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Citrus Heights Messenger

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Republic Services Honors Winners



Girl Scout Troop 559 led the flag salute at the Jan. 22 Citrus Heights City Council meeting. Photo courtesy of the City of Citrus Heights

By Shaunna Boyd

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - Girl Scout Troop 559 led the flag salute at the Jan. 22 Citrus Heights City Council meeting as the group of second-year Daisies, working on their government badge, attended the meeting to see the process firsthand.

City Council welcomed Troop 559 and Mayor Jayna Karpinski-Costa said that Scout programs are a “terrific way” for young people to experience both “learning and sharing.”

“I’m impressed you decided to come visit us for your badge,” Vice-Mayor MariJane Lopez-Taff said.

Councilmember Tim Schaefer said he was “delighted” to have the troop attend the meeting and

Councilmember Porsche Middleton said she loves Girl Scout cookies and will be stocking up on thin mints.

“You all are great businesspeople and I’m so excited for your cookie season,” said Councilmember Kelsey Nelson.

Republic Services, Citrus Heights’ residential garbage and recycling collection agency, presented the winners of its annual poster contest. In partnership with the San Juan Unified School District (SJUSD), the art contest is open to all kindergarten through eighth-grade students in Citrus Heights.

The prompt this year was “Who is your recycling hero?” and the 12 winning posters are featured in a calendar. Each winner also received a plastic Republic Services truck

replica, a signed certificate and their framed artwork ready for display.

After reviewing hundreds of submissions, the following students were selected: (from Lichen K-8) Andres P. in seventh-grade; (from Skycrest) Allison A. in fourth-grade, Dana H. in fourth-grade, Anastasiia K. in fifth-grade, and Daniil R. in second-grade; (from Woodside K-8) Amelia P. in sixth-grade; (from Kingswood K-8) Lea P. in fifth-grade; (from Cambridge Heights) Kate N. in fourth-grade, Harper B. in fifth-grade, Zavanna B. in first-grade, and Valeriia P. in first-grade; and (from Carriage Drive Elementary) the grand prize winner Juannahlyn F. in fifth-grade.

During the meeting’s Public *Continued on page 7*

Doggie Day Out Program Re-Launched



The Doggie Day Out Program allows residents to take shelter dogs out on adventures for the day. Photo courtesy of the City of Sacramento

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Front Street Animal Shelter has re-launched its popular Doggie Day Out program, which allows members of the community to take a shelter dog on a “field trip” to get a break from life at the shelter and increase their chances for adoption.

A video on the shelter’s Facebook page describes how the program works. Community members can take dogs on walks, to dog-friendly restaurants and breweries, to pet stores for treats and more. The shelter provides all necessary supplies, including a leash and other accessories for the dog that say, “Adopt me.”

“This program is extremely beneficial for our dogs,” said Phillip Zimmerman, manager at Front Street Animal Shelter. “It gives them much-needed exercise and a break from the stressful shelter environment, allows us to collect photos and valuable information about their behavior, and gives them exposure to potential adopters out in the community.”

The pandemic and staffing shortages caused the program’s hiatus, but with substantial hiring as well as improvements in technology to improve efficiencies, the shelter is excited to offer the program again.

“It’s not just great for the dogs, but also for the people who find meaning and enjoyment giving the dogs a fun day out,” Zimmerman said.

To learn more and sign up for a Doggie Day Out appointment, visit cityofsacramento.gov/doggedayout. ★

Sunrise Tomorrow Amendment Proposed

By Thomas J. Sullivan

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - “When Macy’s closes the two stores... (Sunrise Mall will] for all intents and purposes die,” said Sacramento-based commercial real estate developer Ethan Conrad.

He was telling some 75 people gathered at the monthly neighborhood meeting of Citrus Heights Area Seven, Eight, Nine (CHASEN) on Jan. 21 that the city’s vision for its Sunrise Tomorrow redevelopment plan is not “economically viable.”

The amendment proposal, submitted by his firm Ethan Conrad Properties Inc. details adjustments to the plan approved by the Citrus Heights City Council in 2021 that would affect the redevelopment of the Sunrise Mall area.

Conrad controls 71 acres of the southern portion of the mall and confirmed that he is in escrow to purchase 50 more acres, including the northern section of the mall where the two Macy’s



Ethan Conrad spoke at the monthly community meeting of CHASEN to outline his vision for Sunrise Tomorrow redevelopment plan which allows for all “logical use” tenants. Photo by Thomas J. Sullivan

stores are located. The JCPenney parcel that faces Arcadia Drive and includes a closed auto repair facility is also part of the same deal.

He purchased 21 acres of the almost 100 acre-Sunrise Mall property in 2022 where the former Sears

retail store and its automotive service center were located.

“Unfortunately, there has been no current interest from any developer to move forward with the (Sunrise Tomorrow) plan as written,” Conrad said.

Specific modifications

to the city’s Sunrise Tomorrow plan must allow all “logical use” tenants which would have been allowed before the city’s specific plan for the mall was approved, Conrad said.

Specific changes recommended by Conrad include the allowance of eight quick-service restaurant and drive-thru businesses, building and landscape materials sales, light industrial and storage uses, and automotive uses, as well as the removal of requirements for open space. His plan also calls for the elimination of proposed commercial office space on the mall property.

Conrad proposes to submit a commercial parcel map application, which will merge some of the existing parcels and to re-parcel them to allow indoor commercial recreation facilities that are not allowed within sub areas of the adopted Specific Plan and its zoning.

A quick-serve national restaurant is also shown *Continued on page 3*



Safe Stay Community Campus Breaks Ground



Ground has officially been broken to begin work on the Watt Safe Stay Community. Photo courtesy of Sacramento County

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - Sacramento County and its partners have officially broken ground on a large-scale campus that can serve the unhoused population with diverse offerings to help people in various stages of homelessness.

The 13-acre property on Watt Ave near Roseville Road, already equipped with a 130,000-square-foot warehouse, is designed as a mixed-use campus with shelter, respite, and safe parking. Behavioral Health services, co-located on-site with case management, storage, pet respite, laundry services, showers, bathrooms, job training, and more, will complete the vision of having a dynamic, multi-use, co-located facility to serve the unhoused population.

"This is a project we've been working on for years - a large-scale campus-style shelter that will serve hundreds of people at a time and address the diverse needs each of them have," said Rich Desmond, County Supervisor District 3. "Our staff is putting in extra time and attention to this campus, ensuring

that it houses everything we need to end homelessness for people."

The Watt Campus will have the capacity to host (at any given time): 225 beds in Safe Stay cabins, 50-person capacity in Safe Parking and 75-person capacity for emergency/weather respite beds.

Conservative estimates, based on the data from other county sheltering and respite projects, show that over 15 years, the Watt Campus will serve 18,000 people - which pencils out the cost to less than \$3,600 per person - a drastic reduction to what it costs to leave people unhoused and burden the cost of response.

The Watt Campus's size and configuration offer a unique opportunity to serve folks immediately exiting homelessness in the emergency/weather respite center and those more stabilized and working towards permanent housing in the Safe Stay cabins. Additionally, it will allow staff to serve people living in vehicles, which includes the working poor, and those who are only recently homeless.

While having the space to serve folks at these different stages of their homeless experience, the site

will allow for a myriad of community-based supports - behavioral health, physical health, employment services, treatment services (and many more) - to co-locate at the site and support clients towards a permanent exit from homelessness.

Watt will be the county's fourth Safe Stay Community, with other locations in south Sacramento at Florin, East Parkway and on Stockton Blvd. In addition to these shelters, the county also has scattered site shelter homes across the county, as well as several other sheltering programs. The county continues to pursue new and innovative programs and services to address homelessness, stretch limited funding and partner with its cities, community-based organizations and local non-profits in the mission to end homelessness.

Have questions? Read the Frequency Asked Questions at https://schs.saccounty.gov/Pages/Watt_Ave_Safe_Stay_Community_Updates.aspx.

For more information about what the county is doing to address homelessness, visit our website at <https://schs.saccounty.gov/pages/default.aspx>. ★

District Attorney's Podcast Launches

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento County District Attorney's Office is launching a new "Off the Record" podcast, available now on all major podcast platforms with a video version on the D.A. YouTube channel.

Off the Record dives deep into stories that matter, presenting cases and topics in a totally immersive way. Expect 911 calls, video and photo evidence, bodycam footage and on-location shoots. From fascinating cases to unsolved cold cases and changes in laws that have real-world impacts, listeners will hear it all. Plus, the "Did You Know?" segments give surprising facts and behind-the-scenes information.

The launch episode features a human trafficking case, which includes video evidence of a victim getting slammed by a car door and demeaned by

her trafficker and several other traffickers in a parking lot near the "Blade." The episode also includes a 911 call reporting this victim later being sexually exploited behind a building outside in that same public parking lot. There is also photo evidence of physical injuries that the victim suffered over a period of time. As a part of National Human Trafficking Awareness Month, it's a glimpse into the reality of this violent life and the abuse victims endure.

The video can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/etbHrqZ7MAM?si=9A-94JAY0GAWmLBNr>.

This podcast is for true crime enthusiasts and anyone interested in criminal justice and public safety issues. It is an important platform for us to engage and educate the community.

Subscribe to our YouTube channel and follow us on social media @ SacCountyDA to be notified when Off the Record episodes drop. ★



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Dishes To Choose From

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Tempura

Tofu

Vegetarian

Chow Mein

Pad Thai

Pan-Fried Noodles

Stir-Fry

Teriyaki

Wonton

Zucchini

FROZEN & FISH DEPT

<p>Red Abalone Sashimi Grade 2.2 lbs REG. \$49.99/EA \$29.99/ea</p>	<p>Frozen Salmon Burgers 2 pcs REG. \$6.99/EA \$3.99/ea</p>
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WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS

<p>Beef Cross Rib Shoulder Roast - Bnds Costilla Cruzada & Ternera Asada Deshossada \$4.99/lb</p>	<p>Beef T-Bone Steak Filete Chuletón de Brasería \$5.49/lb</p>	<p>Chicken Drumsticks Piernas de Pollo 79¢/lb</p>
<p>Pork Spare Ribs (Single Pack) Costillas de Cerdo \$2.99/lb</p>	<p>Pork Loin Roast Boneless Lomo de Cerdo Asado Deshossado \$2.79/lb</p>	<p>Pork Loin Chops Boneless Chuletas de Cerdo de Cerdo \$2.99/lb</p>

WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS

<p>Chicken Drumsticks Piernas de Pollo 89¢/lb</p>	<p>Australian Lamb Shoulder Chops Bone-In Chuletas de Cordero con Heras \$3.49/lb</p>	<p>Beef Cross Rib Shoulder Roast - Bnds Costilla Cruzada & Ternera Asada Deshossada \$5.49/lb</p>
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FRESH PRODUCE

<p>Mandarine 2 lbs Bag \$2.29/bag</p>	<p>Green Bean 99¢/lb</p>	<p>Cherub Tomato 10 oz \$3.79/ea</p>	<p>Honey Crisp Apple 5 lbs \$2.49/bag</p>
<p>Russet Potato 10 lbs Bag \$2.99/bag</p>	<p>English Cucumber 99¢/ea</p>	<p>Orange Navel 10 lbs Bag \$5.99/bag</p>	<p>King Oyster Mushroom \$1.59/lb</p>

AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY

<p>Wishbone Dressings 15 Loz \$2.49/ea</p>	<p>Whole Wheat Crackers 8.85 oz \$2.99/ea</p>	<p>Saviled Fabric Softener 8.5 Liters \$14.99/ea</p>	<p>Sanay Orange Drink 1 gallon \$7.49/ea</p>
<p>REG. \$3.99 \$2.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$3.99 \$2.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$16.99 \$14.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$4.49 \$3.99/ea</p>

ASIAN GROCERY

<p>REG. \$2.29 \$1.69/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$3.49 99¢/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$2.99 \$2.29/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$2.99 \$2.29/ea</p>
<p>Beandol Superior Pickle Sauce 16.9 Loz</p>	<p>Kikkoman Noodle Kit with Sauce 4.8 oz</p>	<p>Koon Chun Hoisin Sauce 15 oz</p>	<p>Saltin Quail Eggs (in brine) 15 oz</p>

EUROPEAN GROCERY

<p>REG. \$6.99 \$4.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$3.69 \$2.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$4.99 \$4.49/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$4.69 \$3.49/ea</p>
<p>Uyella Buckwheat 1.5 kg</p>	<p>Behrer Old Polish Style Salad 900 gr</p>	<p>Vinard Cucumber in Brine 750 gr</p>	<p>Safel White Green Cardamom 21 gr</p>

KOREAN/JAPANESE GROCERY

<p>REG. \$6.99 \$6.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$12.99 \$12.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$19.99 \$19.99/ea</p>	<p>REG. \$2.49 \$2.49/ea</p>
<p>Premium Sushi Rice 4.4 lbs</p>	<p>Shin Ramyon 16 x 120 g</p>	<p>Dee Anders Red Curry Extract 30 x 70 ml</p>	<p>Q Food Lunches Meat 340 g</p>

HOUSEWARES

<p>PAON SEVEN-EIGHT HAIR COLOR (REFILL ONLY) REG. \$8.99 \$6.99/ea</p>	<p>ELECTRIC BBQ GRILL 39.99/ea</p>
<p>ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (4.5QT) \$49.99/ea</p>	<p>ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (5.5QT) \$54.99/ea</p>

FROZEN & FISH DEPT

<p>Dried Cod Fish 500 g REG. \$16.99/EA \$12.99/ea</p>	<h2 style="text-align: center;">EUROPEAN DELI</h2> <table border="0" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Belmont German Ham \$5.49/lb</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Pitted Olive Garlic Salad \$5.79/lb</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Ham Off the Bone \$6.19/lb</p> </td> <td style="width: 50%; vertical-align: top;"> <p>Green Cracked Olives REG. \$5.99/lb \$4.59/lb</p> </td> </tr> </table>	<p>Belmont German Ham \$5.49/lb</p>	<p>Pitted Olive Garlic Salad \$5.79/lb</p>	<p>Ham Off the Bone \$6.19/lb</p>	<p>Green Cracked Olives REG. \$5.99/lb \$4.59/lb</p>
<p>Belmont German Ham \$5.49/lb</p>	<p>Pitted Olive Garlic Salad \$5.79/lb</p>				
<p>Ham Off the Bone \$6.19/lb</p>	<p>Green Cracked Olives REG. \$5.99/lb \$4.59/lb</p>				

Sunrise Tomorrow Amendment Proposed

Continued from page 1 being added along Greenback Lane. Conrad suggested BJ's Brewhouse, potentially occupying the former Elephant Bar site, and IKEA to fill one of Macy's vacant retail store locations.

The former Sears building is listed as "national tenant bowling/entertainment use" and a Home Depot is shown in the southeastern corner of the property.

Conrad's presentation was pulled from the Jan. 22 City Council meeting agenda, according to a Jan. 16 announcement by the city. Instead, Conrad decided to make a presentation to the monthly neighborhood meeting of CHASEN with other scheduled community meetings to follow.

Conrad outlined his specific modifications to the Sunrise Tomorrow plan, calling his proposal "Sunrise Tomorrow Evolution."

On Nov. 10, 2021, Citrus Heights City Council unanimously voted in favor of adopting the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan and its associated environmental impact report (EIR), rezoning and a General Plan amendment for the future redevelopment of the nearly 100-acre mall property.

"Sunrise Tomorrow Evolution simply provides more flexibility for logical retail uses to ensure we can attract the tenants needed to establish an economically viable, long-term solution for the property," Conrad said.

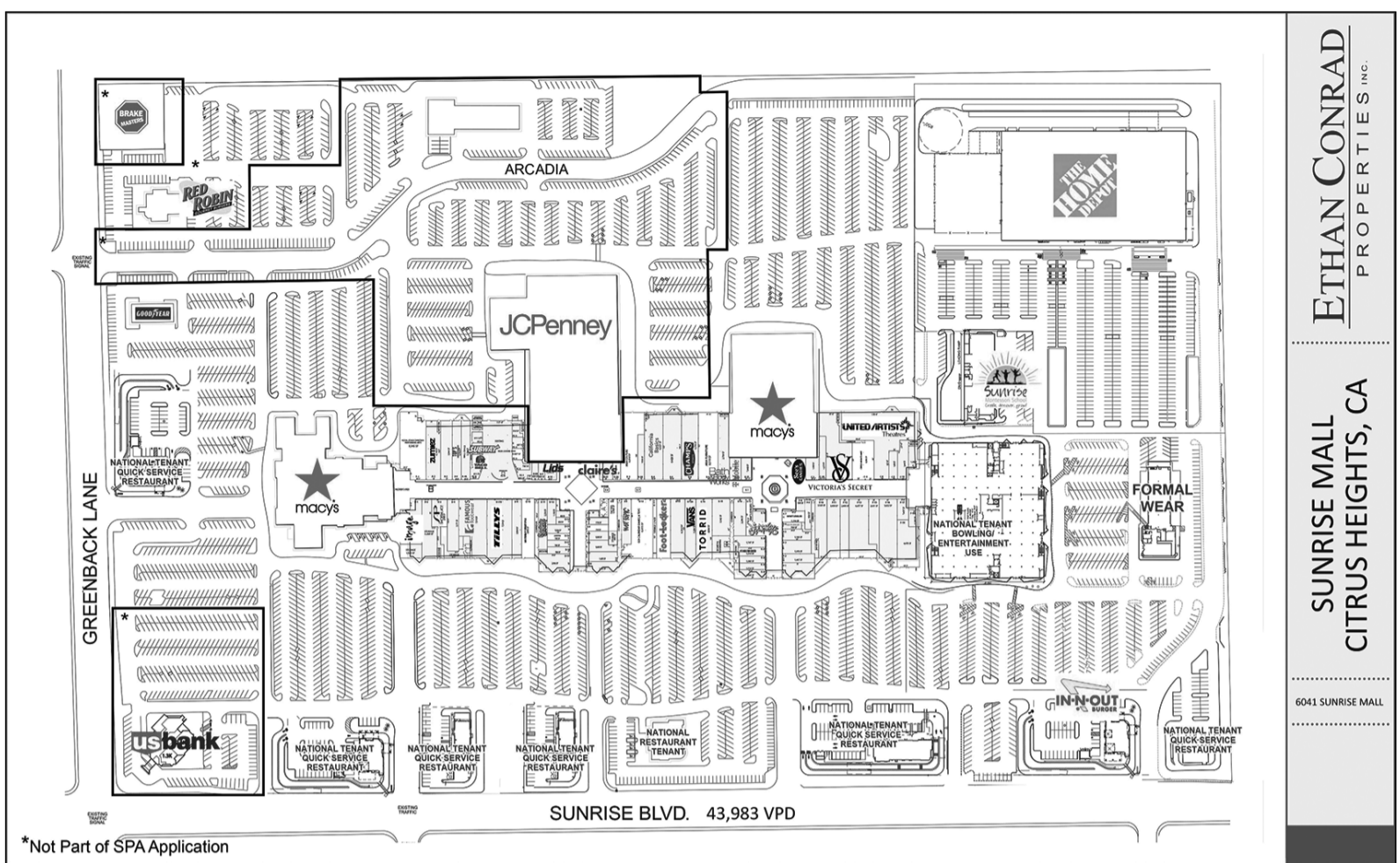
"We (Conrad) are simply proposing more flexibility to allow logical retail uses to allow the new retailers that will help drive the economic vitality of the new property, provide jobs, and increase sales tax revenue," he said.

Modifications proposed by Conrad would have to come before the Citrus Heights City Council in a formal hearing, according to city communications officer Marisa Brown. Such a hearing has not been yet scheduled, she said.

Conrad said he had an opportunity five years ago to purchase Sunrise Mall from the Namdar Realty Group, a privately-held commercial real estate investment and management firm based in Great Neck, N.Y.

Namdar Realty Group did not respond to a request for comment.

In his slide presentation, Conrad said that the status of Sunrise Mall is "unacceptable" for Citrus Heights "and will only continue to worsen" with



Here is an overview of the Conrad proposal. Courtesy photo

ETHAN CONRAD
PROPERTIES INC.

SUNRISE MALL
CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA

6041 SUNRISE MALL

the recently announced closure of Macy's. "Namdar has not demonstrated any increased urgency in response to Macy's closure announcement," Brown said. "The city continues to engage with all property owners and potential investors to support the redevelopment of the site."

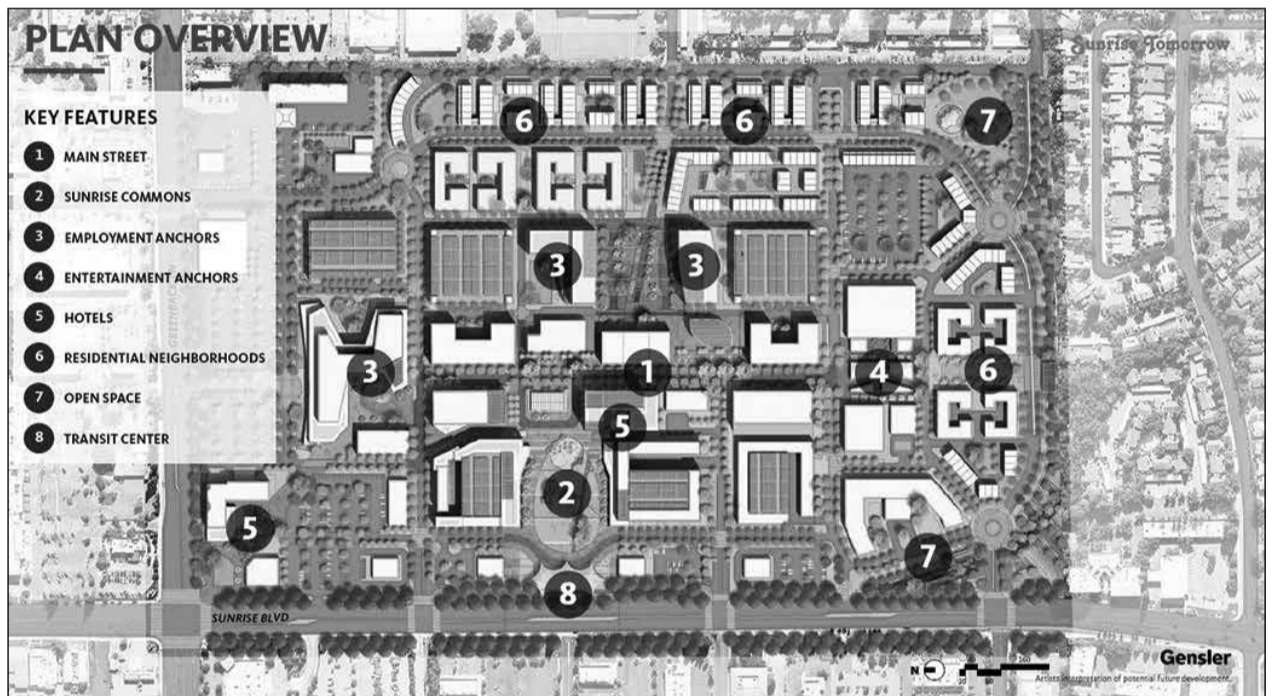
Conrad described the revitalization of the mall would take place in two main phases. Phase 1 would include construction of Home Depot, In-N-Out, two other fast-food restaurants, Judi's Cleaners and Lucky Stripe's Entertainment.

According to Conrad's Sunrise Tomorrow Evolution website, Phase 2 would involve placing tenants in the northern section of the mall. Tenants would be dictated by market demand and be subject to city approval, according to the website.

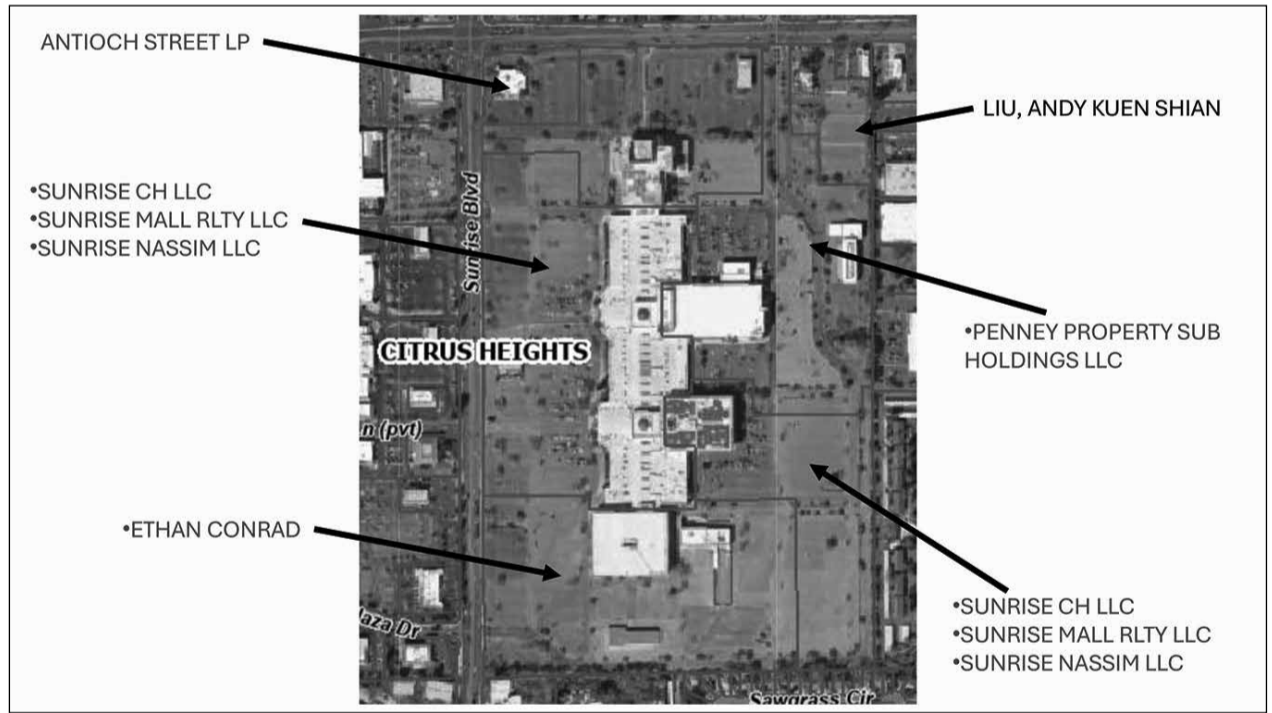
"The current occupancy of Sunrise Mall is approximately 50 percent but it is estimated to decline to approximately 20 percent once Macy's vacates its two stores.

Brown also provided a map outlining the multiple parcel owners of Sunrise Mall.

Antioch Street LP owns the parcel at the corner of Sunrise Boulevard and Greenback Lane where a proposed hotel is under consideration. The US Bank will remain on an existing 0.93-acre parcel while allocating 1.48 acres for a future hotel development, as well as a 0.38-acre parcel anticipated for retail or restaurant use.



Above and Below is the city proposal for the Sunrise Tomorrow plan. Courtesy photo



"While the city is in contact with each owner independently, there has not been a formal three-way conversation," Brown said.

"There has been no current interest from any

developer to move forward with the plan as it is written and there is widespread acknowledgement that there needs to be more flexibility to ensure plans for the space are economically viable," Conrad said

in his concluding remarks. Conrad lists more possible tenants, including Peet's Coffee, a Nordstrom Rack, Dick's Sporting Goods and Dunkin' Donuts on its Sunrise Tomorrow Evolution

webpage developed by the property company,

For further information on the Sunrise Tomorrow Specific Plan and related updates and to provide feedback, visit www.sunrisetomorrow.net. ★

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Semitrucks Carry Young Patient's Story Across Country

By Tricia Tomiyoshi

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The story of a 7-year-old boy's health care journey will take the country by storm this year.

A larger-than-life image of UC Davis Children's Hospital patient Shine Arslanian appears on the sides of two semitrucks from Knight Transportation and Swift Transportation.

The trucks also include photos of the Children's Hospital transport team, a 24/7 unit that connects children such as Shine in 33 counties in Northern California, with specialized pediatric care at UC Davis Children's Hospital.

Both trucks will cross the country in 2025. It is part of the trucking companies' Fleet of Miracles campaign, which raises awareness for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals.

Born five weeks early in 2017, Shine weighed just 4.5 pounds and was transported to UC Davis Children's Hospital, where he was diagnosed with two very rare genetic conditions.

Shine has had 17 surgeries to date, including



Shine enjoyed seeing the larger-than-life image of him outside UC Davis Children's Hospital with his mother, Jamie DUBY, and sister, Willow. Photo courtesy of UC Davis

the amputation of his legs above the knee at 2 years old. Still, Shine has not let these challenges hold him back and he hopes to be a Paralympic athlete one day.

"We're really hoping that our story can be a message of hope to other families," said Shine's mother, Jamie DUBY.

The semitrucks made

a special stop on the UC Davis Health campus last week, giving hospital employees, as well as Shine and his first-grade class, the opportunity to

see them up close.

"I like it," declared Shine when he first saw himself on the trucks.

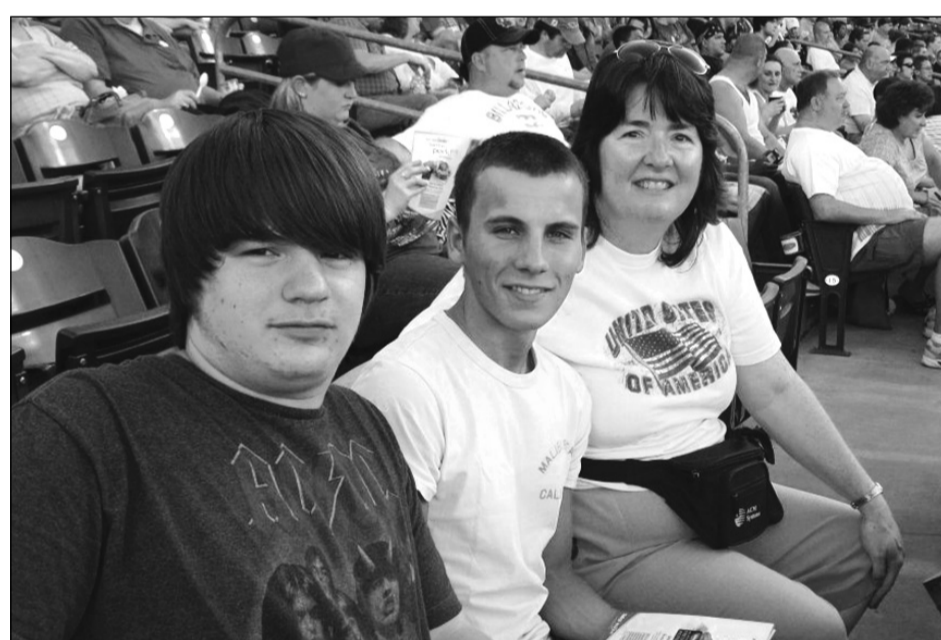
This is the third year for the Fleet of Miracles,

a collaboration between Knight Transportation and Swift Transportation to raise awareness for Children's Miracle Network Hospitals. ★



Two semitrucks traveling from UC Davis Children's Hospital will share Shine Arslanian's message of hope across the country. Photo courtesy of UC Davis

Northwest Student Exchange Seeks Host Families



NorthWest Student Exchange Local Area Coordinator Sheryl Longworth has hosted several exchange students, including Louis in 2012. Photo courtesy of Sheryl Longworth

NorthWest Student Exchange News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Responsible parents looking for ways to supplement the educational and personal growth opportunities for their children or themselves should consider hosting a teenage exchange student for an academic semester or year. Children and adults alike, by interacting daily with an international student, broaden their perspective on the world and discover new facts and ideas.

NorthWest Student Exchange places international high school students with adults and families throughout the country. Exchange students add a dimension to the family dynamic.

Benefits to the exchange students include honing their English language skills; learning about this country's educational system; understanding U.S. social, political and cultural values; and establishing international friendships.

Benefits to the hosts are similar. Not only can hosts learn about another culture and its values but they can view the U.S. through another's eyes and thereby gain a broader understanding of the U.S.

Adults do not need to have children at home to host. Many childless couples, empty nesters and single-parent families have enjoyed exchange students. NorthWest Student Exchange places students from dozens of countries with local families who have varied interests. The international students are matched to a host family's lifestyle and interests, according to NorthWest Student Exchange Local Area Coordinator Sheryl Longworth.

Those unable to host can earn up to \$175 for every student placed with referrals. Nonprofit organizations that refer families to Longworth can receive \$175 per student in the form of a donation to the organization. While hosts cannot be compensated for hosting, tax deductions might be available. Check

with your tax preparer, Longworth recommended.

"NWSE exchange students are closely screened for appropriate motivation, academic and language skills; our students have solid emotional and practical support from NWSE professional partners abroad, and from the students' natural parents in their own countries," Longworth said. "Our students come with their own spending money, health and accident insurance. Hosts are not expected to be tour guides. Students are here to go to school to improve their English, not be tourists. NWSE local academic coordinators, like me, recruit, screen and orient local hosts and provide close support throughout the program."

Flexible hosting terms are available, including hosting for a month, as a welcome host or on a trial basis.

"My family has personally hosted students from France and China and we keep in touch with every student even years later," Longworth said. "While they stayed with us, they shared games they play at home with us, cooked their favorite meals and tried to teach us their language and share their culture. We also have been invited to stay at their family's homes when we visit their country. One of our French students even calls me his 'American mom.'"

For more information, go online to nwstudentexchange.org. To see the list of available students, visit online nwse.com/meet-our-students. Or contact Longworth at 916-833-1218 or sheryl6663@yahoo.com or NorthWest Student Exchange at 877-850-3312 or info@nwse.com.

"Students are placed with hosts quickly, so if you're interested in a specific student, contact me as soon as possible so I can have that student 'put on hold' for you," Longworth said. "If that student is placed elsewhere, I will do my best to find another student that fits your or your family's lifestyle and interests." ★

Area Residents Help Raise More Than \$940,000 for Wildfire Relief

KCRA 3 News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - KCRA 3, KQCA My58 and the California Gold Country Region Chapter of the American Red Cross partnered on a disaster relief drive that raised more than \$940,000 to support people impacted by the devastating wildfires in Los Angeles. Donations came in from thousands of callers and companies who generously gave money to help those in need.

The devastating wildfires devoured homes and businesses, blackened cars and left only ruins where thriving neighborhoods once stood. Thousands of Southern Californians have been forced to evacuate with fires still only partially contained. The massive blazes have killed at least 27 and destroyed thousands of homes. The blazes are expected to be some of the costliest U.S. wildfires in history.

"The second our KCRA 3 crew arrived at the evacuation zone, all we could see was devastation in every direction," said KCRA 3 Anchor Andrea Flores. "As a born and raised Californian, my heart breaks for the people who lost everything. Decades of memories were gone in an instant, but the resilience of those families is awe-inspiring. With a long recovery ahead of them, residents are

grateful for every dollar donated by their fellow Californians."

"California truly shines when we come together, showing that with the right support, we can achieve incredible things," said KCRA 3 and KQCA My58 President and General Manager, Ariel Roblin. "Though the road to recovery might be long, our team and community are fully committed to seeing it through to the end, no matter the time it takes."

"While the scale of damage in the Los Angeles area is immense, the generosity of Californians is even greater," said Derek Schnell, Regional Director of News for KCRA 3 and Hearst Television. "With so many viewers asking how they could help, we're grateful to be able to shine a spotlight on this effort to help thousands of families with their immediate needs. And we will continue to provide updates and push for answers about the recovery process in the weeks and months to come."

KCRA 3 and KQCA My58 did live cut-ins and had coverage during newscasts asking for donations. People were able to donate by calling a special hotline or texting their donation directly to the American Red Cross. The funds raised will benefit those in areas impacted by the California Wildfires. ★

Community Efforts Help Prevent Human Trafficking

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - As part of an effort to make our community a safe place for all residents, Sacramento County is raising awareness about human trafficking. January is National Human Trafficking Awareness Month, and each year, the U.S. Department of State recognizes it as a way to raise awareness about this crime that impacts communities across the country.

Several of Sacramento County's community partners are dedicated to helping victims of human trafficking.

My Sister's House aids Asian and Pacific Islanders and other underserved women and children impacted by domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking.

The Family Justice Center helps victims during legal proceedings.

Other helpful resources include RTI International providing insight into information about sex trafficking by collecting and sharing data about the issue, and the National Human Trafficking Hotline allowing residents to report tips about suspicious activity that they have observed. (The National Human Trafficking Hotline is 888-373-7888 and the text is 237333).

We can all do our part to keep community members safe from human trafficking.

Learn the signs of human trafficking, which can include:

Multiple employees living with their employer.

A person who is not given the chance to speak to others alone and someone appears to control who they talk to and what they say.

Visible signs of physical abuse. A person who does not have control of personal identification such as their driver's license or passport.

A child who is living with someone who is not their parent, a relative or their legal/assigned guardian.

A child under the legal working age tells you they are forced to work.

If you are in the United States and believe someone may be a victim of human trafficking, call the 24-hour National Human Trafficking Hotline at 1-888-373-7888. If there is an immediate emergency, always call 911.

Become a mentor to a teen, young adult or someone in need. Traffickers might target children or adults who are going through a difficult time, do not have stable housing or do not have a support system.

Get involved with a local organization that fights human trafficking, such as one of the groups listed above.

Take time to learn more about the warning signs and how to report human trafficking at the U.S Department of State website at state.gov/national-human-trafficking-prevention-month/. ★

Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



I firmly believe the schedule makers for the NBA have a mean streak in them.

After back-to-back wins over the Wizards and Warriors, the Sactown boys were forced to travel to Denver and play in back-to-back games. The travel, altitude, and Nikola Jokic were too much for Kings as the Nuggets registered a 132-123 win over a tired Sacramento squad.

Amazingly, the Kings mounted an unlikely comeback, coming from 25 points down and bringing the game to within five points late in the contest.

Michael Malone was so concerned, he brought back Jokic late in the game to insure the victory.

Jokic had a historic performance, registering his fifth triple-double in a row, scoring 35 points, claiming 22 rebounds, and dishing out an unheard of 17 assists. His performance was one for the record books, and at the end of the day, the furious comeback by the Kings was no match for the 3-time MVP.

For the basketball purest, you had to just sit back and watch a true master of the hardwood at work.

Domantas Sabonis countered with 23 points and 17 rebounds, but on this night, Denver would not be turned away.

Rumors continue to swirl as the Kings shop the market for the missing link, that being a power forward that can tip the scales.

My hope is that the recent success the Kings have had will calm the front office and allow them to realize what this team is capable of doing. Wins like the one at the Boston Garden serve as a wake-up call to Monte McNair, and scream don't give the store away!

Make absolutely certain you know what you have before you give away a future all-star, and by all means pay attention to your rookies.

Players like Isaac Jones are just waiting for an opportunity to shine, and his recent accomplishments in the G league should serve notice to every fan that his big man has some real game. Jones played for three colleges in three different conferences and earned awards wherever he went. Finally arriving at Washington State Jones earned All-Pac-12 conference honors.

Amazingly, 6'9" Isaac Jones was overlooked in the 2024 NBA draft, and before it's over there will be a lot of teams that will wonder what their scouts were looking at.

When I see the infrequent time that Isaac has had with the Kings, I'm constantly impressed with the way he carries himself on the court, and in this young rookie the Kings have a legitimate forward who seems to get better every time he takes to the hardwood.

In recent G league performances, he has looked like a man among boys and registered three straight 30-point plus performances. Not an easy thing to accomplish, but it tells me Isaac Jones needs more minutes at the NBA level. By all means, put him on the no-trade list along with Sabonis, Fox, and Keon Ellis.

What I'm loudly saying is build from within before you give away talented players that you have not fully realized. Isaac Jones is one of those players and same can be said of Devin Carter. It's essential that the Kings allow rookies to develop, and coach Christie needs to find playing time for them.

The Sactown boys are 10-3 under Doug Christie, and I don't believe it's a fluke. The Kings are currently on a torrid 6-game road trip, and will face the Nets, 76ers, Thunder, and Timberwolves before they set foot in the friendly confines of Golden One Arena.

If the Kings can win two of the remaining four games, I would consider it a victory, as the Thunder and Timberwolves are tough matchups for Sacramento.

The recent 7-game win streak seemed to regenerate Kings fans, and the upside for Sacramento is looking probable rather than just fortuitous.

Let's celebrate our stars and root on our rookies. Great things are yet in store!

If the Kings don't make a trade by the trade deadline of Feb. 6, don't lose heart. This team as assembled can make the playoffs, and I believe McNair will make an acquisition at some point.

We are witnessing some great performances. Enjoy them! More to come.

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

Social Security Matters

Clarification of Medicare IRMAA and MAGI



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I am confused by an article in my local newspaper which said that "MAGI" (modified adjusted gross income), on which my Medicare Part B premium is based, is my Adjusted Gross Income, plus any non-taxable interest, plus 50% of the social security I received. The part that is confusing is the 50% part. When I look at my tax return my Adjusted Gross Income includes the taxable portion of my Social Security benefit which, in my case, is 85% of my total benefits. Why must 50% of benefits be added to my AGI if it is already included in my total AGI?

Signed: Confused

Dear Confused: The article you refer to was misleading for stating that the Modified Adjusted Gross Income (MAGI) used to determine your Medicare premiums includes your normal Adjusted Gross Income (AGI) from your income tax return, plus any non-taxable interest you may have had, plus 50% of the SS

benefits you received during the tax year. What the article should have said was that the MAGI which determines your Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) to your Medicare premiums consists of your normal AGI from your tax return (which includes the taxable portion of your Social Security benefits), plus any non-taxable interest you may have had.

For additional clarity, the Income-Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA) is a supplemental amount added to the standard Medicare premium for those with higher incomes. The thresholds at which the IRMAA supplements apply depend on your IRS filing status, and your MAGI determines the amount of supplement which will be added to the standard Medicare premium. Single filers with MAGI over \$103,000, or married filers with MAGI over \$206,000 will see an IRMAA supplement added to their Medicare premium. Those whose MAGI is under the first IRMAA threshold pay the standard Medicare premium, but those whose MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold above will pay more. How much more depends on how much their MAGI exceeds the first IRMAA threshold by. The IRMAA supplement (the additional premium amount)

could be anywhere from \$69.90 to \$419.30 per month for Medicare Part B (coverage for outpatient services), or an additional \$12.90 to \$81.00 per month to the Medicare Part D (prescription drug plan) premium - again dependent on how much over the initial MAGI threshold the person is for their IRS filing status. You can see the MAGI levels and corresponding IRMAA supplements at this Medicare website: www.cms.gov/newsroom/fact-sheets/2024-medicare-parts-b-premiums-and-deductibles

IRMAA and MAGI can be confusing. If you have questions about your Medicare premiums, help is available at ssadvisor@amacfoundation.org, or at 1.888.750.2622.

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Trump Jumps Back into California's Water Wars with a Pro-Farmer Decree



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

It would be impossible to overstate the complexity of water supply management in California.

Hundreds of federal, state and local agencies decree who or what is supplied with water, when and how much will be delivered, and the prices recipients must pay.

Moreover, there are policy differences within those broad categories. For instance, local agricultural water agencies and municipal providers to homes and businesses often have different priorities.

The politics of water are even more convoluted, involving not only the public agencies but seemingly countless outside stakeholders, ranging from developers who need water supply commitments for their projects to commercial fishermen who want to protect spawning salmon.

The proliferation of competing agendas explains why it is so difficult to reach the consensus needed to move policy forward. It's not unusual for proposed projects and policies to kick around for years, if not decades, before something concrete occurs.

For example, the proposed Sites Reservoir on the west side of the Sacramento Valley now seems likely to be built, but only after 70 years

of promotion by backers. The long-planned expansion of Los Vaqueros Reservoir in Contra Costa County collapsed recently when the East Bay Municipal Utility District pulled out, citing ever-rising costs.

More than six decades ago, state water officials proposed a canal to carry water around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. After gaining legislative approval, a 1982 referendum blocked construction, and 40 years later, a proposed tunnel beneath the Delta remains stalled by a political stalemate.

Operations of existing of dams and canals are similarly fraught, particularly divvying up water among farmers, municipal users and flows to protect fish and other wildlife as supplies fluctuate due to climate change.

For years, federal and state authorities have sought to reduce diversions by agriculture — by far the largest water users — to bolster habitat flows. Farmers have resisted.

The state has sought "voluntary agreements" from farmers in the San Joaquin River watershed between Stockton and Fresno to enhance natural flows, threatening to order reductions if agreements are not reached. But unilateral action by the state would spark a legal battle over water rights whose outcome could not be predicted.

Another player in California's high-stakes water game emerged eight years ago when Donald Trump became president for the first time. He forcefully backed farmers in their conflict with state water managers, ordering the Bureau of Reclamation and other

federal agencies to adopt more agriculture-friendly policies.

Four years later, after Trump was defeated by Joe Biden, the policies were reversed. Just days before Biden's tenure ended, federal and state water managers last month announced a new operational agreement.

This week, when Trump once again became president, he essentially sought to cancel that agreement and reinstate his previous policies. Based on a memo to federal water agencies, he directed them to draft a plan "to route more water from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta to other parts of the state for use by the people there who desperately need a reliable water supply."

Trump not only cited farmers' needs for a reliable water supply but reiterated his belief that a lack of water deliveries to Southern California made it more difficult to fight deadly wildfires — a contention that has no basis in fact. Los Angeles had plenty of water to fight fires, but hydrants ran dry because the system was designed for fighting individual building fires, not massive wildfires, and was overtaxed.

Despite the media splash, it's doubtful that Trump's decree will be anything more than a relatively brief pause in efforts to resolve California's water conflicts simply because they are measured in decades, not any one president's term.

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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Man Arrested for Sexually Assaulting a Minor

Sacramento County Sheriff's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Jan. 8, 32-year-old Trevon Lyle was arrested in relation to a sexual assault investigation conducted by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Sexual and Elder Abuse Bureau (SEAB).

The victim, a minor, reported that Lyle had sexually assaulted her in multiple instances over a period of time.

Lyle was booked into the Sacramento County Main Jail on three counts of Unlawful Sexual Intercourse with a minor who is more than three years younger than the assailant. He posted bond on

his \$50,000 bail the next day and was released from custody. Lyle was scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 10, after press time.

Through Lyle's employment, Detectives are concerned that he had access to numerous other potential unreported victims. Any persons who have potentially been a victim of Lyle or any community members with information regarding this investigation are urged to contact the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Sexual and Elder Abuse Bureau at (916)-874-5070 or Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at (916) 443-HELP. This is an active and ongoing criminal investigation. ★

Father and Son Sentenced for Child Sexual Assaults from 80s and 90s

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Dec. 20, 2024, the Honorable Donald Currier sentenced Theodore Smith to 100 years in prison and James Smith to 23 years to life in prison. On Nov. 13, 2024, Theodore Smith pled no contest to 11 counts of committing forcible lewd acts upon a child and three counts of lewd acts upon a child. He also admitted to a substantial sexual conduct allegation and aggravating factors that he was in a position of trust and the crimes took planning and sophistication.

James Smith pled no contest to two counts of committing lewd acts upon a child. He also admitted to a multiple victim allegation and substantial sexual conduct allegation as well as aggravating factors that he was in a position of trust and the crimes took planning and sophistication.

The charges relating to Theodore Smith are from 1988 and James Smith from 1993. Theodore Smith is the father of James Smith. The case came to the attention of law enforcement when a citizen purchased the Orangevale home where the Smiths had lived for over 40 years. In 2021, the citizen

was renovating an outbuilding when explicit Polaroid photos and video tapes showing child exploitation from the 1980s and 1990s came tumbling out from the wall. The citizen called the Sheriff's Office and after a thorough and extensive investigation by detectives, they were able to locate the now adult victims.

The victims were under five years old when the abuse began, and it continued for the majority of their first decade in life. The victims never told anyone about the abuse other than their spouses. Despite video and photographic proof of the molestation, the criminal law statute of limitations prohibited charges for the abuse that occurred prior to 1988. Criminal charges of forcible child molestation were filed for molest that occurred after 1988. Some of the molestation involved a conspiracy between James and Theodore Smith. James Smith additionally molested another individual after 2010.

At the time of their arrest, Theodore Smith (age 90) and James Smith (age 66) were living in Texas. Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) was found at the Texas residence and property. James Smith was found in a vehicle in route back to California with Child Sexual Abuse Material in his possession. ★

Defendant Sentenced for Robbery, Series of Attempted Robberies

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - On Dec. 30, 2024, the Honorable Laurel White sentenced Contiee Redicks to 50 years to life in prison. On Dec. 20, 2023, a jury convicted Redicks of robbery and four counts of attempted robbery. Allegations that Redicks has three prior strike convictions for robbery were also found true at the sentencing hearing.

On Aug. 5, 2019, a suspect entered a bank on Kiefer Boulevard, passed a note to a bank teller stating he was robbing the bank and immediately demanded the note back after the teller read it. The teller did as the suspect demanded and gave him \$2,389. The suspect fled the bank and was not identified at that time.

On Aug. 28, 2019, the suspect entered a bank on West El Camino Avenue and again passed a note to a bank teller, stating he was robbing the bank before demanding the note back. After the victim hesitated, the suspect fled the scene without any money.

Several hours later, the suspect went to a bank on Madison Avenue and again passed a note to a teller, stating he was robbing the bank before demanding the note back. This time, the bank supervisor told the teller not to give it back to the suspect and the suspect fled without any money. The same suspect tried to rob two more banks the next day but was not successful.

In October 2019, the Sacramento Sheriff's Office developed a significant lead when their crime lab pulled a print from the robbery demand note. The print belonged to Contiee Redicks, according to the Sheriff's Office. Detectives from the Sacramento Sheriff's Office, Sacramento Police Department, California Department of Parole and the FBI worked together to confirm Redicks was the suspect in the robbery and attempted robberies. At the time of these offenses, Redicks was on parole for a 2015 bank robbery in Alameda County. Case number is 19FE018834. Prosecutor is Deputy District Attorney Stephanie Maroun, Major Crimes Unit. ★



Church Staff Member Arrested for Sexual Assault Against a Minor

Sacramento County Sheriff's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On the morning of Jan. 14, 28-year-old Edwin Valdez was arrested in relation to a sexual assault investigation conducted by the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Sexual and Elder Abuse Bureau (SEAB).

The victim in this case reported that Valdez had sexually assaulted her multiple times when she was a minor.

Valdez was transported and booked into the Sacramento County Main Jail on two counts of Penetration with a Foreign Object on a Victim who is Under 18 Years of Age, four counts of Oral Copulation with a Person who is Under 18 Years of Age, two counts of Communicating with a Minor with the Intent to Commit a Sex Offense, and two counts of Contacting a Minor with the Intent to Commit Other Sexual Offenses.

He is currently being held in custody on \$500,000 bail. Valdez was scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 16, after press time.

This is an active and ongoing criminal investigation. Detectives are concerned there may be other unreported victims, as Valdez is known to have had access to other minors through his position at his church, as well as in different roles outside of the church. Any persons who have potentially been a victim of Valdez or any community members with information regarding this investigation are urged to contact the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office Sexual and Elder Abuse Bureau at (916) 874-5070 or Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at (916) 443-HELP.

Tips leading to an arrest are eligible for a CASH reward of up to \$1000, and tipsters remain anonymous. Tips are paid in cash, and you are never asked for identification. Contact Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at (916) 443-HELP (4357), 1-800-AA-CRIME, or **TIPS. Use the "P3 TIPS" app or online at www.sacvalley-crimestoppers.com. Tip information may also be left anonymously at www.sacsheriff.com or by calling (916) 874-TIPS (8477). ★

Defendant Sentenced for Vehicular Manslaughter, DUI

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - On Jan. 3, the Honorable Michael Sweet sentenced Kaya Moonbelle Pritchard to four years in county jail prison. On Nov. 1, 2024, a jury convicted Pritchard of vehicular manslaughter and driving under the influence of alcohol causing injury. The jury also found true a great bodily injury allegation.

At 9:37 p.m. on Nov. 27, 2022, Pritchard was driving southbound on SR-160 when she crossed the double solid yellow lines into the northbound lane and collided head-on with a car driven by Ryan Aguirre. A Rio Vista police officer arrived on scene and located Aguirre's car down in the embankment. Aguirre was

unconscious and trapped in the driver's seat. After the Fire Department extracted Aguirre from the car, he succumbed to blunt force injuries sustained from the crash at 11:14 p.m.

Officers and paramedics smelled alcohol on Pritchard, but she denied having consumed any alcohol or marijuana. She stated she was coming from work at a restaurant where she serves alcohol. An Alcohol Beverage Control agent later went to Pritchard's place of work and confirmed she had not worked on that date.

At approximately 11 p.m., Pritchard blew a PAS of 0.070% and 0.074% BAC. A blood test taken three hours after the collision showed Pritchard had a BAC of 0.10% at the time she was driving at 9:37 p.m. ★

Defendant Sentenced for Violent Attacks in Carmichael

Sacramento County District Attorney's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - The Honorable Helena Gweon sentenced Jorge Zepeda to 63 years to life in prison on Jan. 10.

On Oct. 24, 2024, a jury convicted Jorge Zepeda of first-degree murder, attempted murder, four counts of assault with a deadly weapon and two counts of assault with a semi-automatic firearm. The jury also found true multiple allegations that Zepeda personally used a deadly weapon, caused great bodily injury, discharged a firearm causing great bodily injury and personally used a firearm.

The allegation that Zepeda has a prior strike conviction for voluntary manslaughter was also found true. However, upon the request from the defense, the judge used her discretion and struck the prior strike.

The case number is 21FE010889. The prosecutor was Principal Criminal Attorney Kristen Andersen, Homicide Unit. On June 21, 2021, Zepeda used his truck to run over and kill a man, according to court documents. When a woman exited her car to help the victim, Zepeda hit her with his truck as he tried to run over the man a second time. Zepeda then ran his truck into the back of a Volkswagen Jetta and assaulted the driver with a tire iron as he sat in the driver's seat. A couple who heard the crash went to the scene and tried to help the driver of the Jetta. Zepeda assaulted the husband with the tire iron before taking his firearm from him and shooting him in the head. That victim survived the shooting. Zepeda assaulted the victim's wife with a firearm as she tried to help her husband. The wife then shot Zepeda and he was held at gunpoint until officers arrived and detained him. ★

Arrest Made in Domino's Pizza Robbery in South Sacramento

Sacramento County Sheriff's Office News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - At approximately 10 p.m. on Saturday, Dec. 8, 2024, two male suspects entered the Domino's Pizza restaurant on Gerber Road in South Sacramento and robbed the business at gunpoint. During the

incident, one suspect jumped over the sales counter, pointed a handgun at an employee, and forced her to open the safe. The suspects stole approximately \$500 in cash.

Sacramento County Sheriff's Robbery Detectives began their investigation and learned 33-year-old Johnny Battle, who was on active Post Release Community Supervision out of

Sacramento County, was one of the two robbers.

On Jan. 9, Detectives arrested Battle at a hotel in the Arden-Arcade area. Battle is currently in custody at the Sacramento Main Jail, where he remains ineligible for bail. He was scheduled to appear in court on Jan. 13, after press time.

This is still an active and

ongoing investigation as Detectives work to identify the second suspect. If you have information about this incident, please contact the Sheriff's Office at (916)-874-5115 or Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at (916) 443-HELP (4357). Tips leading to an arrest are eligible for a cash reward of up to \$1,000, and tipsters remain anonymous. Tips are

paid in cash, and you are never asked for identification. Contact Sacramento Valley Crime Stoppers at (916) 443-HELP (4357), 1-800-AA-CRIME, or **TIPS. Use the "P3 TIPS" app or online at www.sacvalleycrimestoppers.com. Tip information may also be left anonymously at www.sacsheiff.com or by calling (916) 874-TIPS (8477). ★

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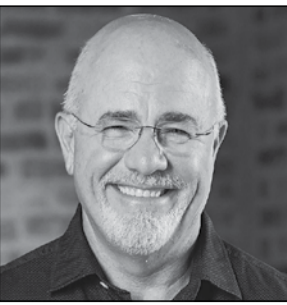
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Dave Ramsey Says Emergency Fund for Teens? What Comes First?

What Comes First?

Dear Dave,

I'm a non-traditional student in my last semester of college. In May, I'll graduate with a degree in elementary education and have a job waiting for me. It will bring our household income up to a little over \$100,000. We're already living on a budget, but the problem is we'll have \$15,000 in student loan debt to repay, plus \$5,000 in credit card debt. What should we address first?

– Marta

Dear Marta,

It sounds like all your hard work is about to pay off in a big way. And I've got some more good news for you. If you two keep living the way you have been, and put the rest toward debt, you can have that student loan and credit card debt knocked out in just a year or so.

But I want you to pay close attention to what I'm about to say next. Just because you're making more money doesn't mean you should start buying a bunch of toys or pick up a car payment. Sit down together now—don't wait—and practice making a written monthly budget based on

your new income. Give every dollar a name before you spend it, and don't forget to work the debt snowball, too. List your debts from smallest to largest, make minimum payments on the largest, and then attack that credit card debt with a vengeance.

Chances are you can get the credit card debt taken care of in two or three months. Then, roll the money from that payment over, and apply it and any other cash you can scrape up toward the student loan debt.

With just a little more work, you folks are going to find yourselves in a really great place soon!

– 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. ★

Dear Dave,

Our son is in high school, and he has a car and a part-time job nights and weekends. We've worked with him on saving, spending and giving, but should a teenager have an emergency fund, too? If so, how much do you recommend them setting aside?

– Dominic

Dear Dominic,

This is a great question! I'm glad to know you're working with your son and teaching him wise financial habits.

I always recommend an emergency fund of three to six months of expenses for adults, and I think that's a fair expectation for teens, as well. He won't need as big an emergency fund as a married couple with kids if his expenses consist only of those connected to his car and social life. So, I'd suggest him saving up three months' worth of what it takes to operate the car—gas, insurance and maintenance.

I think those are fair financial responsibilities for a responsible teen in his situation.

– Dave

After-School Program Teacher Arrested for Lewd Acts with Minors

Citrus Heights Police Department News Release

CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA (MPG) - On Dec. 2, 2024, the Citrus Heights Police Department (CHPD) received a report of a possible sexual assault involving a substitute teacher, 58-year-old Ricky Anthony Linan, employed at an after-school care program, called Discovery Club, within the San Juan Unified School District.

Police launched an immediate investigation into the allegations in collaboration with the San Juan Unified School District and the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office. Linan was promptly placed on administrative leave and removed from contact with students during the investigation.

Following an extensive investigation, Citrus Heights detectives uncovered evidence related to the crime, which resulted in additional minor victims that were identified.

On the morning of Jan. 23, detectives arrested Linan at his residence. He is currently being held at the Sacramento County Main Jail on \$1.7 million bail for violation of multiple counts of lewd and lascivious acts with a minor under 14, and possession of child pornography.

Citrus Heights detectives, in partnership with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office and the San Juan Unified School District, are working closely with the victims and their families to provide support during this tragic and challenging time.

"Children are among the most precious and vulnerable members of our society, and it is our duty to protect them from those who seek to exploit their innocence. A violation of this type, by a trusted adult is reprehensible and simply heartbreaking," said Citrus Heights Police Chief Alex Turcotte. "I am proud of the dedication of our investigators, in partnership with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office and the San Juan Unified School District, who thoroughly investigated these allegations and continue to press forward to bring these victims justice."

The Citrus Heights Police Department is asking for the public's assistance in identifying any additional minors who may have been in contact with Linan, either in the school setting or any other environment where he had access to children.

To protect the integrity of the investigation and evidence collection, and to avoid jeopardizing any future potential cases, we request that parents who strongly suspect their child may be a victim contact our investigators before discussing the situation with their child. Our team, in collaboration with the Sacramento County District Attorney's Office, can provide guidance on how best to approach such conversations in a safe and non-suggestive manner, ensuring the investigation remains unaffected.

For assistance, or to provide information, contact Citrus Heights Police Department Detectives at (916) 727-5524 and reference the Mr. Linan case to speak with investigators. ★

How Old Is Too Old?

Dr. James L. Snyder

One of my grandchildren asked me quite a penetrating question this week. "Grandpa, how old are you?"

Before I was married, I had no problem about always telling the truth. I always got in trouble if I did not tell the truth, so my practice has always been to tell the truth, no matter how difficult it might be or who it might hurt.

After being married for several years, I was presented with a question I was unprepared for. We were going to a banquet and just before leaving the house, my wife looked at me and said, "Does this dress make me look too fat?"

After I got over being stunned by this question posed to me by my wife, a wonderful thought hit me. I looked at her and simply said, "I don't know about that, but your hair looks beautiful."

"Oh," she said with a smile dancing all over her face, "thank you."

How old am I, really?

I am not sure I can really answer that kind of a question. It all depends upon your definition of old.

When I was in my 20s,

someone my current age I consider old. Now that I am this age, I understand the word old differently.

How old a person is, has nothing to do with the year of his or her birth. The one thing my father did tell me about people of the opposite sex is, "Never ask a woman her age." To the best of my knowledge, I have kept to that standard.

"So, grandpa," the curious little person asked, "how old are you?"

When you have a little person whose age is still in the single digits how do they know anything about age? Most of these little people are most anxious to reach that birthday where their age is double digits. Single digits only last for nine years while double digits lasts the rest of your life!

This little person looked at me with curiosity all over her face, when a marvelous thought danced into my cranium. I then responded, "Well, I am not as old as your grandma." For the time being, that satisfied that little slice of curiosity.

I do not know any year I would like to repeat. I certainly do not want to be a teenager again. I remember those teenage years

and I was so glad to get out of that age group. My 20s were not any better, except it was during my 20s that I met the person who later became the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Those were good years.


Then when I got into my 30s, little people started coming into our house. They arrived about 18 to 20 months apart and stopped when the number reached three. Three is a good number.

The roughest thing about having teenagers is that it is payback for when you were a teenager. That is why as a grandpa, I smile benignly as I watch my children trying to parent their teenagers.

David understood this when he wrote, "Now also when I am old and grey-headed, O God, forsake me not; until I have showed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come" (Psalms 71:18).

I am not old; I am just mature for my age.

Dr. James L. Snyder lives in Ocala, FL with the Gracious Mistress of the Parsonage. Telephone 1-352-216-3025, e-mail jamesnsnyder51@gmail.com, website www.james-snyderministries.com ★



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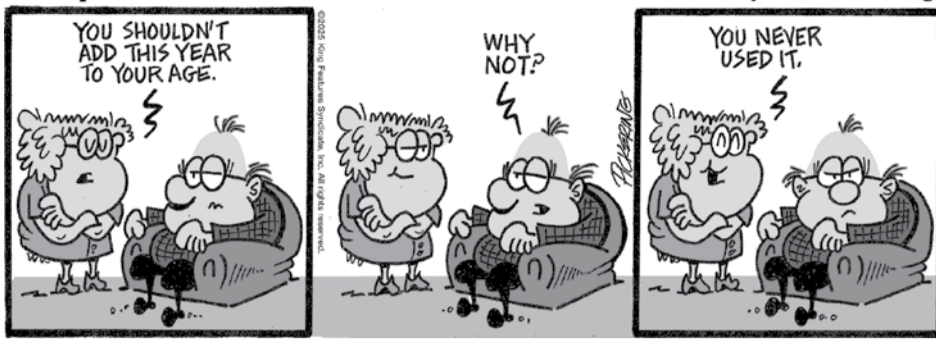
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The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



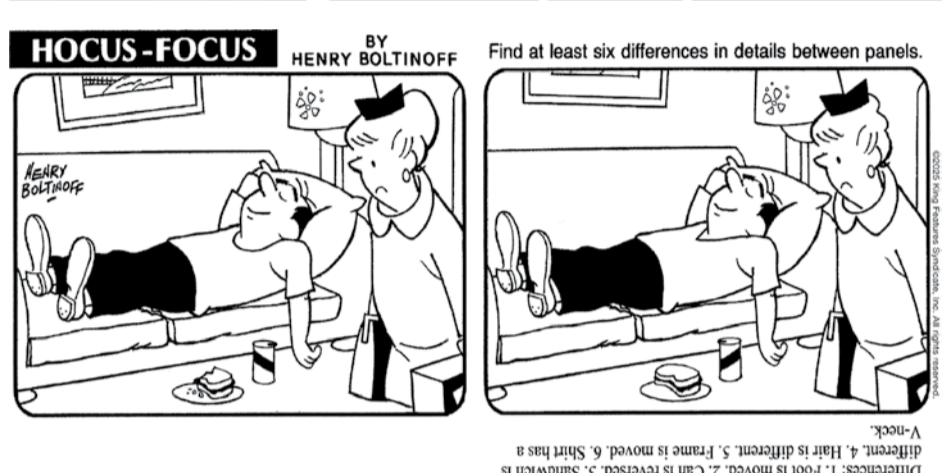
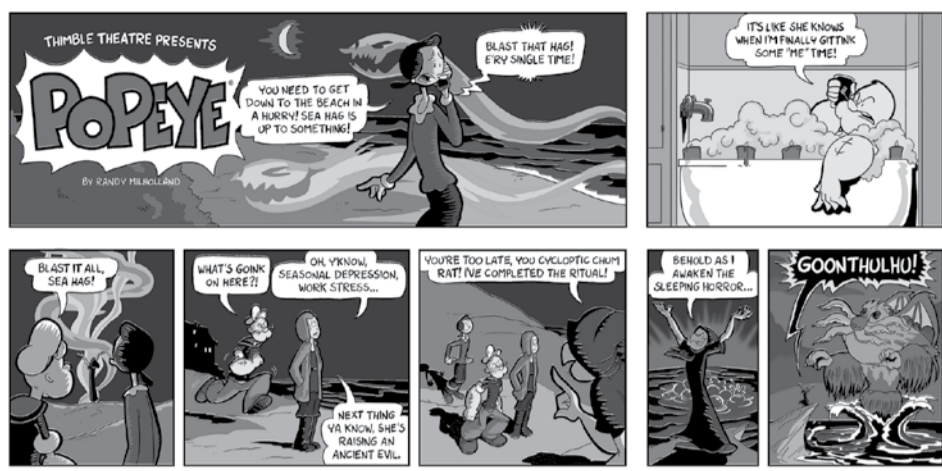
Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • VALENTINE'S DAY

CLUES

ACROSS

- Past participle of spit
- King Kong, e.g.
- Greek portico
- Not to be mentioned
- Congel
- ___ cell carcinoma
- Top of Kilimanjaro, e.g.
- Periods of time
- D-Day beach
- *Holiday the day before Valentine's Day
- Shade of beige
- Quantities on doctors' prescriptions
- Not amateur
- *Letters to Juliet destination
- Come to final conclusion
- *Ultimate Valentine's vow?
- Purchaser
- Zelensky's capital
- Move a plant
- High-___, as in an image
- Tubular pasta
- Not Visa or MC
- *Moving Valentine's Day date option
- *Annie get your ___
- a.k.a. ladybird
- Maximum
- *"Rub A Dub Dub" vessel
- Suburb of Dallas
- Skunk's defense
- *Sweet Valentine's gesture
- Long stories
- Rhythmic way of talking
- Yours and mine
- Send, as payment
- The E of B.P.O.E.
- A bit of water
- Biblical paradise
- Elf in
- Sign of boredom

DOWN

- Doe's mate
- One of Three Bears
- Cain's brother
- Prom night garb
- Bird of prey's nest
- *Make them in advance of Valentine's Day
- "Or ___?"
- *"Cupid" singer (2 words)
- Russia's Terrible one, e.g.
- Pearl Harbor island
- Between Fla. and Miss.
- Ship's floating wreckage
- Afrikaners' ancestors
- Group of nine singers
- For each
- All over the internet
- Possible allergic reaction
- Lassoed
- *Baby's breath's partner
- Texting vocabulary, e.g.
- *Cupid's mom
- Black tie ___
- Snob
- Gymnast's goal
- *a.k.a. "love hormone"
- Deck alternative
- Chicago basebatter
- Defrauds
- Explosion
- Pleasing notes succession
- At the same time
- Too much egg middle
- Newspaper piece
- Five and ___
- Staff leader
- Heavenly glow
- Think, archaically speaking
- Sport spectator's TV acronym
- Before, old English

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Women's Golf Picked to Top Big Sky



Sacramento State Women's Golf team picked to repeat as Big Sky Conference champions. Photo by Sacramento State Athletics

Sacramento State Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Winners of four of the past five Big Sky Championship titles, the Sacramento State women's golf team was unanimously selected to continue its dominance by being tabbed first in the coaches poll.

Sacramento State received all nine of the possible first-place

votes as coaches were not permitted to vote for their own team. Northern Arizona, who finished second in the voting, received the other available first-place vote.

The Hornets had an impressive fall campaign, which included a third-place finish at the Evie Odom Invitational and a fourth-place showing at the Golfweek Red Sky Classic.

At the 2024 championship,



Sacramento State cleared the

field by 14 strokes, finished at 2-under par (282-282-286-850) as a team. That 54-hole total marked the lowest in Big Sky tournament history.

Sacramento State's roster features a lot of veteran leadership, including 2023-24 Big Sky Player of the Year Sneha Sharan and 2023 individual champion Caitlin Maurice.

Tabbed second, Northern Arizona features the league's

defending individual champion in Lizzie Neale, who had the lowest 54-hole individual score of 203 (-10) at the 2024 championships. The remainder of the top five was comprised of Montana State, Weber State and Idaho.

The 2025 Big Sky Conference Women's Golf Championship will take place at The Wigwam in Litchfield Park, Arizona from April 14-16. ★

Sac Republic FC Fan Fest Returns

By Grace Ogata-Beutler, Sacramento Republic Football Club

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Ahead of the 2025 USL Championship season, Sacramento Republic Football Club (FC) will host Fan Fest on Feb. 22 at Heart Health Park. In addition to a preseason match, fans can join the club for its inaugural Strive for 45 3K Fun Run & Walk at 11:30 a.m., as well as Meet the Team following the game. Family-friendly activities will take center stage throughout the day, including player autographs, soccer darts, and more. Visit SacRepublicFC.com/FanFest for additional details about match tickets, Fun Run & Walk Registration, and Meet the Team.

The day begins with the Inaugural Strive for 45 3K Fun Run & Walk, presented by UC Davis Health. Last season, the club and its founding partner launched a new initiative to help inspire kids to be active for 45 minutes each day. During the week, the club visited select schools throughout the region to take over PE classes, and during matches, kids were invited to the Strive for 45 Run across the pitch at halftime. Since kicking off in March last year, the program has served nearly 400 students in local schools, while also providing an opportunity for thousands of kids to get their heart rate up with the half-time Strive for 45 Kids Run at Republic FC home matches.

The 3K Fun Run & Walk is open to people of all ages and fitness levels and will



Sacramento Republic Football Club will host Fan Fest on Feb. 22 at Heart Health Park within the Cal Expo grounds. Photo by Sacramento Republic Football Club

begin at Noon. Participants will start and finish on the field, while running through Cal Expo and seeing some of the unique monuments – including the California Letters from Disneyland, the September 11 Memorial Plaza, and the on-campus working farm. Registration is open now at SacRepublicFC.com/FanFest and for just \$17.50 also includes entry to the match, with the option to purchase seat upgrades, and access to the Meet the Team event as well.

At 2 p.m., the Indomitable Club will

kick off its only open preseason contest in Sacramento against MLS Next Pro side Ventura County FC. Season ticket member benefits include tickets to the match and Meet the Team. Fans can purchase tickets for only the game at SacRepublicFC.com/tickets with seats starting as low as \$19, inclusive of tax and fees. All attendees will receive a commemorative 2025 player poster. Members will also have the opportunity to add-on Fun Run registration for \$10 via their SeatGeek account.

After the final whistle, fans will have the opportunity to meet the 2025 squad at Fan Fest. Supporters will be able to meet and interact with players face-to-face, hear from new Head Coach Neill Collins, purchase some new merchandise (including the 2025 kits) and more. Season ticket holders will have a chance to pick up their 2025 member gift featuring an exclusive scarf, as well as take advantage of their discount at the Pro Shop.

The Indomitable Club has a full slate of preseason competition scheduled ahead of the March 8 home opener. The squad will participate in closed-door scrimmages against MLS debutant San Diego FC (Feb. 1), USL Championship sides Orange County SC (Feb. 5) and Oakland Roots SC (Feb. 15). In addition to the Feb. 22 match against Ventura County FC, MLS Next Pro side The Town FC will visit on Feb. 12 for a closed-door match. To close out the preseason calendar, Republic FC will take a road trip to Seaside to face off with Monterey Bay FC in an open-to-the-public match at Cardinale Stadium on March 1.

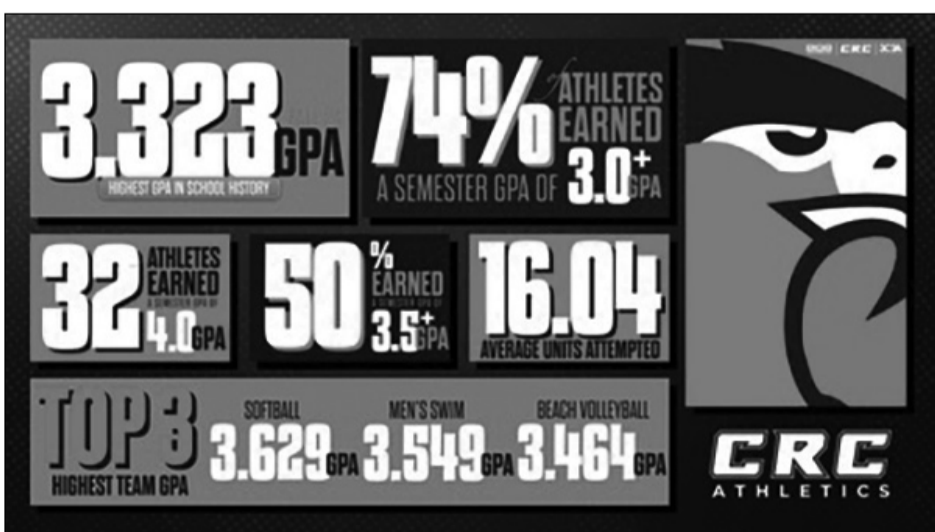
Republic FC's 2025 regular season officially kicks off on Saturday, March 8 when the club hosts Western Conference foe New Mexico United at Heart Health Park. Fans can secure their spot for all the action this year, including February 22 festivities, by becoming an Indomitable Member today. For more information, or to purchase a membership today, visit SacRepublicFC.com/Memberships. ★

CRC Hawks Score Great Grades

Cosumnes River College News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - For the 10th consecutive semester Cosumnes River College (CRC) student-athletes compiled a grade-point average above a 3.0 as the Hawks continue to shine among the brightest in the state for their combination of academic and athletic success. The overall GPA for the student-athletes from CRC's 10 varsity sports was 3.323 for the fall 2024 semester while attempting an average of 16.04 units.

“Just another record-setting performance by our record-athletes,” Dean of Kinesiology, Health, and Athletics and Athletic Director Collin Pregliasco said. “Not only is this the 10th consecutive semester of the athletic department achieving a 3.00 GPA or higher, but it is the highest GPA in the 55 years of CRC Athletics. A 3.323 GPA and 10 consecutive semesters of a department GPA over a 3.0 shows not only our students’ dedication and determination, but it also is a reflection of the hard work and support of our academic staff and coaches



For the 10th consecutive semester Cosumnes River College student-athletes compiled a grade-point average above a 3.0. Photo by Cosumnes River College Athletics

whose emphasis on academic success has become a benchmark of CRC athletics.”

Academic success in Fall 2024 continued to be across-the-board for the Hawks, who had nine of the 10 sports post a team GPA above a 3.0 for the semester. The softball team had the highest GPA in the fall with a mark of 3.629, followed by men’s swimming who had the highest

GPA with a 3.549 among men’s programs with a 3.549 mark. The teams rounding out the top five GPAs were women’s beach volleyball (3.464), women’s soccer (3.427), and baseball (3.420).

From an individual standpoint, there were 32 student-athletes who posted a perfect 4.0 GPA in fall 2024. The group represented seven different teams. led by

the women’s soccer program who had nine student-athletes with a 4.0 GPA. There were six student-athletes from softball and five from women’s beach volleyball with a 4.0 for the semester, as well as four from baseball and three each from women’s volleyball and men’s swimming. In all, more than 74 percent of student-athletes had a GPA of 3.0 or higher while more than 50 percent earned semester marks above a 3.5.

A longstanding practice, the CRC Athletic Department recognizes scholar-athletes that competed in fall or are on a current spring sport roster, completed 12 or more units, and posted a GPA of 3.0 or higher. There were a record 108 student-athletes who achieved this distinction for the fall semester.

Women’s soccer led the way with 20 scholar-athletes while baseball (17), men’s soccer (14), and softball and women’s volleyball (13) were close behind.

Pregliasco said, “I want to thank the entire campus for their continued support of CRC Athletics and our student-athletes. It is only through your support that our student-athletes have the opportunity for these amazing accomplishments.” ★