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Land Park News

VOL 34 • ISSUE 3

Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years

FEBRUARY 7, 2025

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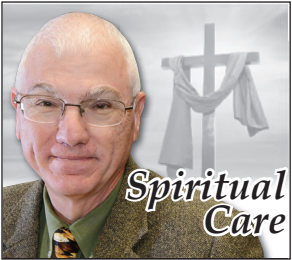
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**FOX WILL BE
BACK MARCH 7**



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**YOU NEVER
EVEN CALL ME
BY MY NAME**



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A Colorful Mind

Artist creates work from memory, flotsam and dream

*Story and photos by
Kristina Rogers*

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Judith Johnson has had many titles, a wife, mother and career woman but she has always been an artist. After retiring in 2016, Johnson sold her Austin, Texas, home and moved to Sacramento.

"There were certain things I wanted in a new place," Johnson said. "I prefer to walk and cycle. The climate is great for gardening and Sacramento is close to Lake Tahoe and so much natural beauty. And of course, there is the art community."

She found a Land Park home that met the checklist, plus the spot had incredible natural light for an artist studio. She didn't know anyone but quickly fixed that problem by volunteering at The Crocker

Continued on Page 3



Judith Johnson is in front of her outdoor piece "Front Street Promenade" commissioned by Kaiser Permanente for an ICU breakroom.

Ballot Measure Proposes Secession

California Secretary of State News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - California Secretary of State Shirley N. Weber, Ph.D., is addressing misinformation surrounding a ballot measure recently cleared for signature gathering and encouraging Californians to educate themselves about the initiative process and the measures currently in circulation.

On Jan. 23, Weber announced the approval of a new ballot initiative for signature gathering, a routine step in California's direct democracy process.

The proposed initiative, if enacted, places the following question on November 2028 ballot: "Should California leave the United States and become a free and independent country?"

For statewide initiatives, the state attorney general prepares the legal title and summary required on petitions. Once finalized, this language is sent to both the proponent and the secretary of state, officially enabling the measure to proceed.

"It has come to my attention that misinformation is being circulated, falsely claiming that I am 'organizing an effort for California to secede from the United States,'" stated Weber. "This is absolutely false. Such misinformation, whether intentional or not, is unacceptable, as it erodes trust in our democratic institutions. I urge everyone to turn to trusted sources like my office or their local elections office to verify information about ballot measures or any election-related matters."

Weber emphasized that announcements of approved ballot measures are not endorsements but a legal requirement that supports transparency and civic engagement.

"I encourage all Californians to educate themselves about the initiative process and to explore the measures currently in circulation," Weber added.

For more, see the Statewide Initiative Guide at elections.cdn.sos.ca.gov/ballot-measures/pdf/statewide-initiative-guide.pdf.

★

Sac State Kicks Off Spring Semester



Sacramento State President Luke Wood delivered his annual Spring Address to the campus community on Jan. 16, highlighting faculty success and discussing the budget challenges the University faces in the coming year. Photo by Bibiana Ortiz, Sacramento State University

**By Cynthia Hubert,
Sacramento State University**

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Even as it faces significant budget cuts, Sacramento State has much to celebrate as it approaches its Spring 2025 semester, President Luke Wood said Jan. 16.

In his annual Spring Address, Wood acknowledged challenging financial times ahead, as the university faces an 8% cut in state funding in the coming year, translating to \$45

million at Sac State. But he pointed to enrollment gains, athletic success and faculty achievements among many positive developments propelling the University forward.

The event was one of two held on Jan. 16 to kick off the new semester. In the afternoon, Wood presided over Convocation, the Sac State's formal welcome to new students. The Spring 2025 semester officially began Jan. 21.

During his Spring Address, Wood noted that graduation rates continue

to rise, and while other universities are struggling to maintain enrollment, Sac State is trending upward.

Thanks in part to partnerships with regional school and community college districts, Sac State will welcome 2,300 new scholars to campus this spring, Wood said. Those students will join a campus community that continues to value underserved communities, even as other universities downsize or cut programs dedicated

Continued on Page 2

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Sac State Kicks Off Spring 2025 Semester

Continued from Page 1

to diversity and inclusion, he added.

“We will continue to provide pathways for upward social mobility, and we will do so unapologetically, as that is a core part of our mission,” he said.

Wood also, however, acknowledged that the university is facing a tough budget situation, and “will have to do less with less.”

“We will have to identify what it is that we can’t continue to do anymore in order to reduce stress on staff and faculty,” he said. “We can’t be all things to all people in all areas, but we can be really great in the areas that we excel in.”

He devoted a significant part of his speech to honoring extraordinary faculty and staff members. Sac State soon will be classified by the Carnegie Foundation as an elite research institution that brings in tens of millions of outside dollars and awards a significant number of doctoral degrees, Wood noted.

Among the researchers Wood highlighted were Alex Pettit from the department of Physics and Astronomy, who has received a \$230,625 National Science Foundation award for his research in modeling spiral galaxies; Praveen Meduri, in Electrical and Electronic Engineering, who received a \$344,000 National Science Foundation grant to study ways of improving student outcomes in online STEM courses; and Nate Dutra from the Deaf Studies program, who won a \$3.4 million grant from the National Institutes of Health for work on

language acquisition among Deaf and hard-of-hearing students.

Wood also called attention to faculty members who have produced journal articles, published books and served as media experts on important topics.

“The future is bright because of all of you,” the president said. “You embody the Hornet spirit by ensuring that we can advance our mission day in, and day out.”

Later that day, the University held its semi-annual Convocation to welcome new students starting this semester. The event marks the formal beginning of students’ academic careers at Sacramento State, serving as a bookend to the Commencement ceremony that marks the completion of their degree.

Presiding over the ceremony, Wood frequently referred to the University as “Our Sacramento State,” saying it belongs to the community, its alumni, faculty and staff.

“And most importantly it belongs to our nearly 31,000 students who are on their pathway to creating a better life for themselves and their family. That includes you, here today,” Wood said. “This University belongs to you. You are not a guest at this moment, this day. This is your hive. This is your home.”

Wood also offered advice to incoming students. “Get involved on campus,” he said. “Remember that half of what you learn at Sacramento State occurs outside of the classrooms, and laboratories, and studios, and the other half occurs inside those

classrooms, laboratories and studios. You have the opportunity to get involved outside the classrooms.”

He urged students to use their time at Sac State to figure out their life’s purpose. “It’s not really just about your degree,” Wood said. “It’s not even about your goals to become a scientist, business leader, health care professional, policy maker, educator, partner or community leader. It’s about what you do when you’re empowered with that title or that role to change the world.”

“Embrace every good and challenging experience as an instructive lesson on how we can and should change the world and lead this city, this university and this world.”

During the ceremony, students and family and supporters pinned each other with special Sac State pins, a symbolic acknowledgement of their induction into the Hornet Family and the role parents, friends and other loved ones play in students’ success.

Alyssa Dillingham, 21, a transfer student from American River College who will be studying Childhood Development, attended Convocation with her parents.

“Coming from ARC, we didn’t get to experience things like this,” Dillingham said. “This was a different way to start the school year off with good vibes.”

Her parents, Joe and Bennae, said they were “beyond proud” to attend the ceremony with their daughter.

“We want to celebrate her and honor her hard work,” Bennae Dillingham said. ★

Black History Month Discussed



Black History Month was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in February 1926. Photo courtesy of asalh.org

By Association for the Study of African American Life and History, asalh.org

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Black History Month is an annually observed month-long celebration of African American life, history and culture.

Founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson in February 1926, what was formerly known as Negro History Week became a month-long celebration as a way to promote, research, preserve, interpret, and disseminate information about Black life, History, and culture to the global community.

The relevance of February goes back to 1926, when Dr. Woodson first established “Negro History Week” during the second week of February. And why that week?

Because it encompasses the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass, both men being great American symbols of freedom.

More importantly, Dr. Woodson chose them for reasons of tradition. Since Lincoln’s assassination in 1865, the black community, along with other Republicans, had been celebrating the fallen President’s birthday. And since the late 1890s, black communities across the country had been celebrating Douglass’. Well aware of the pre-existing celebrations, Woodson built Negro History Week around traditional days of commemorating the black past.

The 2025 Black History Month theme, African Americans and Labor, focuses on the various and profound ways that work and working of all kinds,

free and unfree, skilled, and unskilled, vocational and voluntary, intersect with the collective experiences of Black people.

Indeed, work is at the very center of much of Black history and culture. Be it the traditional agricultural labor of enslaved Africans that fed Low Country colonies, debates among Black educators on the importance of vocational training, self-help strategies and entrepreneurship in Black communities, or organized labor’s role in fighting both economic and social injustice, Black people’s work has been transformational throughout the U.S., Africa, and the Diaspora.

The 2025 Black History Month theme, “African Americans and Labor,” sets out to highlight and celebrate the potent impact of this work. ★



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A Colorful Mind



Here is Judith Johnson's self-portrait with her mother and grandmother gazing back from a mirror called "Reflecting."



Shown here is "Bike Lane #3," subtitled "Be the Motor."

Continued from Page 1

and Verge Arts. Today, art is the center of her world and clearly displayed in rooms all over her home and also hiding in closets, the garage and under her bed.

Johnson's style is an orderly medley of color, pattern and memory. She gives common items with cherished memories new meaning in bright acrylics and assemblages. An assemblage is a collage of repurposed items creating a new image. Her kitchen table is where Johnson sketches her ideas in winter.

She points to a sketch, "Barnicle Betty's Heart." The high relief piece contained in an emergency first-aid box hangs in her living room. She added her grandmother's gloves, rusty pliers and other items.

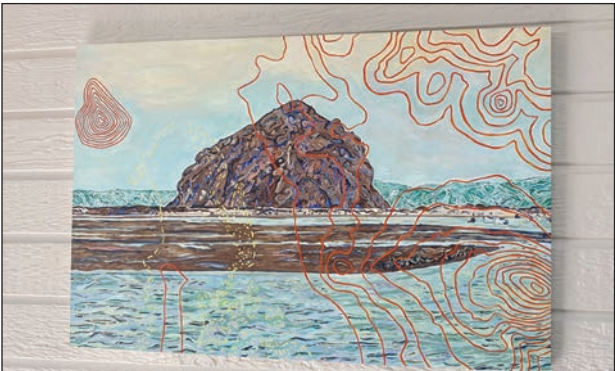
"I call it 'do it yourself heart surgery.' The barnacles look like a heart to me. It reminded me of an old song; Hey girls bring rusty pliers and pull this tooth because all men are liars and that's the truth. "

Johnson has a series of assemblage-type work involving discarded junk she finds along the local paths she cycles with her boyfriend. A sculpture, part of the "Bike Lane Series" is a whimsical treat; "The Snake Goddess's" backside is a spine-painted bike seat and she is adorned in bottle caps, wires and snakeskin patterns. "Bike Lane #3" is a woman's face with discarded CDs for glasses.

Johnson is also an outdoor enthusiast and completed a piece inspired by her frequent walks along the tree-lined river. It was commissioned



"The Snake Goddess" assemblage is next to a prior sketch.



"A Walk in the Park - Morro Rock" is part of Johnson's "Walk in the Park" map-inspired series.



Judith Johnson's living room displays part of an unnamed series, from left, "Necklaces," "Strands" and "Kukla."

by Kaiser Permanente and will hang in an ICU breakroom.

"I think it will be a nice colorful piece for the doctors who work in ICU, which must be terrible at times," Johnson said.

After receiving an arts degree at the University of North Texas, Johnson painted murals for restaurants. A minor in technical theater had her freelancing at the Performing Arts Center in Austin.

"When you get an art degree, you end up doing weird jobs," she chuckled.

Johnson also worked as a cartographer before computers were used in the field.

"Map making was done with India Ink on Mylar film back then," Johnson said. "If you made a mistake, you started over."

When Johnson married and began a family, her priorities changed: "I cobbled together an existence but I didn't want my kids to have to live with the bohemian lifestyle"

She found a steady career as a criminal investigator in financial crime

at the Texas Attorney General's Office, which lasted 30 years. During that time, her family found out her son had a brain tumor and worked through several emotionally draining and expensive surgeries. The good news is that her son is an adult and doing well today.

Johnson found a way to combine her experiences in her artwork. Investigating stacks of stale financial data honed her ability to see patterns and pinpoint the one aspect that didn't fit to create a successful case. Her cartography past is reflected in a series of paintings of California's central coast. "Morrow Bay" hangs in her studio. Another piece of Yosemite Falls was displayed and sold at the Crocker Kingsley Blue Line Exhibition in Roseville.

Johnson keeps boxes of bits and bobs of family mementos to draw from. These often give her ideas for new works. An example is a painting of Johnson looking into a mirror where her mother and grandmother look back. Patterns associated with wallpaper and fractured images of her childhood float about the piece.

Who doesn't have a non-descript, cherished item from someone they loved, an item that brings back a feeling or a pattern emerging in their own dreams at times? Maybe this is what viewers can relate to the most.

As she gazes at the grey retaining wall outside her studio, Johnson said, "I see floating people on the wall in an ocean or something."

Judith Johnson will get to painting the wall when the flotsam drifts in place in her colorful mind. Follow Judith Johnson and where her art will be exhibited at www.judith-johnson-artist.com. ★



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Remember the three P's for what can be flushed in the toilet: Pee, Poo and Paper. Photo by Pixaby

Only Flush the Three P's, City Advises

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - Disinfecting wipes, baby wipes and paper towels should never be flushed.

Flushing wipes can clog plumbing systems leading to expensive repairs. Wipes don't break down in sewer or septic systems and can damage your home's internal plumbing as well as local wastewater collection systems.

Remember the three P's for what can be flushed: Pee, Poo and Paper. These are the only things that should be flushed.

The following items should be put in the trash and never down the toilet: baby wipes, surface cleaning and antibacterial wipes,

facial or makeup wipes, hand/face towelettes, body/spa wipes and facial masks, toilet cleaning wipes and paper towels.

Wet wipes when flushed make their way into private sewer laterals, septic systems and sewer lines and can cause extensive harm and result in overflows and

damage.

Once wipes make it to the sewer collection system, they can tangle and form large clumps that attract fat, oil and grease. This can result in blockages and sewer spills.

Small microfibers and microplastics can shed off wipes.

These fibers can't be captured and can make their way into the environment.

Clumps can damage sewer pumps or end up at wastewater treatment plants, which can result in significant damage to sewer infrastructure. ★

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State Water Project Increases 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



On Jan. 28, the Department of Water Resources announced an update to the State Water Project allocation forecast for 2025, increasing the allocation to 20 percent of requested supplies, up from 15 percent in December. Photo courtesy of Pixabay

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 water.ca.gov/programs/state-water-project/management/swp-water-contractors. ★

ABOUT TOWN

- Jazzercise Open House Feb. 22-23**

Promenade Jazzercise Studio will host an open house from 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. Saturday and Sunday, Feb. 22-23.

Along with sign-up specials, refreshments and door prizes, visitors can sample class formats including Power Sculpt and Cardio Sculpt. Bring light hand-held weights and an exercise mat.

Promenade Jazzercise Studio is at 7485 Rush River Drive Ste. 630 (next to Device and Goodwill).

For more information, call 916-410-8651 or visit jazzercise.com.
- Area Museums Offer Plenty of Experiences**

Must-see and must-do experiences and special activations offered by local museums include the following:

California Automobile Museum – Take a ride in a museum car during Sunday Drives, the third Sunday of every month. With paid museum admission, take a ride from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Details at calautomuseum.org/

California State Railroad Museum– The Chinese Railroad Workers’ Experience offers visitors a view of the Chinese workers who built the western portion of the nation’s first Transcontinental Railroad. Details at californiarailroad.museum/.
- Elks Lodge Calendar of Events**

Elk’s Lodge Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday; \$15 tax included. Best deal in town.

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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 Recce, 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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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 under-way and preparing to shower patients and their families with handmade Valentines and hun-dreds of toys and teen items on Feb. 14.

Oak Ridge High School Junior Aislynne Hartman, 16, and Ponderosa High School Sophomore Sophia Alonso, 15, created their nonprofit organi-zation, 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 chil-dren’s charities.

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

“It all started with the sim-ple 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 paper-work necessary for starting a nonprofit organization and get-ting their IRS tax-exempt status, the teens shared that this year has been dedicated to spread-ing 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 Cabaral. 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 Aislynne 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 partici-pate. The kits include things like stickers, card-making materi-als 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 founda-tion.” 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 Aislynne, who spent much of her life work-ing 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, Aislynne learned data entry and greeting customers. I own a family law office in Gold River, where Aislynne 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. ★

A’s Announce 2025 Promotional Schedule

Major League Baseball News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA - The A’s 2025 promotional schedule for their inaugural season at Sutter Health Park will feature 14 giveaway items including three bobble-heads, four fireworks shows and more. Single-game tickets will go on sale on Friday, Jan. 31.

Opening Series Giveaways. Every fan who attends the A’s inaugural game at Sutter Health Park on March 31 against the Cubs will receive a green-and-white trucker hat donning the new Sacramento jersey patch that the team will wear this season in addition to a Rickey Henderson rally towel.

The following day, every fan in attendance will receive a 2025 magnet schedule and on the final day of the opening series, each fan will receive a Rickey Henderson t-shirt in honor of the greatest A’s player of all time.

Player Bobbleheads. The A’s are giving away three bobbleheads throughout the course of the season to celebrate the exciting talent on the field in 2025. On Sunday, June 8, fans will receive a Home Run Counter Bobblehead of 2024 Silver Slugger Award-winner Brent Rooker. Two

weeks later, on Sunday, June 22, fans will receive a Mason Miller bobblehead in honor of the flamethrowing closer’s All-Star 2024 campaign. Finally, a Lawrence Butler bobblehead will be given away Thursday, July 10, which also happens to be the superstar’s 25th birthday.

Wearables Galore. The rest of the give-aways feature a plethora of wearable items, including an A’s basketball jersey on April 26, a straw hat on May 6, a cooler bag on May 22, an A’s back-pack just in time for the back-to-school rush on Aug. 3, a hat on Aug. 26, a t-shirt on Sept. 14, and a crewneck sweat-shirt on Sept. 26.

Four Fireworks Days. The 2025 home schedule will feature four super-sized fire-works shows. Following the games on June 7 vs. the Orioles, July 4 vs. the Giants, Aug. 16 vs. the Angels, and Sept. 27 vs. the Royals, fans will be treated to a fireworks display they won’t want to miss.

Heritage Nights Return. The A’s will bring back heritage nights for the 2025 season beginning with Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Night on May 20. African American Heritage Night will be held on June 19 to honor Juneteenth, and Sept. 23 will mark Hispanic Heritage Night. ★

Saving the Environment at Kings Games

Sacramento Kings News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Kings and Golden 1 Center unveiled a new PATH Grab-and-Go location, integrating Amazon’s Just Walk Out technology to enhance the fan experience. This innovative store debuted at the Jan. 22 game against the Golden State Warriors and will be available during all Kings home games, as well as most concerts and events at Golden 1 Center.

“Sustainability is a core value of Golden 1 Center, and this Grab-and-Go location not only provides fans with convenient access to PATH’s eco-friendly aluminum bottles but also reflects our shared dedication to environmental responsibility,” said Sacramento Kings President of Business Operations John Rinehart. “By also adding PATH refillable water stations, we are furthering our commitment to reduce waste and protect our environment for future



Grab-and-Go location at Golden One Center provides fans with convenient access to PATH's eco-friendly aluminum bottles containing still purified water. Photo by Sacramento Kings

generations.” “Golden 1 Center is setting the standard for convenience and sustain-ability in sports venues,” said PATH Partner Cedric Benaroch. “This innova-tive Grab-and-Go location not only makes it easier for fans to enjoy PATH’s sustainable aluminum bot-tles, but it also highlights our shared commitment to enhancing the fan experi-ence while prioritizing the planet. Additionally, the PATH refillable water sta-tions allow fans to stay hydrated while reducing single-use waste, reinforcing our mission to create lasting change.”

The new PATH Grab-and-Go location will offer a selection of beverages, including co-branded

PATH aluminum water bottles, featuring a sleek, redesigned black finish. These lightweight bot-tles contain still purified water with electrolytes for taste and serve as a styl-ish, reusable souvenir for fans. PATH water has been available at Golden 1 Center since the 2021-2022 season, and as part of this partnership, water refill stations presented by PATH will also be avail-able throughout the arena.

Shopping at the PATH Grab-and-Go is fast and simple. Fans start by scan-ning their credit card or mobile wallet at the gate to enter. Once inside, they can grab what they need and simply walk out. Payment is automatically processed as they leave. ★

Aggies Post Top Fall Quarter Academic Marks

UC Davis Athletics News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - Tying for the sixth-highest quarterly GPA in Division I history, UC Davis student-athletes again set the standard in the classroom posting a fall quarter cumulative GPA of 3.25.

The Aggie women's team tied

for its fourth highest Division I GPA with a mark of 3.35 and the UC Davis men posted a 3.07 GPA tying for the eighth highest mark in the Division I era.

An impressive 12.95 percent of Aggie student-athletes finished with a quarterly GPA of 4.0, with 89 Aggies breaching the mark during the fall quarter. 272 Aggies finished with a

3.5+ quarterly GPA (39.59 per-cent) and 476 student-athletes posted a mark of 3.0+ GPA, encompassing 69.29 percent of all student-athletes.

Women's golf posted the highest quarterly team GPA with a mark of 3.68, tying for the program's fourth-highest GPA in Division I history. Men's cross country led the men's teams

with a 3.25 GPA (fifth high-est in Division I) and that mark was also the seventh highest posted by an Aggie Division I men's team.

AGGIE NOTES Women's water polo had its highest team GPA of the Division I era with a mark of 3.51. Men's basketball had the program's second highest

GPA of the Division 1 era with a 3.14. Baseball had the pro-gram's fourth highest team GPA of the Division 1 era with a 3.05. Women's tennis had the program's fourth highest team GPA of the Division 1 era with a 3.51. Women's lacrosse had the program's fifth highest team GPA of the Division 1 era with a 3.44. ★

Doggie Day Out Program Relunched

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Front Street Animal Shelter has relaunched 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



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

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, visit cityofsacramento.gov/doggiedayout. ★

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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. ★

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City Debuts Free Tool for Market Research About Sacramento Small Businesses

City of Sacramento News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The City of Sacramento has launched SizeUp Sacramento, a free innovative online tool designed to provide small business owners and aspiring entrepreneurs with valuable market research and data insights to support decision-making in today's competitive market.

To introduce the tool and highlight its features, the city's Office of Innovation and Economic Development hosted a virtual event on Thursday, Jan. 30 on Zoom. The event included remarks from city and business leaders, as well as a live demonstration of the program's capabilities.

"Sacramento is building a vibrant and inclusive economy that supports

entrepreneurs, attracts investment, and fosters community growth," said Vice-Mayor Karina Talamantes, who will represent the city at the virtual event. "By investing in innovative tools and our small business community, we're investing in Sacramento's economic future."

"In today's data-driven economy, access to actionable information is vital

for small business success," added Assistant City Manager Mike Jasso. "This software ensures that every entrepreneur in Sacramento has data to compete and thrive."

The program empowers entrepreneurs to develop strong business plans, identify growth opportunities and improve operations.

These efforts drive business success while strengthening the local

economy through job creation and innovation.

With the new tool, Sacramento small business owners can analyze their business performance with objective, industry-specific data; identify potential customers, suppliers, and business opportunities; optimize marketing strategies to effectively reach target audiences; and understand the spending habits and demographics

of local consumers.

SizeUp Sacramento is powered by SizeUp, a nationally acclaimed tool that earned a first-place award from the U.S. Department of Commerce for its effectiveness in enhancing business competitiveness and fostering job creation.

Learn more at cityofsacramento.gov/city-manager/office/BusinessAssistance/business-data. ★

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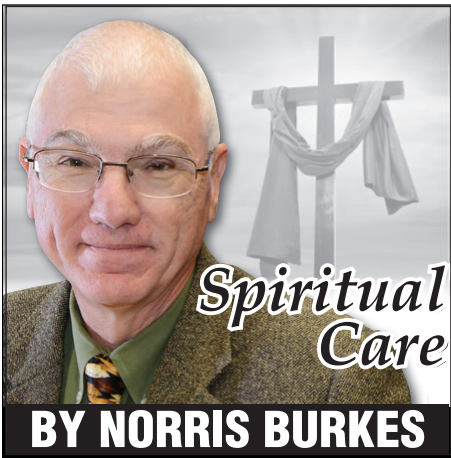
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You Never Even Call Me By My Name



During my adolescent years, I rarely introduced myself with verbal clarity. My soft introductions were hard to hear and communicated more doubt than any kind of confident identity.

I'd try to tell people that my name was Norris, but they'd often respond with a one-word question. "What?"

If I repeated my introduction, my inquisitors only became more frustrated. "What? Did you say Morris?"

Even if they heard "Norris," they might say, "Yes, but what's your first name?" The assumption was that Norris could only be a surname.

So, by the time I graduated from high school in 1975, I'd had enough of the confusion. I anticipated an opportunity to end it when I accepted a summer job at a church conference center outside Santa Fe, New Mexico.

A few weeks later, I entered the grounds ready for a change. The first person I met introduced himself and I responded with the first syllable of my middle name, "Ed." I was not only using my middle name, but I'd adopted the abbreviated version.

I still remember his reply – "What? Did you say Fred?"

It was quickly apparent that my lack of confidence was still causing me to mumble my name. "Ed" rolled off my tongue with no more clarity than did "Norris."

By the end of the summer, I'd already received a lot of grief from my mother who constantly reminded me that she wouldn't have named me Norris if she had intended for me to go by Ed. I returned to Norris.

Out in Northern New Mexico, the name experiment seemed harmless enough. After all, it was only a summer job. Since I was headed for Baylor University in Texas, I resolved to leave my AKA-Ed life in New Mexico's high desert.

Not so fast. I wouldn't be the only staff member from the camp headed for Baylor.

Imagine the surprise on the face of the freshman girl I escorted to the homecoming bonfire when we were greeted by two of my former New Mexico coworkers who called me "Ed."

In the weeks that followed, my old camp friends continually called me Ed, compounding the confusion among my new Baylor friends. My roommates were further puzzled when they brought in mail addressed to "Ed Burkles."

During my sophomore year, David Allen Coe's, "You Never Even Call Me by My Name," became a favorite song. By my senior year, I'd persuaded all of my friends to call me Norris once again – with only one exception.

That exception was the especially spirited blonde I'd met in that New Mexico camp named Becky. Through four years of college, my roommates teased me at every mail call. "Yoo-hoo, Ed!" they'd croon in a falsetto voice. "She wrote you another letter."

It took a lot of persuasion to get this girl to call me Norris. She preferred the name Ed and it seemed as though she'd never concede. However, at our wedding in 1980, she finally made a pledge to forever call me Norris.

"Norris," she said, "I take thee to be my wedded husband. To have and to hold, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, till death do us part."

Happy 45th anniversary, sweetheart. You've always known who I am, even though I often lack a clue. Your love changes me because it honors the best in me.

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Milstein's tenure with the city also includes serving as the director of the finance department from 2008 to 2017, where she was responsible for the

The council is conducting a national search for a permanent city manager, with Milstein serving in the interim. ★

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