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AMERICAN RIVER Messenger

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FEBRUARY 7, 2025

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Local Rotarians Aid Fire Evacuees



Chuck and Conni Thompson, on the left, receive help unloading supplies at the Burbank studio. Rotary District Governor Albert Hernandez of Southern California District 5280 is in the yellow shirt. Photo courtesy of Chuck and Conni Thompson

By Judy Andrews

FOLSOM, CA (MPG) - Last month, when Folsom residents Chuck and Conni Thompson requested help collecting supplies for L.A. area fire evacuees, Rotarian District 5180 members rallied with overwhelming support.

The Thompsons are the 2024/2025 co-presidents of the Rotary Club of Historic Folsom within District 5180. Through a collaborative effort organized by Folsom's three Rotary clubs, the co-presidents collected thousands of much-needed supplies to aid the evacuees.

As Chuck Thompson



Robin Gostovich and husband, Mark Benvenga, sit in front of some dog food that they collected. The couple collected more than 1,000 pounds of dog and cat food, plus monetary donations. Photo courtesy of Chuck and Conni Thompson

explained, "Connie and I were driving in the car listening to the news on the radio about the fires. Given the magnitude, it seemed logical that supplies were

needed. We both looked at each other and wondered 'what if?'"

They contacted their local Rotary Club's District Governor, Steve Turner, about organizing a donation drive at their Folsom home and driving the donated supplies to Southern California. District Governor Turner connected them with District Governor Albert Hernandez of Southern California's Rotary District 5280 to help get the ball rolling.

"We were told the evacuation centers ran through their stock every three days," Conni Thompson

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Board Approves Contract Update for New Amphitheatre Seating

By Shaunna Boyd

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - At the Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District (FORPD) board meeting on Jan. 15, a resident expressed concerns during Public Comment about changes made to the scope and cost of the ongoing improvements to park facilities in the Village.

If the reason for the change is to fix a mistake in the original design, the resident said, then "who pays for that?" He hopes it's "not residents' tax money covering someone else's mistake."

Two residents thanked the board for taking action to improve safety at Miller Park. They said the recent removal of some problematic stations of the disc golf course has resulted in a much safer and more enjoyable experience for park users.

Director Raymond James Irwin pulled some items from the Consent Calendar for board discussion of specific budget changes for the Veterans Memorial Amphitheatre project: \$109,000 for electrical work, \$60,000 for labor and \$32,000 for materials.

"This change order is directly related to the seating of the amphitheater," said District Administrator Mike Aho. "You've approved a \$904,000-plus budget for the amphitheater seating. This is the amphitheater seating component. It isn't going over budget; it's not a new additional cost. It is the cost associated, the budget you approved, for that work."

Aho explained that these changes are to officially add that scope of work into the construction contract, with the specified costs.

Initially, the seating was not going to be part of the scope work, with plans to replace the seating sometime in the future as a separate project. But then it was determined that it would be more difficult to complete the work later and it would have a much higher cost. So, last June, the board approved a budget of \$904,935 to replace the Amphitheatre seating.

Board Chair Delinda Tamagni clarified that the costs are part of the \$904,935 already approved, and the board voted unanimously to approve the Consent Calendar and the included change orders.

The board then considered a change order of \$77,454 for hangar doors for the amphitheater. Aho explained that these are the doors used to close off the stage to create the interior Black Box Theater and to secure the

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Native Recalls Simpler Times

By Judy Andrews

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - What was it like to grow up in Fair Oaks in the 1930s and '40s? Just ask long-time local Margge Wood, who recalls a simpler time when everyone knew everyone else in the community. Wood's family ties to Fair Oaks date back over a century.

Born in 1933, Marjorie "Margge" Wood lived in Fair Oaks until she turned 21. Her father's family owned ranch property in Mills, just south of the river where Rancho Cordova is now. Her mother's side was from Roseville.

When Wood was two or three, her grandfather broke his leg while working at Pacific Coast Aggregate, then known as PCA. The rock-crushing company, located in



Margge Wood displays past news articles and photos from 1950 when she was crowned the second Queen of Fair Oaks. Photo by Judy Andrews

present-day Gold River, was one of the area's largest employers at the time.

Wood's family moved into the grandparents' Fair Oaks home to help care for

the elder Wood.

Eventually, her parents bought "prime location" property in "downtown" Fair Oaks, which Wood still owns today.

The properties include six businesses on Fair Oaks Boulevard, including O Café Bakery. The family home, which her father and grandfather built from Basalite bricks around 1940, is currently home to Honeymoon Tattoo, a business owned by Andy Campoy.

"Fair Oaks was pretty quiet in those days and there wasn't much to do," recalled Wood. "We didn't even have a stop sign in town until after I was married."

For fun, she liked to play tennis at two nearby courts, one at her grammar school (where Meraki High School is today) and

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Native Recalls Simpler Times



Margge Wood's family home, which her father and grandfather built around 1940, is now a tattoo shop owned by Andy Campoy. Photo by Judy Andrews



Margge Wood, shown here as a 3-year-old, is with her father, "Doozy" Wood, on a fishing trip. Photo courtesy of Margge Wood

Continued from page 1

another at Temescal and Bridge streets. During summer, all the youth swam in the river, which was the main recreational activity for Fair Oaks families.

Before World War II, Wood's father ran a car dealership from their Fair Oaks home. When the war broke out, however, everything familiar to Wood's childhood changed.

"It was a scary time to be a kid. It felt like you were always on edge. I had seven uncles and two aunts in the military, so anyone who was in the service left town," she said.

Wood's father was forced to close his auto business because "no one had new cars during the war." Her father took on war-related work to help keep the family afloat.

She remembers the soldiers driving their military trucks past

the house: "We gave them water from buckets. I don't know what they were doing but they'd always stop, wave and comment about the beautiful countryside. Some of them vowed to return someday and many of them did after the war."

When the war ended, Wood's father opened Wood Motors with a showroom next to their Fair Oaks Boulevard house.

"People called him 'Doozy' Wood and he knew everyone within a 20-mile radius," said Wood.

When her father retired in the late '50s, Charlie Edgett bought the dealership. Edgett was her father's only salesman at Wood Motors.

San Juan High School was the only high school in the area until Bella Vista opened in 1960. Every student within miles attended San Juan, High, which was part of the



Margge Wood, shown here as a 14-year-old, attended San Juan High School. Photo courtesy of Margge Wood

Fair Oaks Unified School District.

Wood was 16 when her mother suggested that she run for the annual Queen of Fair Oaks pageant. The contest took place over

Fiesta Days in 1950. Wood competed against two other girls on behalf of the Professional Women's Club and won, making her the second reigning Queen of Fair Oaks in the pageant's history.

"It was an honorary title. I'd show up to business openings and hand out stuff," she said. "They invited me to the Folsom Rodeo and announced me as the Rodeo Queen, which I had no idea they would do. Someone handed me a cowboy hat and told me to wear it."

Wood was 21 when she married. She and her husband moved to Woodland, where they resided for many years. Eventually, she returned to Fair Oaks, her hometown, and became the first female director on the board of American River Bank. She also sold cars at Edgett Motors while her youngest child was

in college. Both businesses are now gone.

Today, Wood lives in Gold River and is active in the Gold River and Fair Oaks communities. She is a busy great-grandmother, grandmother and mother to four children aged 62 to 72. Wood has kept physically active all her life. Although she no longer skis or plays tennis and golf, she loves riding her bike along the American River and enjoys socializing with girlfriends.

When recently asked what she misses the most about "Old Fair Oaks," Wood replied, "I miss the genuine camaraderie of everyone pitching in and doing their part. We didn't separate ourselves by organizations and roles back then. Everything was done for the welfare of the town and the people." ★

Board Approves Contract Update for New Amphitheatre Seating

Continued from page 1

facility in between shows.

"It's a very important door and it's a custom door," said Aho. "It's basically an airplane hangar door."

The frame and motor are already installed but the panels planned to complete the door have been discontinued. They needed four of the original panels but the closest similar panels are smaller and eight will be needed now, changing the overall total cost.

Director Ralph Carhart said that it wasn't a flaw in the design but an issue of the necessary materials no longer being available.

So Carhart asked if there are provisions in the contract requiring the contractor to acquire all materials needed: "Isn't this the contractor's problem and not ours?"

The board consensus was to table the decision until the next meeting, when the architect can attend and answer more questions about this issue.

The board also considered an increase in Bobo Construction's contract allowance to include the Amphitheatre seating as part of the Village improvements.

The design cost and permitting are estimated at \$60,295 and the cost of seats at \$146,314. Those costs will be paid by the district and will not be added to the construction contract. But \$667,335 will be added to Bobo's contract to cover the demolition and construction, which would bring Bobo's new contracted amount to \$22,817,112.

The board voted unanimously to approve the contract increase to ensure the completion of the new Amphitheatre seating.

The board then held a public hearing regarding rental fees for the new Fair Oaks Performing Arts Center and Amphitheatre, which will be completed this year. Arts and Entertainment Manager Jen Schuler explained that the fee schedule is determined by factors such as type of event, rental use dates, and length of event and there are differing rates for community partners, nonprofits and commercial groups. The district administrator will also have the authority to waive or reduce public and facility rental fees.

During Public Comment, there were questions about the ticketing process. If events at the facility are open to the public, Schuler said, then ticketing will go through the district system. If a group rents the space for a

private event, the group will be responsible for any necessary ticketing.

There was also a question about the definition of a community partner, which was explained as a group that performs services that benefit the district.

Director Carhart said he gets many questions about the Fair Oaks Theatre Festival, which for many years has rented the Amphitheatre for performances. The festival will take a break for the 2025 season, with plans to return in 2026.

"They're on very precarious ground right now, from what I understand," Carhart said, with a number of board resignations, a new director and uncertain funding. Carhart said that he would never want to throw an existing community partner "under the bus," so he wants to ensure that the fees are feasible for them.

Schuler had previously discussed the planned fees with festival representatives, and she said she will reach out again to confirm. And she reminded the board that the district administrator can reduce or waive the fees if needed.

The board voted unanimously to approve the proposed fee schedule.

During Staff Updates, Parks and Facilities Manager Sean Ventura said he is still working to schedule a survey of Bannister Park for a possible site for a disc golf course. He will report to the board as soon as possible.

With the Village improvements on schedule for completion this year, Aho said, parking in the area will be significantly impacted. The district will hold public outreach meetings with residents and businesses in the Village to gather input. Then the issue will come to the board for consideration of a parking management system.

Aho also provided a construction update, with paving of walkways set to begin in the park, as well as drainage work on the playground and grading for the amphitheatre seating area. Inside, electrical work is ongoing in the Performing Arts Center, and acoustical panels were recently installed in the Community Clubhouse. The risers for the Black Box Theater were also recently delivered.

"There's quite a bit going on," Aho said.

The next Fair Oaks Recreation and Park District board meeting is scheduled for Feb. 19 ★

Mother-Daughter Volunteers Strengthen Community Spirit

Helping Hands OV – Orangevale-Fair Oaks News Release

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - Tracy Furze, an integral part of Helping Hands OV – Orangevale-Fair Oaks since 2020, has been a cornerstone of this community service organization.

Known for her dedication to improving the lives of those in need, Furze's efforts in planning and logistics have directly supported many community programs and events aimed at assisting low-income, elderly and disabled individuals with small household tasks they are unable to do on their own.

An educator by trade and a devoted Girl Scout volunteer, Furze has been instrumental in spreading awareness of Helping Hands OV's mission and encouraging others to get involved.

"I love that I found an organization that helps so many people with small projects and wonderful events to better the community we live in," Furze said.

In 2024, the volunteering spirit was passed on to Furze's daughter, Aleena Furze, when she moved back to the area.

Aleena Furze, eager to get involved and contribute to the community, quickly became hooked on Helping Hands OV's programs. Her first volunteer experience was the Valentines for Seniors Program, where she was touched by the overwhelming sense of



Tracy Furze and her daughter, Aleena, are happy to volunteer together for Helping Hands OV – Orangevale-Fair Oaks. The organization is run solely by volunteers. Photo courtesy of Helping Hands OV – Orangevale-Fair Oaks

community support.

"I really felt a sense of community," Aleena Furze said.

Volunteering can sometimes be a rigorous task, but with the majority of Helping Hands OV's volunteers working full-time jobs and having families, it is that sense of community that is kept as a reminder.

"It's hard to find time sometimes with work and life, but I help out whenever I can," Aleena Furze said.

When Tracy Furze was asked how she felt with her daughter by her side, she said, "I love having my daughter involved with Helping Hands OV."

The bond between mother and daughter has only deepened through their shared experiences of volunteering. They recently joined the planning committee for an upcoming event in May and are excited about the future opportunities to

serve together.

"I think it's going to be something really special and fun. I can't wait to see what we at HHOV come up with next," Aleena Furze added.

Helping Hands OV is proud to have this dynamic duo as part of their volunteer team, as their experiences reflect the organization's values: bringing the community together to support and uplift one another. Their ongoing contributions are a testament to the power of family involvement in community service and how even small acts of kindness can make a meaningful difference.

To learn more about the all-volunteer Helping Hands OV- Orangevale-Fair Oaks, discover ways to get involved or request assistance, visit facebook.com/HelpingHandsOV, email helpinghandsov@yahoo.com or call 916-426-8583. ★

ACAI Gallery Hosts February Showing

Story and photos by Thomas J. Sullivan

FAIR OAKS, CA (MPG) - The Allied Ceramics Art Institute (ACAI) Studios and Gallery, at 7425 Winding Way near the corner of San Juan Avenue in Fair Oaks, welcomes the public to an eclectic showing, "Potpourri," now running through Feb. 22.

The gallery is easy to find, with a large metal sculpture of a dragon out front.

"It's an appropriate name to describe the diversity of the types of works we're showing in this art exhibition," said Laurene Fitzpatrick, the Allied Ceramics Art Institute gallery director.

"Potpourri" opened Jan. 11. Inside the gallery, there's a splash of color in almost every direction. The nonprofit ACAI Studios & Gallery was founded in 2009 by ceramic artists who recognized the need in the eastern Sacramento communities of Fair Oaks, Folsom, Citrus Heights, Orangevale, Gold River and Carmichael for an art center devoted to the ceramic arts, she said.

The facility features an art gallery, private studio spaces, an indoor sculpture garden and a shared ceramics studio space, Fitzpatrick said.

"ACAI a very special place, where artists from around the area, many who may want to show their work publicly for the very first time, can come together in an inviting atmosphere to do so," Fitzpatrick said.

The exhibition changes every two to three months emphasizing a different theme, she said. A ceramics sale with works by local artists is held each December, Fitzpatrick said.

The collective vision of the Allied Ceramics Art Institute Studios and Gallery seeks to inspire creativity through the arts, Fitzpatrick explained.

"We take a different look at



Laurene Fitzpatrick, Allied Ceramics Art Institute gallery director, stands outside of the gallery.

what art can be," she said.

A volunteer, Fitzpatrick said she enjoys her duties as gallery director and the process of determining the theme for showings every two to three months by local artists at the gallery each year, many who have not exhibited before.

The Allied Ceramics Art Institute art gallery invites visitors to quietly pause, reflect and learn the story behind each piece of art featured on display. Fitzpatrick encourages each artist who writes a descriptive gallery card accompanying each work on exhibition to tell what inspired them in their creative process.

"We welcome artists to share up to four of their preferred pieces for display with the understanding that we will mix and display their works along with other artists throughout the gallery during the showing," she said.

Many of the paintings and works on display throughout the gallery are available for sale.

"We're also a resource for



The Allied Ceramics Art Institute Studios and Gallery in Fair Oaks welcomes the public to an eclectic showing called "Potpourri" now running through Feb. 22.

personal and professional development as well as for those who love the arts and ceramics and want to learn more about pursuing their creative passion," she said.

Allied Ceramics Art Institute Studios & Gallery offers individual works available for sale.

Ongoing programs for children, beginners, hobbyists and



The ceramics members of the Allied Ceramics Art Institute Gallery and Studio pose for a photo.

experienced artists are offered, according to Fitzpatrick.

Allied Ceramics Art Institute presents year-round ceramics classes for all levels, from beginners through advanced students. Those interested in classes should check with Fitzpatrick for upcoming class starting times. New classes start monthly and sometimes have a waiting list, she said.

"We're excited to show the diversity of creative work from the artists who are participating in the show and spend time appreciating their talent," Fitzpatrick said.

The Allied Ceramics Art Institute Studios gallery hours are from 1 to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Fridays and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturdays. Studio hours are Monday through Saturday by appointment. Visit <https://acaistudios.com> for more information, call 916 966-2453 or email information@acaistudios.com. ★



One of the many exhibits at The Allied Ceramics Art Institute Studios and Gallery

POTPOURRI

Exhibit: Jan 8 - Feb 22

Gallery Hours:

Wed-Fri 1-4 • Sat 11-3

Special Services MIKE SHROCK MINISTRIES Comes to Fair Oaks



Although he was preparing for a career as a professional trumpet player, God had different plans and called Mike into the ministry. He first served as youth pastor and song leader in his local church in East Longmeadow, Mass., before being called to serve as youth pastor and music pastor at Calvary Baptist Church in Windsor, Conn. he also attended Northland Baptist Bible College (Dunbar, Wis.) earning a master of ministries degree in Bible. During the ministry at Calvary, Mike and Lori adopted their son, Drew. He also attended Northland Baptist Bible College (Dunbar, Wis.) earning a master of ministries degree in Bible. Mike next served under Dr. Frank Bumpus at Bethel Baptist Church in Schaumburg, Ill., before being called to serve the next 17 years as a school representative and staff evangelist for Bob Jones University. During his time on University staff, Mike traveled the United States, speaking at countless churches, camps, and retreats.

Today, Mike travels as an independent evangelist, preaching and playing his trumpet at ministries across the United States and around the world.

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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 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.

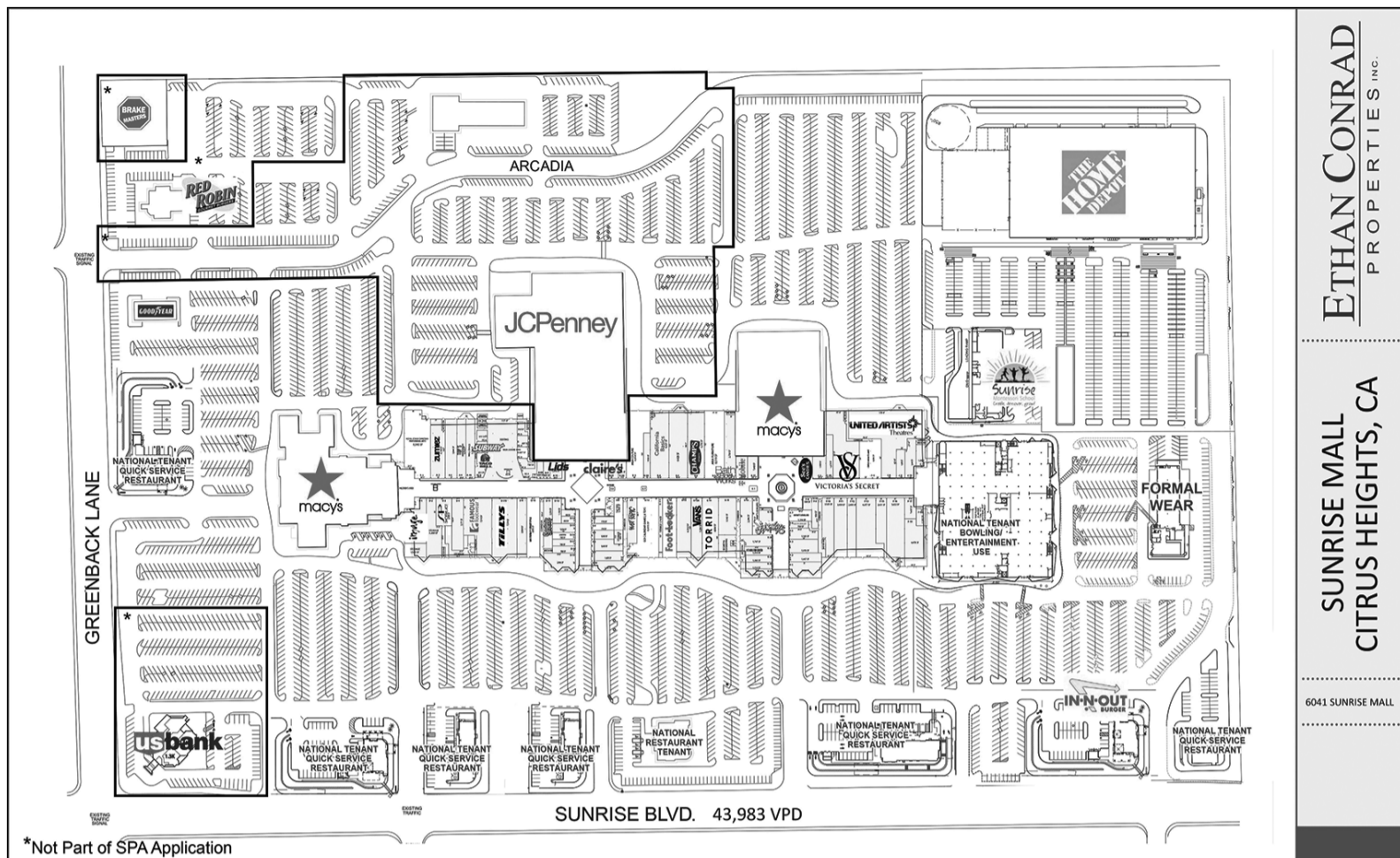
Conrad proposes to submit a commercial parcel map application, which will merge some of the existing parcels and to re-parcel them to allow indoor commercial recreation facilities that are not allowed within sub areas of the adopted Specific Plan and its zoning. A quick-serve national restaurant is also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



Here is an overview of the Conrad proposal. Courtesy photo

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.

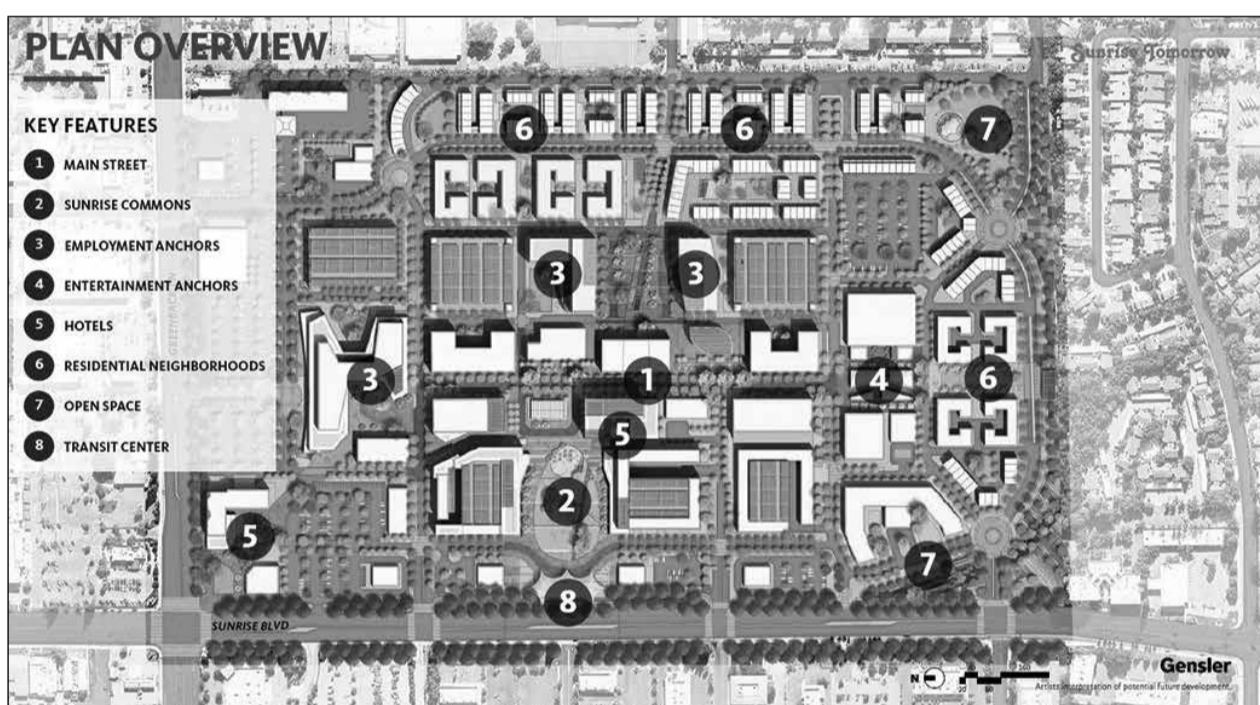
In his slide presentation, Conrad said that the status of Sunrise Mall is “unacceptable” for Citrus Heights “and will only continue to worsen” with the recently announced closure of Macy’s.

“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.”

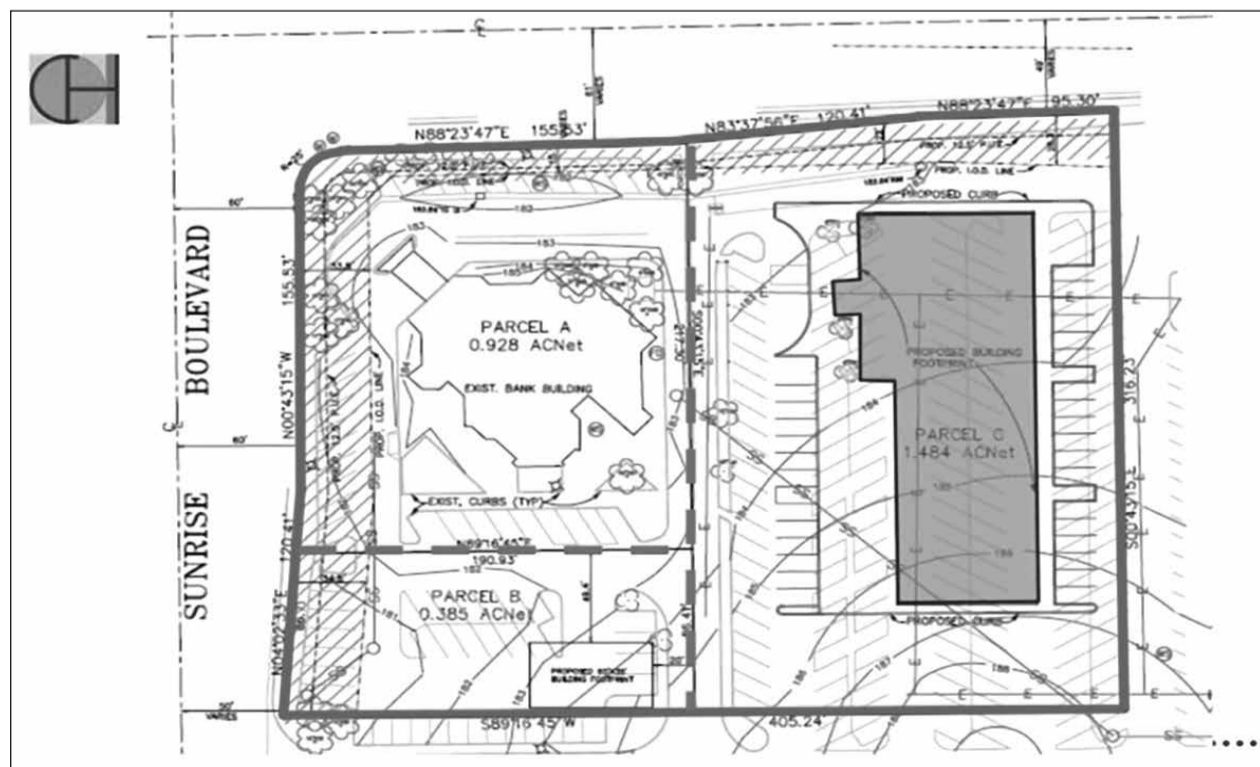
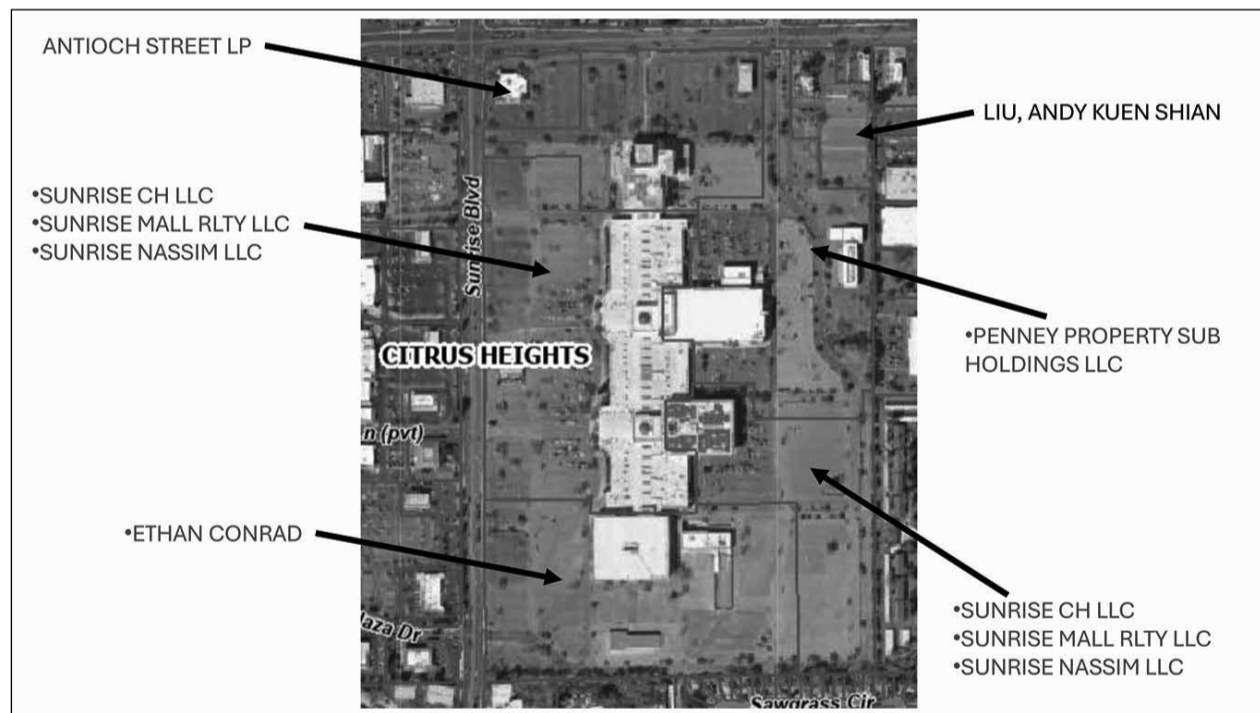
Conrad described the revitalization of the mall would take place in two main phases. Phase 1 would include construction of Home Depot, In-N-Out, two other fast-food restaurants, Judi’s Cleaners and Lucky Stripe’s Entertainment.

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



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



Outlined in red is where the proposed hotel adjacent to the US Bank will go, according to the plan. Courtesy photo

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.

“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. ★

Fair Oaks Celebrates 130th Anniversary



Judy Andrews

By Judy Andrews, Fair Oaks Chamber of Commerce

This year marks Fair Oaks' 130th anniversary. Established as a produce-farming colony in the mid-1890s, early visitors from the Midwest were initially drawn to the area's fertile soil, sunshine, and striking natural beauty: a perfect combination for growing citrus and olives.

Despite early hardships such as the Great Depression, World War II and a freeze that wiped out most of the citrus crop, Fair Oaks became a boom town in the 1950s with the construction of Folsom and Nimbus Dams, completion of the Sunrise Boulevard Bridge and the arrival of Aerojet. In 1958, a Strategic Air Command B-52 wing was assigned to Mather Air Force Base,

which had been in operation since World War I. New elementary schools were in demand and Bella Vista High School opened in 1960 to accommodate the fast-growing population.

Although the old family farms and orchards are gone, remnants from the past can be found throughout the area. Fair Oaks is one of the few communities to retain its charm and natural beauty along the American River. Rich with history and a strong sense of community, it's a town that locals are proud to call home.

Preserving the Past

I want to thank the Fair Oaks Historical Society and History Center for allowing me to share some of this history with you. The History Center, currently run by Chris Highsmith, is where you can learn about the region's enduring past and talk to knowledgeable docents. Visitors can drop in the center (located next to Sunflower Drive-in) between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays.

For more information about the Fair Oaks Historical Society, please

visit their website at fairoakshistory.org. New members are always welcome to join and can apply online or at the History Center during open hours.

Save the Date

The Fair Oaks Historical Society plans to host two special events on Sept. 27 to commemorate Fair Oaks' 130th anniversary and the organization's 50th year. The events include a family-fun afternoon at Fair Oaks Village Park and a Special Commemorative Dinner Banquet at the Community Clubhouse. Stay tuned to this column for event details as they unfold.

In the meantime, we hope you enjoy reading more about the people, events, and places that helped shape this community, beginning with this edition of the American River Messenger. Also, be sure to follow the I Love Fair Oaks (ilovefairoaks.com) website for the "Days Gone By" series Chrysti Tovani is producing, and feel free to share a special memory of your own. Tovani is a REALTOR®, marketing strategist and photographer based in Fair Oaks.

See you in Fair Oaks!

Local Rotarians Aid Fire Evacuees

Continued from page 1

said. "We knew we had to work quickly."

Using their extensive network and social media sites, the Thompsons sent out a vital needs list, including basic medical supplies, essentials for seniors, pet food and other basics such as toilet paper and paper towels, blankets, flashlights and snacks.

Within a short time, individuals started showing up to their driveway with supplies from as far away as Courtland and Elk Grove.

The Laguna Sunrise Rotary Club even filled a pallet with thousands of diapers that the Thompsons forgot to put on the list.

Fair Oaks Rotarian Robin Gostovich coordinated a pet supply drive at her home in one day, collecting more than 1,000 pounds of dog and cat food, dozens of leashes and collars, and other pet items. Additionally, Gostovich received more than \$1,000 in monetary donations from Norcal Golden Retriever Rescue and private donors.

"People brought food and supplies to our house, purchased dog food through Amazon, and had it delivered to us within hours," Gostovich said. "We used the money to buy more dog food and delivered all the pet



Helpers strap diapers to the top of the Thompsons' vehicle. Photo courtesy of Chuck and Conni Thompson

supplies to the Thompson's residence."

Chuck Thompson recalled, "We realized we couldn't get everything in one trip, even with two vehicles and a cargo trailer."

District Governor Hernandez arranged for the couple to drop off the donations at an empty film studio in Burbank. The studio was used to warehouse evacuation center supplies until needed.

Within 48 hours of blasting their plea, Chuck and Conni Thompson were packed and ready to haul the donated cargo 400

miles to Burbank.

Conni Thompson recalled their emotional arrival: "When we drove up to the studio, we were greeted by the District Governor and a group of Rotarian volunteers ready to unload the delivery. It was an incredibly moving moment for Chuck and me."

What about the extra supplies back home?

Chuck Thompson answered, "It will be bigger next time since we have more advanced notice. We've got a 26-foot moving truck, vans, trailers, and tow vehicles ready to load and roll." ★

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Lanzaro Painting Named Small Business of the Month

Office of Assemblyman Josh Hoover News Release

ORANGEVALE, CA (MPG) - We're thrilled to highlight Lanzaro Painting as our 7th Assembly District Small Business of the Month for January 2025. Owned by the hardworking and dedicated Jeff Lanzaro, this family-run business has been a cornerstone of the Orangevale community since 1991.

For over three decades, Lanzaro Painting has set the gold standard in residential repainting services. Whether transforming a cozy home or a sprawling mansion, their commitment to excellence shines through in every project. Known for their impeccable attention to detail, use of premium products, and customer-focused approach, Lanzaro Painting has built a reputation for reliability and quality.

Jeff Lanzaro's leadership and dedication are reflected in the numerous accolades his

business has earned, including being voted Best of Orangevale in 2022 and 2023, with yet another nomination in 2024. Beyond his professional success, Jeff's impact on the community is strengthened by the support of his wife, Viki, their five children, and their growing family of grandchildren—three more expected in the coming year!

Lanzaro Painting embodies the values of hard work, integrity, and community spirit that make small businesses the backbone of our district. Jeff's contributions extend beyond just homes; they've helped preserve the character and beauty of our neighborhoods, making Orangevale and the surrounding areas a better place to live.

If you know of another small business that deserves recognition, please let us know by nominating them at https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe5-3dajQBbdQhCYnZ31-SO85p2N3E-aPIVfJ1iZ3-_CG1Bcw/viewform. ★

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California's Taxes on Wealth May Hinge on How Trump Treats Deductions



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

California's state budget is inordinately dependent on taxing the incomes of wealthy residents.

Gov. Gavin Newsom's proposed 2025-26 budget assumes that the state will receive \$133.7 billion in personal income taxes, more than 60% of general fund revenues. Nearly half of that would be paid by the 1% of Californians sitting atop the taxable income ladder.

The downside risk of such dependency is that taxes on the rich tend to swing up and down more than taxes on ordinary wage earners, because earnings on investments are substantial portions of wealthy people's taxable incomes.

When the rich are getting richer, California sees multi-billion-dollar revenue windfalls. But downturns in their investments often result in sharp declines in tax receipts. In his budget, Newsom mentions the "swings in revenues and uncertainty that are a hallmark of California's volatile tax system."

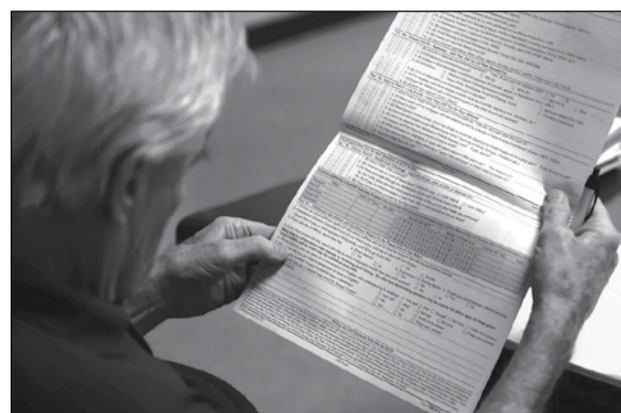
The new budget cites a recent uptick in revenues that allowed Newsom's budget to expand some categories of spending, such as a big increase in tax subsidies for the beleaguered Southern California film and

video industry, one of his pet programs.

The validity of the new budget's revenue assumptions is in doubt because of the wildfires that have afflicted Los Angeles County. But regardless of their impact, the state will continue to depend on volatile revenues from the wealthy, including those who

tax returns to \$10,000.

The limit has the indirect effect of increasing federal levies on taxpayers who pay more than \$10,000 in SALT each year. Other aspects of the 2017 tax bill, signed by Trump, benefited the wealthy but even so, California's tax officials estimated that the net impact on California tax-



John Mahoney reviews a questionnaire for tax preparers in the AARP Foundation Tax-Aide program, in Oakland on Jan. 23, 2019. Photo By Paul Chinn, The San Francisco Chronicle via Getty Images

lost their homes in Pacific Palisades and Malibu.

By happenstance, just as the new budget and the wildfires become prominent items on the Capitol's political agenda, something else is happening in Washington that could affect California's harvest of taxes on the rich.

With Donald Trump back in the White House, negotiations are underway on repeal or retention of a 2017 change in federal tax law that adversely affected states such as California and New York, whose budgets depend on taxing the incomes of the rich.

The change, part of a much larger overhaul of tax policy, limited deductions for state and local taxes – SALT in the political vernacular – on federal

payers would be a \$12 billion annual increase in their federal tax obligations.

New York and California legislators and governors saw it as a deliberate hit by Republicans, including Trump, on blue state finances and have tried, on and off, to have it repealed ever since, to no avail. They worried aloud that the much-reduced SALT deduction would encourage wealthy taxpayers to move to states with low or no income taxes, such as Nevada, Texas and Florida.

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. ★

Social Security Matters

Social Security Benefits for Someone with Multiple Ex-spouses



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: If a financially well-off individual had multiple ex-spouses, could it happen that the multiple ex-spouses could each be collecting Social Security based on their own financial situation as compared to their rich ex-spouses? Thus, multiple payouts by SS? Just curious, because there are probably many people in this situation as a result of the ever-increasing number of people involved in multiple marriages that each lasted more than ten years. **Signed: Curious Ex-Spouse**

Dear Curious Ex-Spouse: A former spouse can only collect one SS benefit – either their own SS retirement amount, or an amount as an ex-spouse if the marriage lasted 10 years or more. And it is possible for multiple ex-spouses

of a marriage to the same person to qualify for benefits from those unions, if each marriage lasted at least 10 years. But each ex-spouse can only qualify for one benefit payment – either their own earned SS benefit, or their benefit as an ex-spouse. In other words, someone with two (or more) ex-spouses might have their ex's collecting full benefits on their record, provided that each marriage lasted at least 10 years. But an ex-spouse can only get one benefit – their own SS retirement amount or an ex-spouse amount – whichever is higher.

It's possible, also, that an ex-spouse can collect benefits from a former spouse at the same time as a current spouse is also collecting spouse benefits on the same record. And there is no detriment to either's amount because multiple spouses or ex-spouses are collecting on a one person's SS record (Social Security is, after all, a means for spouses, or ex-spouses, to avoid poverty). However, an ex-spouse's own SS retirement benefit (from their personal lifetime work record) must be less than any ex-spouse

benefit they are entitled to from a former spouse. Essentially, if the "10-years-married" rule is satisfied, ex-spouses are subject to the same benefit rules as a current spouse.

You are correct that we see some cases like this these days, but each eligible ex-spouse can only get one benefit, and their ex-spouse benefit is always offset by any personal SS retirement benefit the ex-spouse may also be entitled to on their own lifetime work record.

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Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris

Mark your calendars for March 7 in the friendly confines of Golden One Arena, as it should be a night to remember. Yes, on that night when the San Antonio Spurs arrive, you'll have the opportunity to once again witness the fastest man in the NBA, and you guessed it, none other than former King DeAaron Fox.

Emotions are running high right now as arguably the best overall player in Sacramento Kings history leaves the Sactown family to join the San Antonio Spurs.

What do I think of that? Sad simply doesn't get it. There's a hole in my heart, but a gratitude for a player that turned back the clock when it comes to professionalism and fan involvement.

DeAaron has comported himself with a degree of elegance and grace seldom seen in professional athletes. I feel that Sacramento is not only losing an amazing athlete, but an amazing family as well. Make no mistake about it, the Foxes are a package, and they will steal your heart.

I fondly recall a moment earlier this season in which DeAaron took a hard fall at the edge of court where the baseline meets the sideline. He went head over heels, and as he rolled over to get up, who was there to assist but none other than his wife who was sitting on the front row with his son. It made me smile as DeAaron was helped to his feet by Recee, and then it was on with the game.

I will miss watching his young son clapping gleefully, and DeAaron streaking to the hoop and scoring baskets that would be beyond the capability of most NBA players.

I won't forget his record setting 60-point performance against the Minnesota Timberwolves, albeit in an overtime loss, but it took nothing away from the highest scoring single game total in franchise history.

I can't help but smile and nod my head when I remember DeAaron taking several minutes to talk with my grandson and sign his treasured DeAaron Fox rookie card prior to a game last season. The photos of that moment along with the card itself will be something my grandson will never forget, and it simply is who

DeAaron Fox really is.

Sunday Feb. 2 will be a day that most Kings fans will never forget, and as big a trade as the Luka Doncic for Anthony Davis was over the weekend, for those of us that love the Kings, it pales in comparison.

The nuts and bolts are that DeAaron Fox is going the San Antonio Spurs in a 3-team trade that also sends Jordan McLaughlin to the Spurs, and Keven Huerter to the Chicago Bulls.

What the Kings receive in return is 2-time all-star Zach Lavine who at age 29 is right in the heart of his prime. Zach was the longest tenured player on the Bulls squad, so like most Kings fans, Chicago is likely shedding tears. Lavine is scoring 24 points per game this season, which is just a hair below the scoring output of Fox.

Not to be ignored by any means in this blockbuster trade, are the 6 draft choices that come with the trade. The Kings receive 3 #1's and 3 #2's and it will be years before the Sacramento Kings and their fans are able to see the full completion of this trade.

Zach Lavine does not solve the missing component at the power forward position, but many believe that another move is coming prior to the trade deadline this week. Auspicious in all of this, is the remarkable 3-point shooting that Lavine brings with him. Currently shooting just over 44% ranks among the league leaders, and as Keven Huerter departs, leaving Sacramento as somewhat of a disappointment from beyond the arc, a 44% 3-point shooter is just what the doctor ordered. That combined with a field goal percentage of over 50% is notable for a guard in the NBA, so let's all take a deep breath, and a collective wait and see approach.

Will I miss DeAaron Fox? Do I believe he is the #1 overall best first round pick in the history of the Sacramento Kings? I say heartily, YES!

Godspeed DeAaron Fox and may you and your family thrive in San Antonio! You will be missed!

Your thoughts are always welcome at vgharriskingsfan@gmail.com. ★

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Gov. Meets with Small Business Owners Impacted by Firestorm

Office of Governor Gavin Newsom News Release

LOS ANGELES, CA (MPG) - Continuing to have an eye toward recovery and rebuilding, Governor Gavin Newsom on Jan. 21 met with workers and small business owners impacted by the devastating Los Angeles firestorm to hear their stories and highlight the state's work to help communities rebuild.

The Governor visited NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) in La Canada Flintridge for a conversation with employees impacted by the Eaton Fire. Hundreds of Jet Propulsion Laboratory employees lost their homes, with over 100 more likely to be displaced due to damage to their homes. Joined by Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors Chair Kathryn Barger, Governor Newsom talked with the employees about rebuilding efforts, as well as concerns about home insurance.

As the largest employer of those impacted by the Eaton Fire, Jet Propulsion Laboratory started a disaster relief fund to help employees, which has already raised over \$2 million. Jet Propulsion Laboratory manages the Deep Space Network, a global web of antennas that communicate with spacecraft. The NASA facility has partnered with CAL FIRE to use soil moisture sensors to support the state's fire management and prevention efforts. JPL also helped California launch pollution-tracking satellites last year and partners with the state on drought monitoring.

Governor Newsom also visited with small business owners Kevin Hockin and Rosanna Kvermmo. They started Side Pie as a pizza pop-up during the



Governor Newsom met with small business owners to see how the recent wildfires have impacted them. Photo courtesy of the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

middle of the pandemic. After it went viral, they expanded into a brick-and-mortar shop in Altadena in 2021. They received news while at Disneyland with their daughter that they had lost their restaurant and that their home suffered extensive smoke damage. Kevin and Rosanna plan on rebuilding when safe to do so.

"Thousands of hard-working Californians lost their homes, their businesses and their livelihoods to this firestorm. From the hundreds of workers at NASA's iconic Jet Propulsion Laboratory who lost their homes to folks like Kevin and Rosanna who lost their Altadena pizza shop – the numbers will never capture just how life-changing these fires were for Californians. It will take years to rebuild and fully recover but California will be there every step of the way," said Governor Gavin Newsom.

Also on Jan. 21, Governor Newsom stopped by CAL FIRE and CDCR conservation camp crews filling sandbags that will be placed in firestorm-affected

areas to help protect against potential flooding and mudslides. Yesterday, the Governor issued an executive order to help mitigate this risk and protect communities by hastening efforts to remove debris, bolster flood defenses, and stabilize hillsides in affected areas.

Helping Small Businesses Recover

Since the firestorm, California has worked with federal and local providers to help businesses with the resources and support they need to recover and rebuild.

200+ business advisors from Small Business Support Centers funded through the California Office of the Small Business Advocate's (CalOSBA) Technical Assistance Program are staffed across the region.

This includes business advisors from the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) and Women's Business Center (WBC) who can answer loan application, insurance, employee support and business recovery questions. They are co-located



Governor Newsom speaks with CAL FIRE employees in the wake of the Los Angeles fires. Photo courtesy of the Office of Governor Gavin Newsom

at the Disaster Recovery Center at Pasadena City College and the Disaster Loan Outreach Center in Camarillo (Ventura County).

Small Business Development Center and Women's Business Center advisors are also present at the various Business Recovery Centers organized by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

California Office of the Small Business Advocates has launched a Resource Guide for small businesses impacted by the wildfires through its Outsmart Disaster website, and is conducting a series of online trainings in both English and Spanish.

The California Infrastructure and Economic Development Bank (IBank) is offering loan programs for businesses from one to 750 employees affected by the LA wildfires.

Disaster Relief Loan Guarantee Program (DRLGP) issues loan guarantees up to 95% of the loan through IBank's partner Financial Development Corporations to help small business borrowers

impacted by disaster who need term loans or lines of credit for working capital.

Additionally, Governor Newsom has issued a number of executive orders in response to the Los Angeles fire storms to help aid in rebuilding and recovery, create more temporary housing, and protect survivors from exploitation and price gouging.

Get Help Today

Californians can go to CA.gov/LAfires – a hub for information and resources from state, local and federal government.

Individuals and business owners who sustained losses from wildfires in Los Angeles County can apply for disaster assistance online at DisasterAssistance.gov, by calling 800-621-3362, or by using the FEMA smart phone application. Assistance is available in more than 40 languages.

If you use a relay service, such as video relay service (VRS), captioned telephone service or others, give FEMA the number for that service. ★

State Water Project Increases 2025 Allocation Forecast

California Department of Water Resources News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - On Jan. 28, the Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced an update to the State Water Project allocation forecast for 2025. The allocation has increased to 20 percent of requested supplies, up from 15 percent in December. The State Water Project provides water to 29 public water agencies that serve 27 million Californians.

While January has been incredibly dry across California, storm runoff into the state's reservoirs came in higher than forecasted at the end of December allowing for a modest allocation

increase. Storms in late November and early December had a positive impact by saturating the ground, allowing for storms through December to more efficiently runoff into reservoirs.

More storms are needed, and the long-range forecast does hint at a return to wet conditions in early February that could bring much-needed rain and snow.

"We are in the middle of our biggest months for precipitation for California, and unfortunately January has been very dry, putting a significant dent in our season," said DWR Director Karla Nemeth. "A return to wet weather is critical for our season's success and it will take many more storms to make up the deficit

and further boost water supply deliveries."

Despite the dry conditions, California has effectively managed its reservoirs to keep storage above average for this time of year. Lake Oroville, the State Water Project's largest reservoir, is currently at 127 percent of average for this time of year. San Luis Reservoir, which is jointly operated by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, is at 102 percent of average for this time of year.

Reservoirs in Southern California are also near or above their historical averages.

Each year, the department provides State Water Project allocation forecasts based on available water storage, projected water supply, and water demands. Allocations are updated

monthly as snowpack, rainfall, and runoff information is assessed, with a final allocation typically determined in May or June.

As the winter progresses, if California sees an increase in rain and snowfall, the allocation forecast may increase. Learn more about how the State Water Project allocation process works at <https://water.ca.gov/News/Blog/2025/Jan-25/Get-the-Facts-About-the-State-Water-Project-Allocation>.

The allocation forecast notice to State Water Contractors and historical data on SWP allocations are available at <https://water.ca.gov/programs/state-water-project/management/swp-water-contractors>. ★

FAIR Applauds Passage of the Laken Riley Act

Federation for American Immigration Reform News Release

WASHINGTON, D.C. (MPG) - The following statement was issued by Dan Stein, president of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR) in response to final passage of the Laken Riley Act by Congress.

"The Federation for American Immigration Reform applauds Congress for its swift action in passing the Laken Riley Act with bipartisan support. Fittingly, final passage by the House of Representatives comes eleven months to the day after the Georgia nursing student was brutally murdered by a criminal illegal alien who had been allowed to enter our country and remained at large even after being charged with serious offenses in New York City.

"The Laken Riley Act will be one of the first pieces of legislation President Trump signs into law in his new administration. In his inaugural address, the president spoke of the need to restore common sense to government, and enacting legislation that requires Immigration and Customs Enforcement to detain more criminal aliens certainly fits that description.

"It is especially heartening that the bill that emerged from the Senate Monday and passed today in the House is stronger than the original version. Led by Senators Joni Ernst (R-Iowa), Chuck Grassley (R-Iowa) and John Fetterman (D-Pa.), that chamber, by

a 75-24 margin, added key provisions from Sarah's Law to the final bill. The amendment is named for Sarah Root, another promising young woman who was killed in 2016 by an illegal alien drunk driver who was released from federal custody and allowed to run free. This added provision requires DHS to issue detainers and take into custody aliens who are charged with, arrested for, convicted of, or admit to having committed crimes that resulted in death or serious bodily injury.

"Along with the executive orders signed by President Trump on his first day in office, the bipartisan support for the Laken Riley Act gives Americans hope that enactment of other commonsense border and immigration enforcement measures, that truly protect the interest and security of the American people, can be achieved in the 119th Congress."

About FAIR

Founded in 1979, the Federation for American Immigration Reform is the country's largest immigration reform group. With over 3 million members and supporters nationwide, the Federation for American Immigration Reform fights for immigration policies that serve national interests, not special interests. The Federation for American Immigration Reform believes that immigration reform must enhance national security, improve the economy, protect jobs, preserve our environment, and establish a rule of law that is recognized and enforced. ★

Center for Environmental Health News Release

CALIFORNIA (MPG) - On Jan. 14, the non-profit watchdog Center for Environmental Health (CEH) announced new legal action against eight companies for exposing customers to Bisphenol S (BPS)—the lesser-known but also harmful chemical cousin to Bisphenol A (BPA)—in receipt paper.

Bisphenol S, like Bisphenol A, is a hormone-disrupting chemical that mimics estrogen and can disrupt the normal functioning of the body, including metabolism, growth and development and reproduction.

Bisphenol S was added to the list of chemicals known to the state of California to cause cancer and reproductive issues at the end of 2023, which allowed businesses a one-year grace period to ensure that their products either did not contain this chemical, or included a clear and reasonable warning for the presence of Bisphenol S. After Dec. 29, 2024, the Center for Environmental Health conducted testing to determine if receipt paper still included this chemical in levels that can harm human health and found eight companies in violation of California Proposition 65.

The retailers are Exxon, Walmart, Saks Off 5th, Aesop, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ross, Ace Hardware and Lowe's.

Previously, the Center for Environmental Health reached legal agreements with over 10 major retailers and suppliers of receipts, requiring that they remove Bisphenol A from their receipt thermal paper. While the receipts were reformulated to remove Bisphenol A, Center for Environmental Health's recent investigation showed the

presence of Bisphenol S.

"For more than two decades, CEH has ensured that companies and manufacturers that remove one toxic chemical from their products do not replace it with another toxic, regrettable substitute," said Kizzy Charles-Guzman, CEO at Center for Environmental Health. "These companies have the opportunity to lead by improving their product specifications so that the receipt paper they purchase is safer for their workers and customers."

In 2021, Center for Environmental Health co-created a certification program that highlights products—including thermal paper used for receipts—that do not contain harmful chemicals.

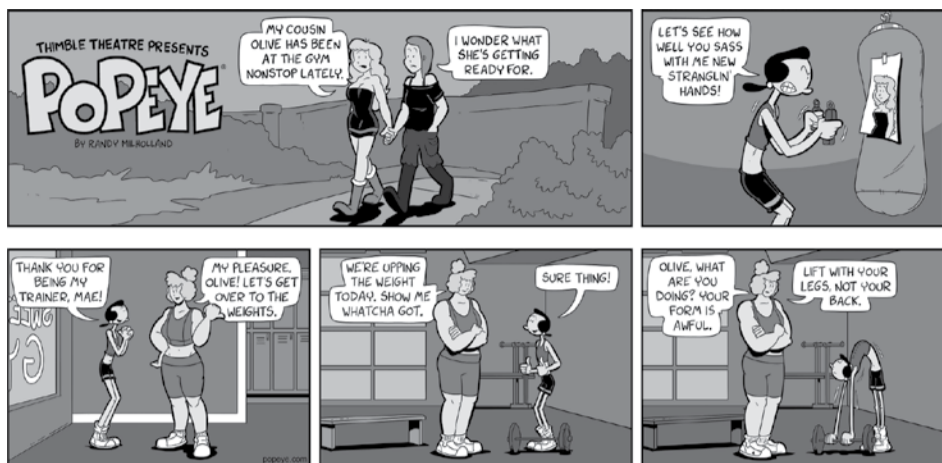
"Studies show that BPS, like BPA, can be absorbed through skin when handling receipt paper, even for short periods," said Shakooria Azimi-Gaylon, senior director of the Toxic Exposures and Pollution Prevent Program at Center for Environmental Health. "When companies know better, they must do better. We are calling on retailers to demand a healthier specification for receipt paper from their suppliers, and suppliers have an opportunity to meet this demand and certify their products under CEH and Clean Production Action's standard."

To reduce exposure to Bisphenol S, Center for Environmental Health recommends that whenever possible, consumers either decline receipts printed on thermal paper, or opt to receive receipts via email for their purchases. Store workers who must handle receipts should wear gloves if possible or avoid using alcohol-based hand cleaners before handling a receipt because it can significantly increase the absorption of Bisphenol S. ★

COMICS & PUZZLES

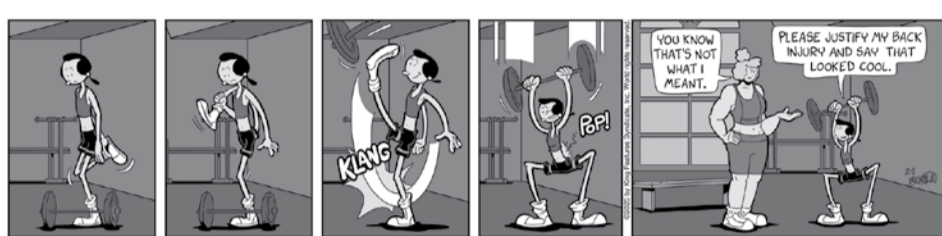
The Spats

by Jeff Pickering



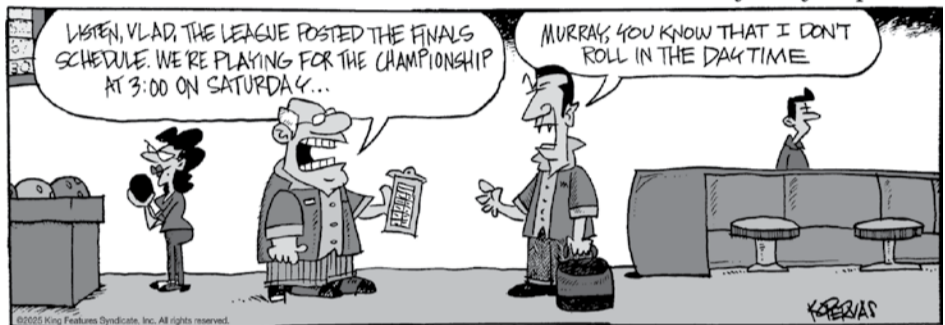
Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps



Out on a Limb

by Gary Kopervas



HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



TIGER

by BUD BLAKE



GRIN AND BEAR IT

Just Like Cats & Dogs

by Dave T. Phipps



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STATEPOINT CROSSWORD • IDIOMS

- CLUES**
- ACROSS**
- Actor Driver
 - By way of
 - Bambino
 - Oscar De La
 - *Do this backwards to try hard to please
 - Range
 - Petri dish gel
 - Celestial bear
 - K-pop home
 - *Cold one is offensive
 - Sportscaster Andrews
 - Outer space path
 - Hold title to
 - *Take this to commit to marriage
 - Bullet factory
 - Even, poetically
 - Trim
 - Sitar music
 - Kon-Tiki and such
 - Be in a cast
 - Very, in music
 - Actress Barrymore
 - *Long Day's Journey into Night" playwright
 - Between Mar. and May
 - Annulling
 - Loads
 - Compass point between NE and E
 - Dugout river ride
 - Check-in via text
 - *Sign of nervousness (2 words)
 - One up
 - Lowest female voice
 - One quark plus one antiquark
 - Toothpaste brand
 - Riddle without solution
 - Cogito ___ sum
 - *Leg's partner, price-wise
 - Make a mistake
 - Robin's house
- DOWN**
- "Eureka!"
 - *They cause no problems when they sleep
 - Nursemaid, in India
 - ___, band
 - "Il Trovatore" composer
 - Garment insert
 - Month before Nisan
 - Torus, pl.
 - Word before sesame
 - *Cupful that's not for everyone
 - Adjective derived from bulb
 - Distorts
 - *Cutting these leads to poor results
 - Prods
 - Dot follower
 - Lost, in Provence
 - Live's partner
 - Hungry
 - Voting no
 - Like Fran Drescher's voice
 - Wide open
 - Bear digs
 - Group of buffaloes
 - *Breaking it relieves tension
 - *When these meet, one can afford what they want (2 words)
 - Remote in manner
 - Football's extra point

CROSSWORD

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WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS

MPG

Teens Create Messages of Love

MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Two high school students have found a way to give back to young patients and their families at Shriners Hospital in Sacramento this Valentine's Day.

Norcal Gift From the Heart Foundation's second annual Valentine's Day Drive is underway and preparing to shower patients and their families with handmade Valentines and hundreds of toys and teen items on Feb. 14.

Oak Ridge High School Junior Aislynn Hartman, 16, and Ponderosa High School Sophomore Sophia Alonso, 15, created their nonprofit organization, the Norcal Gift From the Heart Foundation, in 2024 with the mission of encouraging philanthropy among students in their community while focusing on the specific support of children's charities.

The nonprofit Norcal Gift From the Heart organization is based out of Gold River.

"It all started with the simple idea of collecting handmade Valentines with loving messages for teens," Hartman said. "The first year, it was just the two of us and we asked our own schools to help us make Valentines but this year, more than 12 schools in four counties have agreed to either make Valentines or collect toys for Shriners."

While their first year was largely focused on all the paperwork necessary for starting a nonprofit organization and getting their IRS tax-exempt status, the teens shared that this year has been dedicated to spreading the word and encouraging other schools to help them reach their goal of collecting 1,200 Valentines.

To reach this goal, Hartman and Alonso created a Student Ambassador program, recruiting



Marina Middle School students enthusiastically join Norcal's Valentine's Day Drive for a second year. Photo courtesy of Norcal Gift From the Heart



Co-founder Sophia Alonso, right, poses with Holy Trinity student Mary Cabarral. Photo courtesy of Norcal Gift From the Heart



The girls are confident they will reach their goal of 1,200 cards this year. Photo courtesy of Norcal Gift From the Heart



Co-founder Aislynn Hartman admires cards made by students at Holy Trinity Parish School on Jan. 17. Photo courtesy of Norcal Gift From the Heart

students from area high schools and providing them with the tools and public speaking points to launch the program on their own campuses.

"Our foundation supplies pre-made valentine kits for all the schools that want to participate. The kits include things like stickers, card-making materials and sample messages," said co-founder Alonso. "This year, we also created a special QR code to link our Amazon Gift List to our website and social

media so donors could ship a toy or teen item directly to the foundation." Both girls agreed that their favorite part of the drive is reading the sincere personal messages and seeing how much effort kids put into making their cards.

"We hope the kids and teens at Shriners really feel all of our love this Valentine's Day," Hartman added.

Also feeling the love is Hartman's mother, Kellie Hartman.

"Exposure to running her own business is not new to Aislynn, who spent much of her life working at her parents' businesses growing up. Her father, Galen Hartman, owned Ground Zero Auto Body Inc., located at 11297 Coloma Road, for 25 years before transitioning to teaching auto body at Mather Center," Kellie Hartman said. "At an early age, Aislynn learned data entry and greeting customers. I own a family law office in Gold River, where Aislynn works as

a part-time law clerk. It simply made sense to start her nonprofit in Gold River, since that has always been where she spends her time outside of school and the community has always been so supportive of her family's businesses."

For more information or to get involved, go online to Norcalgiftfromtheheart.org or look for Norcal Gift From the Heart on Facebook and Instagram. The foundation accepts donations all year. ★

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Chinese/Japanese: 7:30pm (last call)

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<p>For 6 people \$95.00 • Gratuity</p> <p>3 Hours Karaoke + Pizza + Pitcher Soda + 2 Main Dishes (14 inch)</p>	<p>For 18 people 295.00 • Gratuity</p> <p>3 Hours Karaoke + 3 Pizzas + Pitcher Soda + 7 Main Dishes (14 inch)</p>
<p>For 12 people \$210.00 • Gratuity</p> <p>3 Hours Karaoke + 2 Pizzas + Pitcher Soda + 4 Main Dishes (14 inch)</p>	<p>For 28 people \$385.00 • Gratuity</p> <p>3 Hours Karaoke + 3 Pizzas + Pitcher Soda + 8 Main Dishes (14 inch)</p>
<p>For 14 people \$230.00 • Gratuity</p> <p>3 Hours Karaoke + 2 Pizzas + Pitcher Soda + 5 Main Dishes (14 inch)</p>	

Dishes To Choose From

FROZEN & FISH DEPT

<p>Sweet Rice Dumpling Skin 10 oz. 14 oz REG. \$3.99/EA \$1.99 /ea</p>	<p>Corn Dog Mozzarella Cheese 14.1 oz REG. \$9.99/EA \$5.99 /ea</p>
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WEEKLY MEAT SPECIALS

<p>Beef London Broil Top Round Roast Pulpa Pura Hormas/Ross sin Hueso \$4.99 /lb</p>	<p>Beef Ribeye Roast - Boneless Chuletón de Terresa \$7.99 /lb</p>	<p>Boneless & Skinless Chicken Thigh Meat Carne de Pollo/Deshuesada \$1.89 /lb</p>
<p>Pork Hocks Corchones de Cerdo \$1.99 /lb</p>	<p>Pork Butts Boneless Cotillas de Cerdo sin Hueso \$2.99 /lb</p>	<p>Pork Baby Back Ribs Cotillas de Cerdo \$3.99 /lb</p>

WEEKLY HALAL SPECIALS

<p>Boneless & Skinless Chicken Thigh Meat Carne de Pollo/Deshuesada \$1.99 /lb</p>	<p>Australian Lamb Lamb Stew - Bone In Hueso de Estofado/Carne Australiana \$3.49 /lb</p>	<p>Beef London Broil Top Round Roast Pulpa Pura/Hormas/Ross sin Hueso \$4.99 /lb</p>
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FRESH PRODUCE

<p>Serrano Pepper 69¢ /lb</p>	<p>Rainbow Bell Pepper 2 lbs \$3.79 /bag</p>	<p>Red Potato 79¢ /lb</p>	<p>Mini Sweet Pepper 1 lb \$2.69 /ea</p>
<p>White Dragon Fruit \$2.29 /lb</p>	<p>Comice Pear 99¢ /lb</p>	<p>Russet Potato 10 lbs Bag \$2.99 /bag</p>	<p>Seafood Mushroom 150 g 89¢ /ea</p>

AMERICAN/HISPANIC GROCERY

<p>Quaker Oats 1 Minute & Old Fashioned 42 oz \$4.99 /ea</p>	<p>Lotus Soft Enoki Licorice 7 oz \$2.99 /ea</p>	<p>Las Palmas Red Chile Sauce 19 oz \$2.29 /ea</p>	<p>Johanny's Aji Jus Sauce 8 Loz \$3.49 /ea</p>
<p>Crisco Pure Vegetable Oil 1 gallon \$13.99 /ea</p>			

ASIAN GROCERY

<p>Chaohong Coconut Milk 13.5 Loz \$1.99 /ea</p>	<p>Zhenjiang Black Vinegar 18.6 Loz \$1.69 /ea</p>	<p>Dragonfly Young Green Jackfruit 20 oz \$1.59 /ea</p>	<p>Del Monte Pineapple Juice 46 Loz \$4.29 /ea</p>
<p>Tesco Young Coconut Juice 16.9 Loz \$1.29 /ea, \$2.99 /ea + CRV</p>			

EUROPEAN GROCERY

<p>Synthesa Safflower Oil 3 liters \$16.99 /ea</p>	<p>Safal Mediterranean Grapeseed Oil 2 liters \$9.99 /ea</p>	<p>Whole Milk Pickles \$3.99 /ea</p>	<p>Indo-European Cucumbers Pickles 23 oz \$1.99 /ea</p>
<p>Tea Time Assorted Cookies 400 oz \$3.69 /ea</p>			

KOREAN/JAPANESE GROCERY

<p>Ribe Chen 5 lb \$5.99 /ea</p>	<p>Shin Ramyon 16 x 120 g \$12.99 /ea</p>	<p>Deer Antlers Red Ginseng Extract 30 x 70 ml \$19.99 /ea</p>	<p>Udon 400 g \$6.99 /ea</p>
<p>Rice Cake for Tteokguk 907 g \$1.99 /ea</p>	<p>Bingsoe Banana Milk 6 x 6.85 oz \$5.99 /ea</p>	<p>Maple Cera Search 354 g \$1.99 /ea</p>	<p>Wang Triyaki Topokki 365 g \$2.49 /ea</p>

HOUSEWARES

<p>PAON SEVEN EIGHT HAIR COLOR (REFILL ONLY) \$6.99 /ea</p>	<p>ELECTRIC BBQ GRILL \$39.99 /ea</p>	<p>KALEN WOK PAN 30 CM \$14.99 /ea</p>
<p>ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (4 CUPS) \$49.99 /ea</p>	<p>ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (10 CUPS) \$54.99 /ea</p>	<p>ELECTRIC RICE COOKER (10 CUPS) \$59.99 /ea</p>

FROZEN & FISH DEPT

<p>Frozen Clam Meat 1 lb \$4.99 /ea</p>	<p>Pan Roasted Turkey Breast \$11.99 /ea</p>
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EUROPEAN DELI

<p>Columbus Appewood Ham \$7.99 /lb</p>	<p>Kalamata Olives w/ Garlic & Pepper \$5.39 /lb</p>
<p>Cerignola Olives \$6.69 /lb</p>	<p>REG. \$7.99 /lb</p>

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