narcan distribution, fentanyl test strips and public education are essential tools in reducing overdoses and keeping residents informed. Sacramento County is dedicated to expanding access to these resources, providing community members with the support needed to prevent and respond to fentanyl-related incidents.

While this is an encouraging trend, county officials are cautious as the holiday season approaches, which is a time of year that can

be challenging for individuals struggling with mental health and substance use disorders. County officials will continue their efforts and are hopeful that they will end the year with a decrease of 50% or more.

If you are in need of substance use help, need access to Narcan and fentanyl test strips or want to know more about the county's collaborative efforts, visit the Sacramento County's Department of Health Services page at [dhs.sacounty.gov](https://dhs.sacounty.gov) and type in Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services. ★

## SMUD Lists Unclaimed Checks on its Website

### SMUD News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Do you have an uncashed check from SMUD?

The names of customers and vendors who have not yet cashed checks dated Sept. 30, 2021 or earlier are now available on [smud.org](https://smud.org).

The list of names will be posted until Dec. 23.

To file a claim on an uncashed check, the claimant's name must be included on the list to be valid.

To make a claim, call 916-732-7440 and supply the claimant's name, current address, telephone number and the address

for the period between Oct. 1, 2020 and Sept. 30, 2021.

Claims can also be mailed to Sacramento Municipal Utility District Unclaimed Monies, 6201 S St., Mail Stop B352,

Sacramento, CA 95817-1818.

Each year, SMUD posts this information to find the money's rightful owner.

Claims must be made by 5 p.m. Dec. 23, or they become the property of SMUD under California Code Section 50050-50057.

Replacement checks will be issued only to the payee or, upon proof of death, to the payee's beneficiary. ★

## Judge Lindquist Designated Presiding Judge of Sacramento County Juvenile Court



Judge Kristina Lindquist has been named the new Presiding Judge over Sacramento County's Juvenile Court. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County Superior Court

### Sacramento County Superior Court News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Superior Court Judge Kristina B. Lindquist will serve as Presiding Judge over Sacramento County's Juvenile Court.

Judge Lindquist had

been serving as interim Presiding Judge of the Juvenile Court with the elevation of Judge Dena M. Coggins to the federal bench in September.

"I want to thank Judge Lindquist for her recent work in the Juvenile Division and am pleased to make her assignment as Presiding Judge permanent, effective immediately," said Superior Court Presiding Judge Bunmi O. Awoniyi, who signed the order effective Nov. 12.

Former Gov. Jerry Brown appointed Judge Lindquist to the Sacramento County bench in 2018. Since then, she has presided over traffic arraignments, trials, juvenile dependency, and delinquency matters.

Before joining the judiciary, Judge Lindquist

served as the deputy legal affairs secretary for the Office of the Governor, advising on criminal justice issues such as prison inmates' parole consideration and the commutation of sentences. She remained in that position until Brown's term as governor ended.

Previously, Judge Lindquist served as tax counsel at the State Board of Equalization and worked as staff counsel at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Judge Lindquist received a B.A. in philosophy and European studies from the University of Notre Dame. She completed a J.D. from the University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law in 2007. ★

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# First Property Taxes Installment Due Dec. 10

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The deadline for paying the first installment of your 2024-2025 Sacramento County property taxes is coming up shortly. Payments are due no later than Dec. 10. Late payments will incur a 10-percent penalty for each tax bill and partial payments are not accepted.

Payment must be received in the Tax Collector's Office by 5 p.m. Dec. 10 or either be postmarked or paid through the county website at [eproptax.saccounty.gov](http://eproptax.saccounty.gov) by Dec. 10. The Tax Collector also reminds property owners to include the appropriate installment payment stub from the tax bill or website, or write the parcel number of the property on the check being submitted to make sure that you receive proper credit for the payment.

Payment can be mailed to P.O. Box 508, Sacramento, CA 95812-0508. Be sure to mail your payment early enough to ensure a timely postmark and avoid penalties.

### Making Payments

Property taxes can be paid by online e-check or credit card through Sacramento County's Property Tax Bill Information System or over the telephone at 1-844-430-2823, using the 14-digit parcel number. Credit card payments are processed by a contractor and a 2.29% convenience fee will be applied if you elect to pay the annual property tax bill using this method. This convenience fee is not revenue to the county. There is no fee to make a payment via e-check.

To avoid penalties, transactions made either on the internet or over the telephone must be completed before midnight on the payment pay by date. Plan ahead and do not wait until the last minute to make your payment. If you are unable to get through on the internet or telephone, causing you to miss the payment deadline, penalties will not be waived.

Verify your data entry very carefully when making online payments. If your payment is rejected by your financial institution for any reason, you will be charged a return payment fee as well as

penalties if your payment is rejected after the due date.

If you use your bank's Online Bill Pay service, a paper check will be printed and mailed to the Tax Collector. Because the check is sent without a payment stub, enter the parcel number, current year's bill number and installment being paid in the online account number field for payment identification. Be sure you are familiar with your bank's online bill pay processing timelines. The Tax Collector uses the date appearing on the check from your bank's Payment Processing Center as the payment date. Online bill pay checks dated after the due date will be returned for penalty without exception. Be aware that because bank online bill pay checks are delivered in large batches without stubs, they will need to be individually handled and the posting of your payment might be delayed.

### How to Obtain Information About Your Tax Bill

If you have not received a tax bill, you can obtain your tax bill information and payment stubs at the Tax Collector's website, over the automated telephone system or by contacting the Tax Collector's Office at 916-874-6622.

Sacramento County offers an online email subscription service for property tax information. To receive e-mail notifications when the annual secured property tax bills are available each year and reminders before the first and second installments delinquent dates, visit the Sacramento County Homepage and enter your email address or mobile number under the "Connect with us" header, located at the bottom right-hand of the page. This service is provided at no cost to subscribers.

For additional information about property taxes, the Sacramento County Tax Collector's website provides answers to common questions from taxpayers regarding property taxes and links to tax bill information and online payments.

*Failure to receive a tax bill does not relieve the property owner of their liability to pay taxes in a timely manner or give the Tax Collector reason to cancel penalties imposed for late payment.* ★

*Lisa D. Presents*  
Sponsored By: City of Citrus Heights

**The Purple Pageant's  
YOUNG TEEN SOCIETY**

**Dec 29th, 2024**

Specializing In:  
Etiquette, Life Skills, Financial Literacy  
Daily Affirmations, Mannerisms  
& More.  
Evening Classes 5pm-830pm

**SIGN UP TODAY!!!**  
Call 916-856-4536  
AGES: 8-18y/o

CITRUS HEIGHTS CALIFORNIA

### The Young Teen Society Orientation

Date: December 29th Time: 5:00 PM

Location: 5150 Sunrise Blvd, Suite C3, Fair Oaks, CA

The Young Teen Society is a 12-step program sponsored by the Purple Pageant and the City of Citrus Heights. This program teaches manners, etiquette, and essential life skills.

### Program Highlights:

Graduation Dinner and Awards Ceremony include  
Limited to 20 girls per class • Age Groups: 8-12 and 13-18

### Curriculum Includes:

- Building confidence and self-esteem
- Effective communication skills
- Etiquette essentials
- Personal grooming and presentation
- Social media and online etiquette
- Financial literacy
- Time management
- Leadership development
- Community outreach
- Bullying prevention
- Starting a business
- Resume writing and mock interviews
- And more!

Cost: \$200.00 per student  
\$50.00 deposit (nonrefundable) required to reserve your seat—due ASAP  
Remaining balance of \$150.00 due on or before December 30th

**How to Sign Up:**  
Visit [purplepageant.org/blog](http://purplepageant.org/blog) to register!

For More Information:  
Call (916) 856-4536

Note: Evening classes only!

**BEST OF  
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OAKS  
2024**

**Get your  
Tickets  
online!**  
[BestofFairOaks.com](http://BestofFairOaks.com)

**VOTING STARTS NOV 14**

**Contest Rules**  
Business must be located in Fair Oaks or be a Fair Oaks Chamber member.  
All votes must be cast online at  
**BestofFairOaks.com**  
Only one vote per category per person.  
All voting entries must have complete information or the votes will not be counted.

**You're Invited!**  
Tickets are expected to sell out fast.  
Don't miss your chance to attend the 8th annual "Best of Fair Oaks" event.

**This year's event will be held:**  
**Where:** North Ridge Country Club, 7600 Madison Ave, Fair Oaks  
**When:** Thursday January 16, 2025  
**Cost:** Tickets starting at \$45 - Tables & Sponsorships Available  
Email [Info@FairOaksChamber.com](mailto:Info@FairOaksChamber.com) or call 916-967-2903



With Mary Jane Popp

# Holiday Survival

It's fun, family and friends. That's what the holidays bring, but they also bring celebrations, shopping and stress. And, it takes a toll on the body. But Dr. Susan Smith-Jones gave me nine surefire tips to look and feel your best and emphasize the FUN factor. Dr. Jones has traveled the world and helped many celebs in Hollywood hold their own, and she's authored some 25 books on health. Soooooo:

- 1. NUTRIFY YOUR SHOPPING.** Malls tempt wallets and taste buds, so bring healthy snacks like nuts, cut up veggies or fruit when shopping. Keeping your body fueled will help with long stressful checkout lines too.
- 2. GET HANDS ON.** Give yourself a mini massage or ask your partner to give you one. Restore vitality even more with this Mediterranean secret. Combine extra-virgin olive oil with three to four drips of Olbas Oil and rub it all over your body or simply do a foot massage. You can take a clue from Chinese medicine and apply pressure to the fleshy place between your thumb and index finger for 30 seconds. It's been shown to reduce upper body stress.
- 3. SLOW DOWN.** When you constantly direct your attention and energies outward, it's easy to lose your sense of inner wonder, calmness and happiness. Your body will relax and you will feel less bogged down.
- 4. SET A POSITIVE TONE FOR THE DAY.** The first 40 minutes of each day sets the tone for your entire day. Choose to make the first few moments as peaceful, positive and uplifting as possible. Spend a few minutes in quiet meditation and prayer time.

**5. SLEEP LIKE A BABY.** Avoid nighttime calls and turn off your cell phone before going to bed. A study at University of Zurich found that exposing people to electromagnetic fields from cell phones altered their brain waves during sleep, which resulted in sleep disturbances.

**6. KEEP HYDRATED.** Our bodies are 70% water. Our cells and planet are 70% water. Drink eight glasses of purified water or more to maintain good health.

**7. BATHE IN LAVENDER.** The flowers of lavender are an age-old remedy for stress. Bathing by itself is calming, but a bath infused with lavender oil significantly reduced anger, frustration and negativity.

**8. REFRESH WITH HONEY.** Honey has been used for centuries to keep skin looking youthful. Apply raw, unfiltered honey on your face like a mask for 20 minutes and rinse with warm water afterwards. It moisturizes the skin and helps it to look taut and supple.

**9. BOOST YOUR MOOD WITH DARK CHOCOLATE.** Chocolate is a wonderful mood booster because it stimulates the production of endorphins, which are the chemicals in the brain that promote pleasure. Dark chocolate contains serotonin, which is a natural mood booster. Keep a small square with you at all times for emergencies.

**Dr. Jones** has a free monthly newsletter. Sign up at [www.susansmithjones.com](http://www.susansmithjones.com). You can get personally autographed copies of her books there like "A Hug in a Mug." I think we all need those HUGS! **HAPPY HOLIDAYS!** ★

# Best of Fair Oaks Voting Ends Dec. 19



Judy Andrews

**By Judy Andrews, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce**

Have you voted? The Best of Fair Oaks 2024 voting is now underway. With close to 9,000 votes to date and 82 categories, this year's event may break previous voting records!

"Thanks to this great community, we've doubled our votes from last year at this time," said Fair Oaks Chamber CEO/President Kimberley Pitillo. "Be sure to keep those votes coming by registering at [bestoffairoaks.com](http://bestoffairoaks.com)."

Pitillo added that the race for first, second and third place in several categories changes daily.

Voting ends on Dec. 19, and you can only vote once per category for your favorite business, service, and organization. If you don't see your favorite listed, you may still nominate them through

Dec. 11. Nominees must reside within the Fair Oaks boundary or be current and active members of the Fair Oaks chamber. For a complete list of rules, visit [bestoffairoaks.com](http://bestoffairoaks.com)

Winners will be announced on Jan. 16 at the North Ridge Country Club awards gala. Tickets will be available online for the event starting Jan. 1, 2025.

Make your votes count by voting today at [bestoffairoaks.com](http://bestoffairoaks.com)!

The Best of Fair Oaks is sponsored by the Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce, the American River Messenger, and VoterFly. ★

# Fair Oaks' Matt Maples Recognized in Sutter County



Sutter County Sheriff's Office Matt Maples, center, is sworn into his new position as captain and jail division commander for the Sutter County Sheriff's Office. Courtesy photo

**By Shamaya Sutton**

**LIVE OAK, CA (MPG)** - Back in September, Brandon Barnes, the 24th sheriff elected to Sutter County, announced that two members of his command staff would retire by the end of the year.

Both happened to be working in Sutter County's corrections facility, the first being Captain Chad Niswonger, Jail Division Commander for the Sutter County Sheriff's Office, and the other Corrections Lt. Kristie Garza.

"I'm losing my two top people who oversee the jail for me," said Barnes during a community radio interview.

Barnes went on to say that Lt. Matt Maples had tested very early on for the position and that he would be promoted to captain on Sept. 21. After this announcement, Maples worked with Niswonger and Garza for several months to get his operational knowledge up to speed.

"I'm looking forward to the change," said Maples. "Sometimes change can feel bad at first but change is good; bringing different people into new roles can be good. I'm going to miss the role that I'm leaving. I greatly care about all the people that I've worked with but I'm excited about working with people on the corrections side and I think it's going to be rewarding and a challenge as well."

Maples has been with the Sutter County Sheriff's Office since 2009. Previously, he worked as the county's patrol lieutenant

in the Operations Division overseeing Main Office Patrol, along with other assignments such as Sheriff's Posse and Search and Rescue.

While his roots might be planted with his family in Fair Oaks, Maples has worked the majority of his professional career in Sutter County and said he feels like a part of the community.

On Nov. 25, Sheriff Barnes and his staff held a special swearing in ceremony, commemorating Captain Maples' new position as overseer of the county's correctional division. When Maples isn't busy keeping his corner of the world safe, he enjoys cooking and has his own business called Silver Sage Catering, which he often uses to cater various fundraising events.

"He's very involved with a lot of our nonprofits in the area," said Barnes. "Even if you don't know Matt, you've probably eaten one of his delicious dinners, I know I've had a few over the course of my career."

It was this type of servitude and commitment that Barnes said showed through in Maples early testing process for the captain position.

"One of the things I always say is, 'I know who people are at work but who are you outside of work, what do you give back?'" said Barnes. "I see that in Matt, he gives back to the community. We're very proud of him and the steps he's taken to come oversee our jail." ★

# Sales of Intoxicating Hemp Products Prohibited

*Continued from page 1*

additional violation within one year of the first violation.

The Business Licensing Division of the County's Department of Finance previously distributed a letter notifying select

business licensees of the proposed intoxicating hemp regulation and will perform additional outreach to the business community of the ordinance's adoption, effective date and administrative penalties. ★



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# CHP Receives Grant to Combat Distracted Driving



## California Highway Patrol News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - The California Highway Patrol (CHP) is proud to announce it received a \$350,000 grant to address the growing issue of distracted driving on California roads.

Distracted driving remains a leading cause of traffic crashes across the state, with drivers often diverting their attention from the road to activities such as using mobile devices, eating or drinking, adjusting vehicle controls or engaging in conversations with passengers. Even a brief distraction can lead to severe crashes, injuries or fatalities.

To tackle this critical issue, the CHP will engage communities statewide through educational presentations, participation in local events, enforcement operations and social media. This comprehensive strategy emphasizes education and enforcement to reduce incidences of distracted driving. Education helps foster a safety culture on the road, while enforcement is a necessary deterrent to dangerous behavior.

“Every driver needs to recognize the serious dangers associated with distracted driving. Each time you look away from the road, even for a moment, you put yourself, your passengers and

others at great risk,” said CHP Commissioner Sean Duryee. “We all have a responsibility to make our roads safer by staying focused behind the wheel.”

The CHP remains committed to ensuring the safety of California’s drivers and will continue its efforts to reduce the risks posed by distracted driving.

Funding for this program is provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

The mission of the CHP is to provide the highest level of Safety, Service and Security. ★

# Sacramento Region Gained People but Flubbed Economic Opportunities Over 50 Years



By Dan Walters,  
CALMatters.org

Fifty years ago this month I moved to Sacramento and a few months later, just after Jerry Brown became governor, began covering politics for the long-defunct Sacramento Union newspaper.

I have lived in five different homes — soon to be six — and my workplaces have always been in downtown Sacramento, near the Capitol.

That experience, plus research for my 1985 book on California megatrends, forms the background of some observations about the Sacramento region’s evolution. So here goes:

In 1974 the six-county region (Sacramento, Yolo, Yuba, Placer, Sutter and El Dorado) was home to barely a million people. However it was on the cusp of explosive growth, as was the entire state, thanks to a wave of migration and a baby boom. Today the region has about 2.5 million residents, making it the nation’s 28th largest metropolitan region, equal to the Las Vegas and Austin, Texas areas.

Much of the growth has been in Sacramento’s suburbs, so the city now contains just a fifth of the region’s population and has ceased to be its economic center, while jobs and businesses have flourished in the suburbs.

As the local economy evolved from state and federal government employment — including four large military

bases — into technology and other fields, voters had two opportunities to merge the city with what were mostly unincorporated communities in Sacramento County.

Merger would have made Sacramento the nation’s seventh or eighth largest city, with the economic and cultural clout that comes with size. But voters rejected both proposals, one in 1974, the other in 1990, and several suburbs incorporated into cities.

The consolidation failures reflected historic economic and political conflicts between the city and its suburbs which today still undermine cooperative policymaking and are visible in chaotic responses to the ever-growing homelessness crisis and the perpetual wrangling over transportation issues.

Glen Sparrow, who headed the 1974 consolidation effort, later blamed Sacramento’s “civic gentry” — its long-dominant families — for torpedoing its passage because they didn’t want Sacramento to grow.

The 1990 effort died because suburban voters saw city officials as incompetent ideologues, while Sacramento’s dominant Democrats feared that suburban Republicans would take control.

The failures blocked the city from controlling development outside its borders, and its downtown commercial district, once full of department stores, withered. It regained some momentum after the Sacramento Kings downtown basketball arena opened in 2016. But the proliferation of homeless encampments, a fatal gang shootout, a violent demonstration and the pandemic, which emptied state offices, erased much of that progress.

Meanwhile city government has become a model of dysfunction, with officials squabbling over mundane issues, chronic budget deficits and ceaseless conflicts with the county government, particularly over homelessness. The lack of cohesion means that Sacramento has flubbed opportunities to gain status among metro regions. Two examples involve its unique positioning at the juncture of two major rivers, the Sacramento and the American. Local officials blocked a canal that would have connected the Sacramento River to the channel that carries ocean-going ships to a Yolo County port and its lake, thereby missing an opportunity for spectacular waterfront development a la Southern California’s Marina del Rey. While the city is redeveloping an old railyard adjacent to downtown, it could have done something truly special by redirecting some American River water through canals, emulating San Antonio’s famous Riverwalk. A third is a failure to fully capitalize on the closure of McClellan Air Force Base in the 1990s. While the base has undergone a workable conversion to civilian use, its unique facilities also could have become another campus of the California Polytechnic State University, fueling off-campus technology businesses. Regions prosper when they have united and visionary leadership — such as North Carolina’s Research Triangle. Sacramento lacks that vision.

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. ★

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# Social Security Matters

## Am I entitled to more Social Security from my Ex-husbands?



By Russell Gloor,  
AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I am 76 years old and a retired high school counselor/teacher. I was married to my first husband from 1968 until 1981. He is still living, and he remarried two more times and, I believe, he is currently divorced. He is 77 years old. His income was always much higher than mine. I was married to my second husband from May 1989 until we divorced in April 2017. My second husband died in June 2023. What I wonder is if I am entitled to receive Social Security benefits based upon the income of either of my ex-husbands? **Signed: Twice Divorced Spouse.**

**Dear Twice Divorced:** Divorced spouses are entitled to the same benefits as a current spouse if their marriage lasted at least 10 years which, in both cases, yours did. The other caveat is whether your own SS retirement benefit is less than you are entitled to

from either of your ex-husbands. If your own SS retirement benefit is less, then you will get an incremental amount on top of your own SS retirement to bring your total monthly benefit up to your spousal (or surviving spouse) entitlement.

Since your first husband is still living, it is likely that your best financial option is to claim a surviving ex-spouse benefit from your deceased 2nd husband. The reason is that survivor benefits from husband #2 are based on his actual benefit at his death, whereas benefits from a living ex-spouse (husband #1) are based upon his full retirement amount. In other words, it is likely that 100% of deceased husband #2’s benefit at his death is more than 50% of living husband #1’s current benefit at his full retirement age (FRA).

It is, of course, possible that 50% of your first husband’s FRA entitlement is more than 100% of your second husband’s benefit at death, in which case your ex-spouse benefit from your first husband could be more. The only way to sort this out is to contact Social Security (1.800-772-1213) to make an appointment to apply for surviving ex-spouse benefits from your deceased second husband. Explain that your first

ex-husband is still living, and that you are unsure of what your benefits are as your first husband’s ex-spouse. Social Security will be able to determine from their records which one provides you with a higher benefit amount (provide each husband’s Social Security number when you call). As I said, your best financial option will likely be to take your survivor benefit from your deceased second ex-husband (note, however, if your first ex-husband also dies before you, you can subsequently file for a survivor benefit from him, if that is more than you are getting from your second husband’s record).

*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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# Apply Now for Next Grand Jury

## Sacramento County News Release

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)** - Applicants are now being sought for new jurors to serve on the Sacramento County Grand Jury. The application period opened on Nov. 20.

Nineteen Sacramento County residents and 11 alternates will be selected from among qualified applicants. The one-year term for volunteer jurors runs from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026.

The grand jury is appointed to provide oversight of county, city, school and special district agencies and operations within Sacramento County.

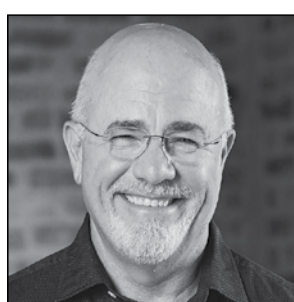
The grand jury is also authorized to hear

criminal indictments and is tasked with visiting regional detention facilities. Grand jurors receive a small stipend for their volunteer work.

To serve on the Sacramento County Grand Jury, you must be a Sacramento County resident over 18 years old and speak, read and write English.

Applications must be received by Dec. 31 to be considered. The grand jury will be empaneled in June 2025.

For more information about the Sacramento County Grand Jury, applicant criteria and how to apply, visit the Sacramento County Grand Jury website at [sacgrandjury.org](http://sacgrandjury.org). ★



Dave Ramsey

Dear Dave,

One of my credit card bills was turned over to a collection agency, because I was late making payments several times. The agency has offered me two or three different payment options I can afford. If I agree to one of these, does the original creditor get paid, as well?

– Bethany

Dear Bethany,

You're facing one of two possibilities. The collection agency is either directly representing the credit card company, or it owns the debt outright. Neither way of handling it is unusual when someone has defaulted on a loan.

Here's the deal. You've already got a mark against you on your credit report for the bill being turned over to collections. So, at this point settling on a credit card you've defaulted on is really no big deal. Unless you have the cash on hand right now to make good on the debt outright, I'd accept whichever deal makes the most sense for you financially at the moment.

But if you want my very best piece of advice for

## Dave Ramsey Says

### My Best Piece of Advice? The Unexpected is Always Lurking

you, and anyone else finding themselves in this kind of situation, Bethany, it goes something like this. Stop using credit cards!

– Dave

Dear Dave,

When I leave my job in two or three years, I'll still have a good income of around \$80,000 thanks to my pension. I talked with my wife recently about us not needing an emergency fund with a continuing steady income like this, but she thinks we should still have money set aside strictly for emergencies. I think we would be fine with my pension and our other investments, but she says a fund set aside strictly for the unexpected would make her feel safer. What are your thoughts?

– Barrett

Dear Barrett,

I always recommend folks have an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses. Put it in a good money market account with check writing privileges and a decent interest rate. That way, your money will work for you a little bit until it's needed.

I know a good pension can feel really solid. But there's always the possi-

bility of lost income or very large, unexpected expenses. Life can take a big financial chunk out of you at any time. What if one, or both of you, have a major medical event? Even with the other investments you mentioned, you should have an emergency fund. Period.

In your case, you could probably lean toward three months of expenses in your emergency fund. If it were me, I'd go ahead and make it a full six months of expenses. Trust me, a fully funded emergency fund will make both of you feel better. It can turn a disaster into nothing more than an inconvenience.

– 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.* ★

# Sacramento Author Helps Shelter Animals Nationwide

## iPub Cloud International News Release

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - A new children's book series is empowering young animal allies nationwide. In

2024, approximately 6.3 million companion animals found themselves in shelters across the United States. iPub Cloud International is thrilled to introduce an extraordinary new children's book that shines a light on this urgent issue. "A Shelter Is... A Dog's Journey from Shelter to Home," the debut picture book by Carolyn Wooddall and beautifully illustrated by Elaine S. Choi, captures the hopes, resilience, and love that define the shelter experience.

With its heartfelt storytelling and vibrant artwork, this inspiring book empowers young readers to connect with the cause and take action to support their local animal shelters.

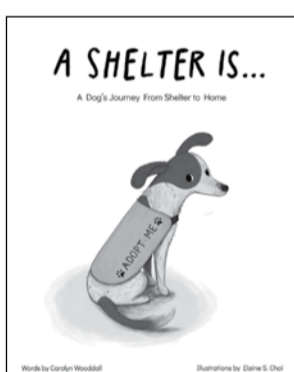
The author aims to enlighten and motivate children through her Animal Ally book series. The first book, "A Shelter Is..." tells the touching story of a hopeful dog in a shelter navigating its path to finding a forever home. Through simple storytelling and vivid illustrations, the book highlights shelters' essential roles in nurturing and rehoming pets. "A Shelter Is..." not only aims to educate young minds about animal shelters but also encourages our youth to actively participate in creating happier endings for all animals in need.

A beautifully illustrated piece showcasing the invaluable resource our local shelters play in our communities. A perfect introduction for children to learn about the life-saving work of dedicated staff and bringing families and pets in need of homes together!" Explained Meghan Ramczyk, Animal Services Manager for the Lodi City animal shelter.

The author's deep passion for animal welfare shines through in her writing. "My goal with this book is to educate readers about the powerful impact of animal shelters and



Photo of the book's author, Carolyn Wooddall.



Cover artwork on display for "A Shelter Is..." Photos courtesy of Carolyn Wooddall

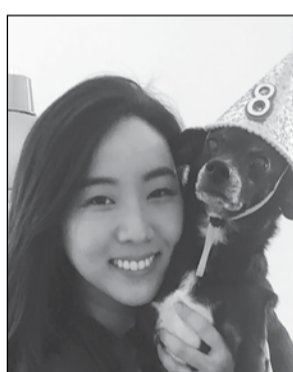


Photo of the book's illustrator, Elaine S. Choi.

their remarkable work," she said. "I also want to empower kids to understand how they can get involved and make a difference in the lives of shelter animals in their communities."

### Community Impact:

Key Statistics (Source: [www.ShelterAnimalsCount.com](http://www.ShelterAnimalsCount.com)):

Approximately 3.2 million sheltered animals are cats, while 3.1 million are dogs. Around 50% of U.S. shelters maintain no-kill policies. An estimated 4.1 million shelter animals find homes each year.

Proceeds from the Animal Ally series will benefit Hard Luck Animal Welfare Advocates, a non-profit that the author and her husband started in 2023 to help shelter animals who are down on their luck, as well as other animal shelters, supporting medical care and adoption efforts for animals in need. This initiative reflects a

significant opportunity for communities to rally together for a compassionate cause, ensuring more animals like the one in Wooddall's book find their happily ever after.

The author resides in Sacramento with her family and their four shelter pups. Her debut picture book is perfect for young animal lovers, and anyone interested in positively impacting animals' lives. It is a compelling reminder that while shelters are essential, the ultimate goal is to turn them into temporary stops on the way to loving homes.

For more information on how to support or to order a copy of "A Shelter Is..." visit [www.ipubglobalconnection.com](http://www.ipubglobalconnection.com). For more information about how kids can get involved with their local animal shelters and become Animal Allies, visit [www.animalally-books.com](http://www.animalally-books.com). ★



Chicken Little said, "the sky is falling, the sky is falling," but was it? We know of course the answer was no but does this sound vaguely familiar.

Kings fans and supposed experts would have you believe that the current team is in need of an overhaul, as well as a group of new coaches.

I'm the first to say that I'm not pleased with coach Brown's performance thus far, but I'm not clamoring for his job. Coach Brown's rotations have been hard to understand all season, but that is no different than the prior season where continuity was in short supply.

It wasn't long ago the Kings were two games over 500, and suddenly went into a losing tailspin. Losers of five out of the last six games will get people talking, and everyone has an opinion.

On the plus side, no one was casting aspersions when last week the Kings announced the signing of small forward Jae Crowder. Crowder, a free agent, has a history of being on winning basketball teams, and his moniker is his hard-nosed style of play, something the Kings could use more of.

Without question, the current squad plays hard every night, but we are lacking in players that have the dog mentality that can set the bone crushing screens that the Kings seem to see nightly from other teams.

Crowder brings that element, so it remains to be seen in what capacity coach Brown will use his new addition.

Brown chose to put Crowder in the starting lineup without even a single practice, while talented Mr. everything, Malik Monk watched as always from the bench.

Imagine my surprise when not one but two former members of the Kentucky Wildcats were introduced into the starting lineup against the San Antonio Spurs on Sunday, Dec. 1 at Golden One Arena. The arena erupted when Malik Monk was introduced right in back of DeAaron Fox, and I couldn't have been happier for Malik.

Coach Brown and Sacramento Kings fans were treated to the best scoring first quarter of the young season, as the Kings put up a staggering 42 points.

Malik was the spark plug he always seems to be, but despite the auspicious start, the Kings played poorly in the fourth quarter, and although they made it close, came away with a 2-point loss.

As is oft the case, the zebras did not help their cause, and the game was replete with calls that one would expect at a high school game, not in the highest court of basketball.

The last week began on a high note, as the Sactown boys went into Minnesota, and after losing the prior two games to the Wolves this season, the Kings put on a fourth quarter show that was a pure pleasure to watch. Surprisingly, while only connecting on 32% of their 3-point efforts, and scoring only 12 3-point field goals all night, the Kings sent the Timberwolves home with a 115-104 spanking.

For Kings fans, this type of overall efficiency, which included solid team defense all night, is what gives everyone hope that this team can turn things around.

Sadly, after breaking a 4-game losing streak by besting the Wolves, Sacramento could not back it up, losing to both Portland and San Antonio back-to-back.

The bright spot for me this past week was the emergence of small forward Isaac Jones. Nearly forgotten at the end of the bench, the rookie out of Washington State brought energy, spirited defense, and added 12 points that were sorely needed against the young and talented Timberwolves.

Why it's taken this long to give Isaac a look is a hard question to answer but look for coach Brown to move this young forward closer to the top of the bench.

Another bright note is hearing Malik Monk in the post-game interview say it's taken him three years in Sacramento to get a single start, and he likes being a starter where he's spent the majority of his career.

Hang on Kings fans. It's not time to pull your hair just yet. Christmas is right around the corner, and something tells me the Sac Town ballers may have some presents in store for basketball hungry Sacramento fans in the month of December.

*All the best Kings fans!*

*Your thoughts are always welcome at [vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com](mailto:vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com).* ★

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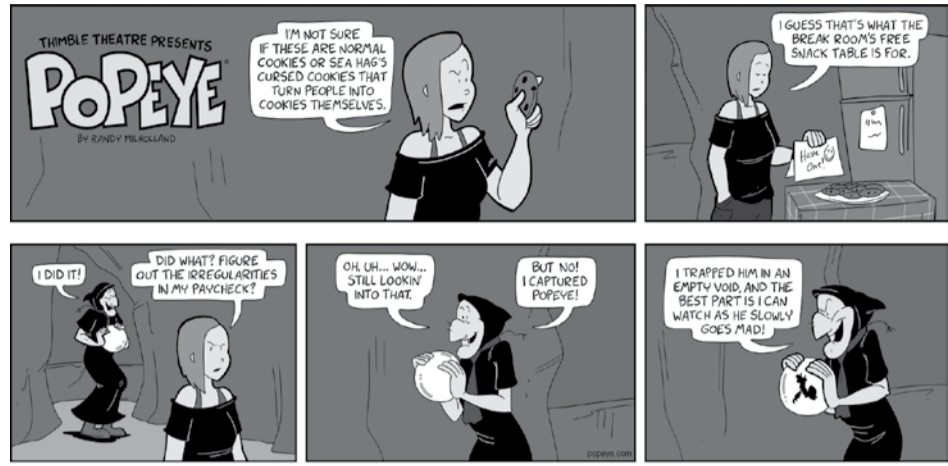
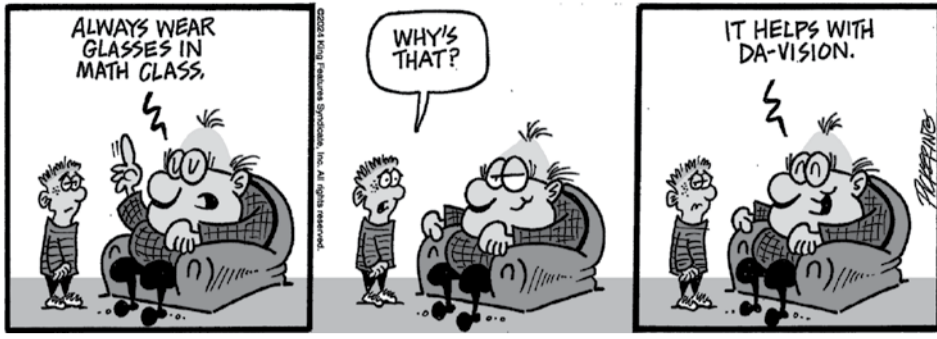
**AMERICANRIVERMESSENGER.COM**



# COMICS & PUZZLES

## The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



## Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



## Out on a Limb

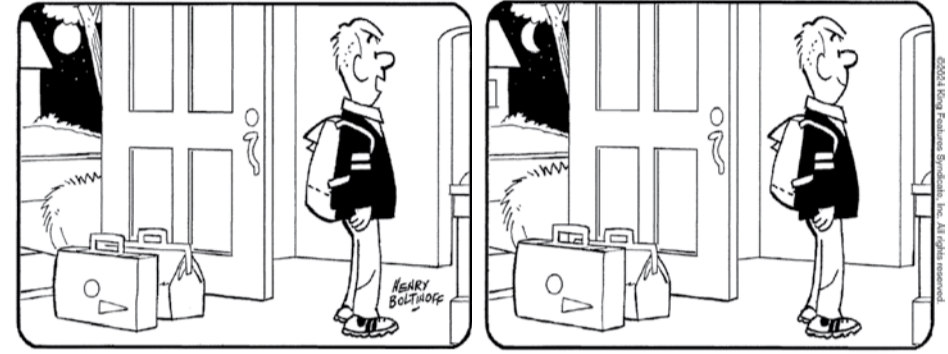
by Gary Kopervas



## HOCUS-FOCUS

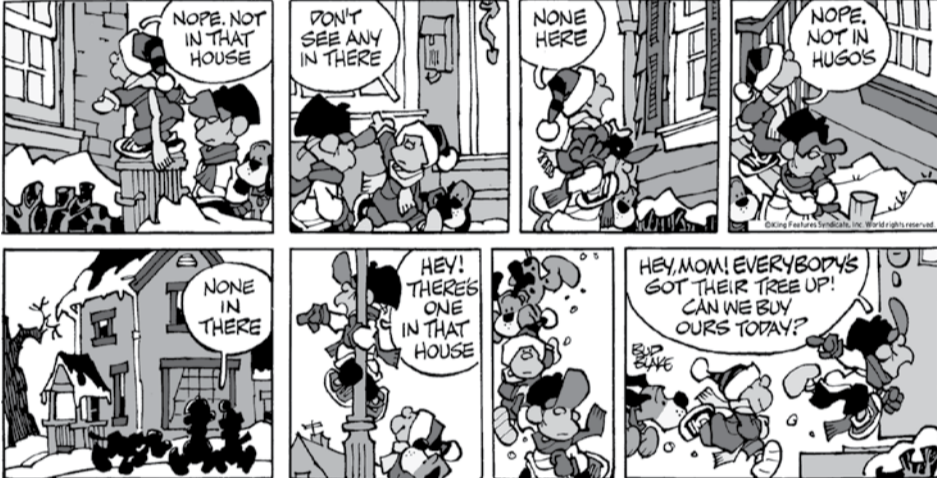
BY HENRY BOLITOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



## TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



## GRIN THE BEAR IT



## Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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## STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • HAPPY HOLIDAYS

### CLUES

- ACROSS**
- Unit of electrical capacity
  - \*Buche de Noël, e.g.
  - What influencers do?
  - Yemen's neighbor
  - Another word for Tokyo
  - Singer Ross of "Where Did Our Love Go" fame
  - Laundry room fire hazard, pl.
  - Much of it about nothing?
  - Furnish with a fund
  - \*"A Bad Moms Christmas" actress Bell
  - \*Tiny Tim creator
  - Tibetan ox
  - Khrushchev's domain
  - \*Goo on real Christmas tree
  - Sketch
  - \*Poinsettia's motherland
  - "\_\_\_\_\_ Good Men", movie
  - Brussels' org.
  - Plant fungus
  - Reluctant
  - Klutzy
  - \*"It's beginning to look \_\_\_\_\_ like..."
  - Domains
  - Bog down
  - Oxen connector
  - Under epidermis
  - Mums' mums
  - Over, poetically
  - Alleviate
  - Mahal
  - \*Tanne in "O Tannenbaum" (2 words)
  - "It is felix to Feliciano
  - Radioshow host: "Hello, you're \_\_\_\_\_"
  - Knot-tying vow (2 words)
  - Dispatch boat
  - Carthage's ancient neighbor
  - "Egg\_\_\_\_\_"
  - Oil lamp dweller
  - Fishing poles
  - Bigheadedness
  - Painter Degas
- DOWN**
- Lore people
  - Mideast ruler
  - Hindu princess
  - Jittery
  - Farthest from point of origin
  - Ground beef description
  - Like Lemmon and Matthau together
  - Merchandise
  - Swim's alternative
  - Dwyane, once of Miami Heat
  - Any day now, to Shakespeare
  - Swerves
  - King's order
  - Increasing
  - Philosophy ending
  - Undo, as in strings
  - Green side
  - Before, in the olden days
  - J.M. Barrie's Pan
  - "Howdy, \_\_\_\_\_!"
  - Internal picture

CROSSWORD													
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WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS

MPG

# Tips for a Holly Jolly Holiday Season

**Sacramento County News Release**

**SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG)**

- As the holidays approach, many of us look forward to gatherings with friends and family, enjoying delicious food and taking part in festive celebrations. However, this time of year can also bring feelings of stress, loneliness or sadness for some. The holiday season is a complex time that can amplify both the highs and lows of life.

"It's normal to feel overwhelmed by the demands of the season," said Sacramento County Director of Behavioral Health Dr. Ryan Quist. "High expectations, separation from loved ones, personal grief and financial pressures can all impact our mental well-being. It's important to remember that it's okay not to feel joyful all the time."

To help navigate the season and its challenges, Sacramento County's Department of Health Services, Behavioral Health Division, offers these tips:

**Acknowledge your feelings and stress levels.** Recognizing when you need a break is essential. During this time of year, we try to squeeze in a bunch of different events. Maintaining regular routines, especially consistent sleep schedules and meal times can also support mental health.

"We often underestimate how critical a regular sleep routine is to our emotional well-being. It can impact your mental health and your ability to function effectively," Quist explained. "Also, simply staying consistent with meals can help avoid unnecessary stress."

**Plan for managing stress.** Whether it's taking a walk, reading or cooking with loved ones, identifying activities that bring calm and joy can be a



The holiday season is a complex time that can amplify both the highs and lows of life. Photo by cottonbro studio

valuable resource when emotions run high.

**Connect with others.** The holidays don't have to revolve around material gifts. Giving your time and support to friends or community members can lift spirits for both you

and them.

**Avoid excessive alcohol and/or substance use.** For those in recovery, the holidays can be especially challenging. It's important to have a plan for navigating social events and leaning on support

systems if needed.

For those needing additional support, Sacramento County Behavioral Health provides a variety of resources for residents including:

**9-8-8 (National Suicide Hotline).** This hotline will

connect you to a local call center, which can then dispatch the Sacramento County's mobile crisis team to meet you where you are.

**CalHOPE.** For less urgent support, residents can also reach out to CalHOPE at 833-317-HOPE or visit its website at [www.calhope.org](http://www.calhope.org).

**The Source Support Line for Youth and Caregivers.** Feeling alone, stressed or sad? Call or text 916-SUPPORT (787-7678) for 24/7 support.

**Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic (MHUCC).** The Mental Health Urgent Care Clinic provides 24/7 crisis services on a walk-in basis to individuals of all ages needing mental health and/or co-occurring substance use supports. The clinic can be accessed by visiting 2130 Stockton Blvd., Building 300, Sacramento, CA 95817 or by calling 916-520-2460. Go online to [dhs.saccounty.gov/BHS/Documents/MHUCC\\_Flyer.pdf](http://dhs.saccounty.gov/BHS/Documents/MHUCC_Flyer.pdf) for more information.

**Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services.** Substance Use Prevention and Treatment Services provides prevention and treatment services for alcohol and drug use/abuse through contracting with an array of community-based service providers throughout Sacramento County. Call 916-874-9754 or toll-free (888) 881-4881 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Mondays through Fridays, and after hours, use the toll-free number.

The holidays can be stressful and that's OK. If you need help, don't hesitate to reach out, whether to a friend, family member or professional resource.

Learn more about Sacramento County's various Behavioral Health resources on its website at [dhs.saccounty.gov](http://dhs.saccounty.gov). ★

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## Women's Empowerment to Hold Annual Holiday Drive

**Kristin Thebaud Communications News Release**

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)**

- Local residents can spread holiday cheer to Sacramento women and children who have experienced homelessness by contributing to Women's Empowerment's annual Holiday Drive.

The nonprofit is seeking fully assembled gift bags that include a \$25 Target and Walmart gift card, winter hat, socks and holiday candy. Assembled gift bags are needed for all ages from infant to adult. For those who prefer to make a financial donation, the average cost of a gift bag is \$40, but any amount is helpful. Items also can be purchased individually through the group's Amazon Wishlist at [www.womens-empowerment.org](http://www.womens-empowerment.org). Items are needed at Women's Empowerment, 1590 North A St. in Sacramento, by Dec. 11.

"These gift bags provide warm and celebratory items for the women and children in our programs during the holiday season, but they also demonstrate that they have a community of love and support encouraging them as they work to break the generational cycle of homelessness," said Lisa Culp, executive director of Women's Empowerment. Items will be distributed to families at Women's Empowerment's upcoming Holiday Craft Party in mid-December where women and children will create gifts for



A Women's Empowerment graduate makes holiday gifts with her grandson at the annual Holiday Craft Party where they also received gifts from the group's annual holiday drive. Women's Empowerment is seeking items for its 2024 Holiday Drive. Photo courtesy of Kristin Thebaud Communications

family and friends. At the event, mothers also will have the opportunity to choose gifts for their children, thanks to a toy drive held by California State Assemblymember Kevin McCarty, District 6. Women's Empowerment provides a two-month employment-readiness and empowerment program, paid job training, childcare and support services so women and their children can break the generational cycle of homelessness. Women's Empowerment offers the most comprehensive job-readiness program in the Sacramento area designed specifically for women experiencing homelessness and their children. In 2023, 165 jobs were secured by graduates, and 189 women either secured or maintained housing. Since 2001, 1,903 women have graduated from Women's Empowerment with their 4,000 children. Women's Empowerment is funded through private donations from the community and grants. To make a donation, visit [WomensEmpowerment.org](http://WomensEmpowerment.org). ★