



**Kiwanis Club  
Presents 11th Annual  
Crab Feed**

PAGE 3

**Public Access,  
Guided Hikes Open  
at Deer Creek Hills**

PAGE 2



# RIVER VALLEY TIMES

41ST YEAR • ISSUE 4      *Serving Rancho Murieta, Sloughouse, Wilton*      FEBRUARY 21, 2025

**SEE  
INSIDE**

**LAX PRACTICES  
BY GATE OFFICERS  
DISCUSSED**



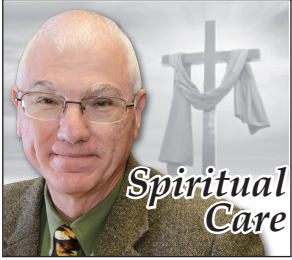
PAGE 7

**MOTORIST RESCUED  
FROM FLOODED  
SCOTT ROAD**



PAGE 10

**CHAPLAIN GETS A  
CLINT EASTWOOD  
LESSON**



PAGE 10



Scan our QR Code for a  
direct link to our online edition!

PRSRD STD.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
CARMICHAEL, CA  
PERMIT NO. 350  
OR CURRENT  
POSTAL CUSTOMER

## CSD Covers Water Tank Issues



The Rio Oso water tank cannot adequately serve current and future customers. The Rancho Murieta Community Services District Improvements Committee discussed a recommendation to build a new water tank at its Feb. 4 meeting. Courtesy photo

**By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times  
Reporter**

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - Aspects of the community's water supply were key topics when the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Improvements Committee met on Feb. 4.

The first topic of note was a recommendation to improve the efficiency of the two existing tanks and to construct a new water tank. These enhancements would benefit both current customers and future development.

A second topic that became a debate was whether to finalize the draft

of the Integrated Master Water Plan. See the separate story in this issue.

The committee also discussed other infrastructure-related issues, including the dashed hope that the Sacramento County Water Agency could provide the community with a second water source.

The Improvements Committee is made up of two board members, Directors Randy Jenco and John Merchant; Operations Manager Eric Houston; General Manager Mimi Morris, who is currently on leave; and other staff. The committee examines infrastructure issues in depth and makes

recommendations to the entire board.

### Water Tanks

The water tank recommendations were included in a draft report by Joe Domenichelli, the district's contract engineer. Although Domenichelli did not attend the meeting, Houston explained his recommendations.

The district currently has two water tanks. The pressurized Rio Oso Tank, which holds 1.2 million gallons, serves houses north of the second Guadalupe Drive. It also has been designated as the water tank for the already approved 198-lot Residences subdivision

near Stonehouse Park and for the 116-lot Village H in the proposed Rancho North subdivision. The 3-million-gallon Van Vleck Tank uses a gravity system to serve the remainder of the community.

The primary short-term recommendation in Domenichelli's report was to add two valves to enhance the existing water distribution system. One valve would directly connect the two tanks, allowing water to flow between them. Domenichelli explained that this would leverage excess storage in the Van Vleck tank to help offset the Rio Oso tank

*Continued on page 4*

## RMA Board Appoints Haviland to Fill Vacancy



John Wyly Haviland is filling a vacancy on the Rancho Murieta Association Board. The board appointed him to the post on Feb. 13. Photo by Gail Bullen

**By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times  
Reporter**

### RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)

- The Rancho Murieta Association Board has appointed John Wyly Haviland to fill the board vacancy left by Renee Bechthold, who recently resigned for health reasons.

The board selected Haviland after interviewing two candidates during a special meeting on Feb. 13. The other applicant was Matt Bingham.

Two other noteworthy topics surfaced during the meeting. One director indicated that the board had authorized nearly \$60,000 in administrative bonuses without informing the membership. The other was a board member's observation that, while residents rarely attend meetings or engage with the board, many quickly express strong opinions behind a keyboard.

Haviland, a retired prison warden, moved to the community with his wife during the pandemic and has since attended nearly every board meeting. He has served on the Rancho Murieta Association Recreation Committee and was recently appointed to the Rancho Murieta Association Compliance Committee.

Bingham is a realtor and teaches Brazilian jiu jitsu classes at the Rancho Murieta Association Building. He and his wife founded the Cosumnes River Activities League to support local youth.

When asked for comment after the meeting, Haviland said he was honored to fill the seat vacated by Bechthold.

"I look forward to serving this community and will do my utmost to continue the outstanding work she has done," he said. "I am thankful for the support and encouragement of my friends."

*Continued on page 2*

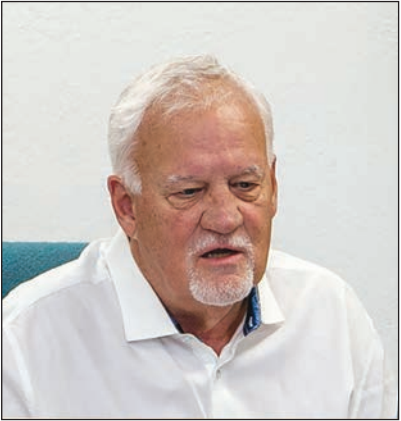
## Water Plan Finalization Debated at CSD Meeting

**By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times Reporter**

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - A proposal to finalize the draft Integrated Water Master Plan sparked intense debate at the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Improvements Committee meeting on Feb. 4.

Although the committee decided to revisit the topic at its March meeting, the February discussion highlighted key concerns about the study, which is intended to assess the community's current and future water needs in light of climate change and drought.

The committee also discussed an engineer's recommendation to improve the efficiency of the two existing water tanks and construct a new one. These enhancements would benefit current customers and future development. See the separate story



Director Randy Jenco, speaking at the Feb. 4 meeting of the Rancho Murieta Community Services Improvements Committee, proposes that the draft of the Integrated Water Master Plan be finalized. Photo by Gail Bullen

in this issue.

The Improvements Committee is made up of two board members: Directors Randy Jenco and John Merchant, Operations Manager Eric

Houston, General Manager Mimi Morris, who is currently on leave; and other staff. The committee examines infrastructure issues in depth and makes recommendations to the entire board.

### Background

Updating the IWMP became a concern in 2022 when the Rancho North subdivision, proposing 697 lots, updated its application with Sacramento County planners in March. Comments by the late John Sullivan, who represented the developers, increased the sense of urgency.

Although the district extensively advertised its request for proposals to develop an IWMP, it received only one bid: a joint proposal from Maddaus Water Management in California and Adkins Engineering in Oregon. In December 2022, the

*Continued on page 4*



# Public Access, Guided Hikes Open at Deer Creek Hills

**Sacramento Valley Conservancy News Release**

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)** - Are you feeling overwhelmed by the hustle and bustle of daily life? Do you find yourself craving an escape from the everyday routine to reconnect with the great outdoors? Located north of Ranch Murieta, Deer Creek Hills Preserve is the perfect escape. Beginning on Feb. 1, Deer Creek Hills opened to the public on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., weather permitting, through May. With over 100 outings annually, it's the ideal destination for nature enthusiasts and families. Whether you're in the mood for a leisurely walk or a more challenging hike or run, the site offers a variety of options. Choose from four self-guided trails, ranging in difficulty from the family-friendly 1-mile Family Loop to a more challenging 6-mile Barn Pond Loop, which offers stunning views of a working cattle ranch. Those who prefer guided experiences

can join the docents every Saturday. Docent-led hikes have a different theme every Saturday and cover various topics, including fungi, birding, geology, yoga, ukuleles, and much more. Equestrians rejoice. Beginning on Feb.1st and continuing every other Saturday, bring your horse, arrive by 10 a.m. and finish around 2 p.m. Experience the beauty of Deer Creek Hills from horseback. Space for activities is limited, so make sure to RSVP online through the event calendar at [sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/events/](https://sacramentovalleyconservancy.org/events/). Don't miss an incredible opportunity to explore one of Sacramento Valley's most beautiful natural spaces. See you on the trails. Deer Creek Hills Preserve is managed by the Sacramento Valley Conservancy, an accredited land trust and local non-profit. At 4,600 acres, the preserve is Sacramento County's largest open space preserve and working cattle ranch.



A group hikes one of the four trails through Deer Creek Hills Preserve. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Valley Conservancy

# RMA Board Appoints Haviland to Fill Vacancy

Continued from page 1

**Haviland's Qualifications**  
In his candidate statement, Haviland said he understands the challenges and opportunities of a homeowner's association, having lived in three distinctly different gated communities.

"As a warden, I was responsible for running a large facility that functioned as a small, self-contained city," he wrote. "I am highly trained and experienced in employment law, staffing, budgeting, and strategic planning, as well as the day-to-day operation of a multi-faceted organization."

Haviland was the warden at California State Prison, Solano, in Vacaville. He previously worked as a budget analyst for the California Department of Corrections and as a program analyst for alcohol and drug programs.

He holds a Bachelor of Science in Management Information Systems from California State University, Sacramento, and is also a California State University Leadership Institute graduate.

In addition to his involvement with Rancho Murieta Association committees, Haviland has served as a board member for the ETC and volunteered with the Hiram Johnson High School Key Club. He also served as board chairman for the Western Railway Museum in Suisun City and has volunteered with the Friends of the Vacaville Libraries Book Sale and Habitat for Humanity.



Elections Supervisor Jim Moore, left, administers the oath of office to Mike Haviland. Photos by Gail Bullen

**Candidate Interviews**  
The candidate interviews included one board question and individual questions from the directors.

Board President Patrick O'Hern asked both candidates what they viewed as Rancho Murieta's major issues and how they would address those challenges.

Haviland identified the security of the community's amenities and facilities as the biggest challenge. He noted that the board is already addressing this issue by forming the Perimeter Security Ad Hoc Committee, which he fully supports.

He cited the community's aging infrastructure, which is nearly 50 years old, as the second major challenge.

Bingaman agreed that security is a significant concern, though he noted it wasn't the primary reason he chose to run for the board vacancy. He emphasized the need for a comprehensive strategy to engage the community's

youth, who often feel bored. Bingaman said that he works with young people through his involvement at Rancho Murieta Community Church and as a martial arts instructor. He and his wife also founded the nonprofit Cosumnes River Activities League to provide meaningful activities and connections for local youth.

Bingaman said he hoped to step into Bechthold's role as chair of the Recreation Committee to bring more value to local families. "So, I will put it on the table right now. If that would not be the primary focus of my role I wouldn't be the best candidate," he said. "But if it is recreation focused, I feel like I am a natural for that position."

Director Chris Childs began his question by noting that few residents regularly attend board meetings or engage with the board. "We live in a community with a lot of people who have a lot of strong opinions, and

they're really not afraid to voice it on a keyboard," he said. "They like to be keyboard lawyers from a distance."

Childs said he was pleased that both men had applied for the vacancy but asked why they had chosen not to run for the board in the last election in November.

Bingaman said the timing wasn't right. "The stars did not align at that time, but I feel now is the time to step up," he said.

Haviland said he chose not to run because he wouldn't have been able to attend candidates' night. After four years of regularly attending board meetings, he felt confident in the two incumbents running for reelection. "Even if I didn't run, I knew we would have a great board."

Director John Van Doren expressed his hope that the candidate who wasn't selected would continue to stay involved and volunteer in the community. "I'm going to refer to Monty Python, and I am going to ask you what is



Candidates Mike Haviland, left, and Matt Bingaman answered questions at the board meeting.

your favorite color."

Haviland said his favorite color was purple because it was his grandmother's favorite. After her passing, she left him some money, which he used to buy a purple motorcycle in her honor. "She was a charter member of Sacramento Cycle," he said. "That's a woman's motorcycle group."

Bingaman said he didn't have he didn't have a favorite color. "They are all beautiful and serve a purpose on the spectrum," he said. "When a rainbow comes out, we can see them all at once."

Director Danny Carrillo said that one of his primary concerns is transparency. He presented a hypothetical scenario where a board approves approximately \$60,000 in administrative bonuses but does not openly disclose the expenditure to its members. "In your opinion, does this scenario reflect transparency?" he asked.

Bingaman said that, based on the limited facts Carrillo provided, the scenario reflected a lack of transparency.

Carrillo responded: "Amen. Thank you."

Haviland agreed with Bingaman but noted that confidentiality rules can sometimes come into play.

Director Scott Adams responded to Carrillo's

question by explaining that the Davis-Stirling Act sets guidelines for HOA board activities, "including activities that the board is obligated not to share for a variety of reasons."

When Adams asked if that information would change their answers, both candidates said it would, citing their own experiences with confidentiality.

Under the Davis-Stirling Act in California, homeowners association (HOA) boards have the authority to manage personnel matters, including decisions about employee compensation and bonuses, without requiring approval from the membership, according to Davis-Sterling.com, a website maintained by a law firm specializing in HOA regulations.

Director Tom Reimers said the candidates had answered his questions.

O'Hern asked each director to submit a paper ballot. Per Elections Inspector Jim Moore, one ballot with marks for both candidates was discarded. O'Hern did not announce the final vote tally.

After Moore administered the oath of office to Haviland, O'Hern congratulated him and adjourned the meeting.

*This story is also available online at [therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com)*



**Rancho Murieta**  
HOMES & LAND



Rancho Murieta, a 3,500-acre country-club community, is an oasis of emerald fairways and manicured greens, built along the scenic banks of the Cosumnes River. It encompasses five lakes, greenbelts, rolling hills and stately oaks.

[rmhl.acceleragent.net](http://rmhl.acceleragent.net) • 7281 Lone Pine Drive, Suite D102, Rancho Murieta, CA, 95683

Karen is a Presidential Award Holder with the Masters Club of the Sacramento Association of Realtors for over 37 years.

This is the most prestigious award given.

Thank you to all of our clients in 2023 for another successful year.

BRE #00670687



**Rancho Murieta's Top Realtor for 44 Years and counting.**

\*Source: MLS for residential, Not including "Residential Income"

**Karen Hoberg,**  
**Broker/Owner**  
**(916) 947-6910**



**By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times  
Reporter**

**RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)**  
- About 300 diners took multitasking to a new level as they simultaneously ate through 1,100 pounds of crab and supported a good cause.

The occasion was the 11th Annual Crab Feed, co-hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Rancho Murieta and the Knights of Columbus, held at St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church on Feb. 1.

The crab feed serves as the Kiwanis Club's primary fundraiser, with all proceeds reinvested into the community to support local youth and seniors. This year, the club sold 296 tickets in just seven hours and boosted its efforts with cash sponsorships, a raffle, a silent auction, and a dessert auction, raising a total of \$38,000.

Kiwanian Jeanette Edwards managed the ticket sales this year. "How quickly we sold out tells us the community looks forward to our crab feed and how much they enjoy the evening. The community is very supportive when it comes to our fundraising events."

The Knights of Columbus also operated a no-host bar to raise funds for the Special Olympics of Northern California.

Although the amount raised this year wasn't available by press time, they raised \$1,800 last year.

Past presidents Dia Utterback and Bonnie Shewchuk, known as the "Dynamic Duo," co-chaired the crab feed



**Sam Somers Jr. and Sam Somers Sr. are bibbed up and ready to eat at the 11th Annual Kiwanis Crab Feed held Feb. 1 at St. Vincent De Paul Catholic Church. Their server was Scarlett Brunton.**  
Photos by Gail Bullen

organizing committee and delivered an impressive event. Together, they secured 32 cash sponsors, 70 raffle items, and nearly two dozen silent auction and dessert auction offerings. In the final week before the event, Shewchuk assembled all the raffle prizes into eye-catching baskets.

This year, Utterback brought in a new caterer for the event: the Lions Club of Elk Grove. In addition to cooking the crab, the team prepared 110 pounds of shrimp and a seemingly endless supply of pasta. "They did a fantastic job," said Edwards. "It was great working with them."

Lions Club member Jack Edwards said they also had a great time participating in the event. He noted that the Lions frequently collaborate with other service clubs "to continue to make our community a better place to raise our families."

## Twenty-two Key Club

members from Sheldon and Pleasant Grove high schools and the Rancho Murieta chapter served food at the event. The tips they earned will support their community initiatives. Kiwanians Patti Maffei and Cookie Whalen supervised the hardworking teen volunteers. Key Club is a Kiwanis service club for high school students.

The event's success was made possible by the efforts of many Kiwanians and several dedicated community organizers. Scout Troop 633 also pitched in, assisting with the cleanup the following day.

Kiwanis Club President Bill Kenney expressed his gratitude to everyone who attended, emphasizing the event's importance as the club's biggest fundraiser of the year. "Without you guys here tonight, we couldn't do what we do in the community, things like the dictionary project, Kids Fishing Day, the July

4 breakfast, and the Easter Egg Hunt.”

Kenney announced that this year's fishing day will be dedicated in memory of the late Joe Mazzoni, who initiated that event and organized the first four crab feeds.

Kenney also encouraged the crowd to show their support for the event's 32 sponsors. "Please take a second to stare up at the wall. These are all of our sponsors," he said. "Without them, we would not be able to hold this event. They are also our friends and neighbors."

This year's Diamond Sponsor was Rancho Murieta Homes and Land (Karen Hoberg). The Gold Sponsors were the Firecode Safety Equipment, Bobo Construction, Town and Country Real Estate, and D.E. Shaw Renewable Investments, which will be constructing a solar facility on Scott Road.

See additional photos at  
[therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com). ★



**Kiwanian Cookie Whalen shares a few words with server Juliet Shead.**



**Lorena Caronongan ties a bib around Kevin Thompson's neck.**



**Dan Fua arranges some offerings at the Knights of Columbus bar. His group co-sponsored the event.**

## RV & BOAT STORAGE • SELF STORAGE

STORAGE PRICING	
SIZE (WXL) ....	PRICE (\$/mo)
8 x 8:	<b>\$127.00</b>
8 x 10:	<b>\$143.00</b>
8 x 20:	<b>\$212.00</b>
8 x 40:	<b>\$287.00</b>

RV & BOAT PRICING	
SIZE (WXL) ...	PRICE (\$/mo)
11 x 20:	<b>\$150.00</b>
11 x 25:	<b>\$155.00</b>
11 x 30:	<b>\$165.00</b>
12 x 40:	<b>\$185.00</b>
12 x 50:	<b>\$200.00</b>

**Office Hours Mon-Sat 8am-4pm**  
 (Gate Hours 6am-7pm Daily)

**24 Hour Video Surveillance • 50' Wide Drive Aisles**  
**Dump Station • Propane Sales**

us at [www.rmairport.com](http://www.rmairport.com)

***Propane Available at  
Rancho Murieta Airport***

***Propane  
Tanks  
Refilled  
Here***

***Propane  
Tanks  
Refilled  
Here***

***Propane  
Tanks  
Refilled  
Here***

***only \$3.65 per gallon***



# Striking the Right Balance

By District 4 Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez

Last week, the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors took a big step forward: We unanimously passed new regulations for sidewalk vendors. It wasn’t an easy decision, but it was an important one.

These rules are all about finding that sweet spot: supporting the hardworking folks who run these small businesses while



Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez. Photo courtesy of Rosario Rodriguez

making sure our neighborhoods stay safe, clean and

fair for everyone. This is an issue that hits me close to home. As the owner of a taqueria in Folsom, I’ve seen both sides of the coin. I know what it’s like to pour your heart into a small business, trying to make ends meet. And I also know how tough it can be for brick-and-mortar shops when the rules aren’t applied evenly. That’s why I’ve worked so hard to make sure this ordinance works for everyone. So, what’s changing? Starting soon, sidewalk

vendors will need to get a county permit, follow health and safety rules and stick to guidelines about where and when they can operate. If someone breaks the rules, we’re starting with warnings, because everyone deserves a chance to fix a mistake. But if it keeps happening, there will be consequences. It’s all about creating a system that’s fair and works for everyone. Some may question the need for this ordinance. The truth is, unregulated vending has caused some real headaches: blocked sidewalks, trash piling up and even safety concerns in crowded areas. This ordinance tackles

those problems while making sure vendors can still thrive. We’ve also made sure the permitting process is straightforward and affordable. No one should be shut out because of red tape or high fees. Throughout this process, we received valuable feedback from community members. While some worried the regulations might not go far enough, others expressed concerns about unintended impacts on small businesses. By approving this ordinance, we found a balance that maintains public safety while fostering opportunity for local entrepreneurs. I want to take a moment

to say thank you to everyone who shared their thoughts, because your input made a difference. If you have more questions or ideas, I’m always here to listen. You can reach me at 916-874-5491 or email [supervisorrodriguez@sac-county.gov](mailto:supervisorrodriguez@sac-county.gov). Let’s keep working together to make Sacramento County safe, fair and full of opportunity for everyone. *Sacramento County Supervisor Rosario Rodriguez represents the 4th District, which includes the communities of Citrus Heights, Folsom, Orangevale, Antelope, North Highlands, Rio Linda, Elverta and Rancho Murieta.* ★

# CSD Covers Water Tank Issues

Continued from page 1  
deficiency, which became particularly evident during last summer’s extreme heat.

His second recommendation was to install a control valve near the water treatment plants to reduce flow to the Van Vleck tank and thereby increase flow to the Rio Oso tank. This adjustment would help mitigate the storage overdraft in the early morning during hot weather when residential sprinklers are in heavy use. According to his report, with the appropriate physical improvements and programming, water flow could be redistributed at optimal times to sufficiently support additional units: 146 for the Van Vleck tank and 50 for the Rio Oso tank.

Houston said that the Residences subdivision developer is installing the valve to connect the two tanks directly. However, the necessary programming and integration

could take months before the system becomes fully operational. Houston said the work could take six months to a year to complete. As for the second pressure valve, Houston said district staff could provide the preliminary design, but they would have to put the construction out to bid. Domenichelli also recommended constructing a new water tank to address the current tanks’ emergency storage deficiencies and provide capacity for new dwellings coming online. According to his report, if the pipeline supplying water to the tanks were to fail, there would only be enough water to last 24 hours under peak demand conditions, assuming the tanks were already at 66% capacity at the time of the emergency. Domenichelli’s report cautioned that building a new tank would require significant time due to

various necessary components and processes. “With the current inadequate peak storage volumes and new dwelling units planned to come online in the near future, an interim solution should be pursued right away,” his report concluded. Houston said the draft IWMP recommended constructing a new storage tank with an approximate 5-million-gallon capacity. The tank could be built on Lookout Hill or within the new development. He also suggested constructing two tanks instead of one to allow for maintenance without service interruptions and recommended using a concrete tank rather than a steel one. Although the draft IWMP provided some cost estimates, it didn’t account for the cost of land acquisition or the needed pumping equipment. “You could easily ballpark it at \$4 to 6 million,” Houston said.

The ensuing discussion addressed various aspects of Domenichelli’s report, with several references to a comment made by developer Bob Keil at the June committee meeting. Keil indicated he could provide the half-acre needed for a new tank within the Residences subdivision. Merchant directed Houston to return to the March committee meeting with “the beginnings of a plan” on the interim fix and plans for a new tank. “Then we could take it to the board and see if everybody buys in on it,” he said.

**Water Agency Pipeline**  
The district began discussions with the Sacramento County Water Agency about the feasibility of constructing a pipeline to supply a secondary water source to Rancho Murieta after developer Bob Keil suggested the idea last

October. The board approved Houston’s proposal to allocate \$30,000 from the Water Supply Augmentation Fund to pay the agency for a feasibility study. However, when district staff met with the water agency, they determined the project was not currently feasible. The projected timeline for completing a feasibility study was approximately 10 years, with approvals and construction taking 15 to 20 years. The estimated cost was \$20 million. Houston said the reserve funds approved for the study were never deposited or spent.

**Other Business**  
Houston said district staff is holding preliminary discussions with the Sloughhouse Water Conservation District about potential groundwater banking opportunities to improve the community’s water supply. Houston also reported researching whether seepage current being pumped from wells under the reservoirs into creeks could be used to offset the district’s

water supply. The operations manager also reported that he is negotiating with SMUD to test the district’s 500-watt pumps at the Granlees intake without triggering a higher rate. Houston also reported on plans to assess the condition of the buried steel pipeline that connects Granlees and Calero reservoirs, noting that it may need more protection. A section of the pipe that developed a leak last fall has been repaired. Houston also reported adding four projects to the Capital Improvements Project List. The first was the completed repair of the Greens Lift Station. The second was the addition of two valves to the existing water tanks. The third was constructing a radio tower to enable wireless reading of water meters. The fourth was replacing the AT&T analog phone lines used in water and sewer operations with cellular phones.

*This story is available online at [therivervalley-times.com](http://therivervalley-times.com).* ★

# Water Plan Finalization Debated at CSD Meeting

Continued from page 1  
board voted 4:1 to contract with the consultants. After the work was underway, the board held several public hearings with the consultants to update the community. The district also presented a three-phase plan on its website. Maddaus concluded the community would have enough water for future development based on certain assumptions and mitigations. As soon as the public process began, members of Save Our Lakes & Open Spaces (SOLOS) and longtime community activist Janis Eckard raised numerous concerns about some of the assumptions and data used in the study. Although staff addressed town hall questions with online FAQs, the board ultimately waited to take any significant action until the consultants completed the draft. After Morris announced at the Oct. 16 board meeting that the consultants had finished the 317-page draft, the board agreed to initiate a 45-day review period and to seek an outside technical review of the study.

Although the board discussed the aspects of the technical review and the incorporation of public comments, they didn’t make any noteworthy decisions at subsequent meetings. The board composition also changed as of the Dec. 6 meeting when John Merchant, vice president of SOLOS, replaced Martin Pohll on the board and Director Steve Booth became the board president. Merchant and Butler are SOLOS board members. Booth has also been outspoken about his concerns about the study. At that same meeting, the board also voted to place the general manager on leave. Morris had been supportive of the plan as written. A turning point may have come at the Jan. 15 board meeting when Operations Manager Houston advised against finalizing the draft IWMP, citing its lack of a clear path forward. Houston suggested the district develop an Urban Water Supply Plan, which the state will require once the district reaches 3,000 water connections and becomes subject to new regulatory requirements as an urban water supplier. Houston also reported that he had asked Water Systems Consultants, which recently developed an Urban Water Supply

Plan and Water Vision report for the City of Folsom, to provide a scope of work for a similar plan for the district. After some discussion, Booth referred Houston’s proposal to the Improvements Committee for further review.

**Committee Discussion**  
Although an urban supply water plan was on the agenda at the Feb. 4 Improvements Committee meeting, Houston reported that a Water Systems Consultants representative could not attend to present a scope of work but would attend the March 4 meeting. Jenco asked Houston about the timeframe for implementing an urban plan after the district reaches 3,000 connections. Houston responded that the district would have a year. Jenco then inquired about the status of the draft plan: “What’s the plan for the IWMP, if anything?” Houston replied that would be a question for the board since it wasn’t in his purview to move it beyond the draft. He also referenced community feedback, saying it was unusable. Jenco challenged his statement: “Who says it’s not usable? You are saying the community is saying that. I’m saying it is usable.” Merchant countered: “I’m saying it’s not.” Jenco recalled that before Merchant joined the board, the general manager had arranged meetings with each director and consultant Lisa Maddaus to review the IWMP. “We had all our questions answered,” Jenco said. “I am totally confident that the report can be finalized and used going forward.” Jenco then expressed his desire to bring the issue to a head by making it a board action item and asked Merchant if that was possible. Merchant pushed back, saying the draft plan doesn’t account for Rancho Murieta Properties’ recent decision not to develop the lots behind the reservoirs. Jenco pointed out that if Merchant had been on the board during the one-on-one sessions with Maddaus, he would have seen how the model worked: “One click of a tab would show the effect of changing an assumption, such as taking out the 39

acres proposed for apartments.” He emphasized: “None of those assumptions were set in stone. They could be changed with a click of a mouse.” Merchant maintained: “We should still look at the new set of numbers.” Jenco said he didn’t believe the final numbers were set. “Whether it was using Clementia or assuming that the 39 acres were going to be built, all of them were assumptions waiting for us to tell them how to finish the report. That’s where it is sitting, right?” he asked. Merchant acknowledged he still had unanswered questions about Clementia, irrigating the golf course in the summer with river water, and the assumptions about conservation. However, he agreed they could take it to the board. Jenco reminded Merchant that he had previously suggested bringing Maddaus to an Improvements Committee meeting to address concerns directly. “To get all these questions answered face-to-face,” Jenco said. Merchant said he wasn’t opposed to meeting with Maddaus but also wanted to bring in Adkins, particularly since Adkins had stated that drilling wells wouldn’t support development. “Why don’t we see what the board wants to do?” Merchant asked. Jenco agreed, asking, “So are we going to abandon this report and start over, or turn the draft into a final so we can move forward?” When district secretary Amelia Wilder asked if she should place the matter on the board agenda, Jenco responded that he preferred Maddaus and Adkins to answer questions at the committee level first. Jenco also reminded the committee that the board initially sought bids for an IWMP and an Urban Water Master Plan. Due to cost concerns, they scaled it down to just an IWMP, accepting the sole bid from Maddaus and Adkins. “In my mind, the plan was to finalize this plan, and then when it needed to be turned into the Urban Water Plan, they would do it for a reasonable amount of money that would mirror the difference between their original price and what we scaled it down to,” Jenco said. Merchant reiterated his concerns about the plan’s assumptions but stated he no

longer disputed the data in the draft. He also expressed his belief that the draft IWMP does not align with the requirements of an Urban Water Master Plan as specified by the State Water Code. Merchant said the next step would be formatting the data in the IWMP in light of the new information and meeting with the new consulting firm. “Then, when we get all that, I guess we can move forward to make a decision. At least, in my opinion, that’s where we are,” he said. Audience member Jim Farrell said bringing the draft finalization to the board at the next meeting would be a “big, big, huge PR problem.” Jenco clarified that he wasn’t suggesting putting it on the next board meeting agenda but that the fundamental question remained: “Are we going to finalize it or abandon it?” Merchant responded, “I don’t see how we can finalize the draft IWMP since the suggested mitigation in it, in my opinion, is wrong.” Merchant also emphasized that he wanted to hear from the new consultants before deciding about finalizing the plan. Farrell acknowledged the issue’s complexity, telling the committee, “You’re dealing with a tough issue, and I don’t think you’ve got the answer yet.” He encouraged them to keep working on it until they could bring a clear recommendation to the board. Merchant agreed that when the new consultant engineer presented at the next Improvements Committee meeting, they would discuss whether to build upon the draft IWMP or not. He asked Jenco if that approach worked for him, and Jenco agreed. The district secretary confirmed that only the new consultant would present at the next meeting, not Maddaus or Adkins. Houston also reported that he had found a spreadsheet that appeared to be the Maddaus model referenced by Jenco. He suggested that they load it up at the next meeting to see what happens when different assumptions are turned off and on. Two other audience members, Tom Shewchuk and Richard Gehrs, also commented during the discussion. *This story is available online at [therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com).* ★



# SECURITY LOGS

Following is a summary of activity for the Rancho Murieta Community Services District Security Department for the following dates. Note: these log entries are condensed. For full security log details, go to the CSD website at [www.rmcsd.com](http://www.rmcsd.com).

**Feb. 1**  
7:21 p.m., Welfare check, Pera Drive: Report of suspicious individual knocking on a residence door, in distress or intoxicated. Reporting party said the suspect was asking to let him inside because someone was after him. Dispatch informed RP to call Sacramento Sheriff's Department to report the situation. Upon arrival the suspect was unable to be located.

**Feb. 2**  
9:30 a.m., Stolen property, Murieta South: Report of Amazon packages stolen from multiple addresses in Murieta South. Resident doorbell Ring cameras captured the suspect and vehicle. SSD was notified by reporting parties and RMCSd security assisted by providing the suspect's license plate from South Gate cameras.

**Feb. 3**  
4:39 a.m., RMA rule violation, Venado Drive: Resident parked overnight on street with trailer without 24-hour pass. Citation issued.

**Feb. 4**  
5 p.m., Fallen tree, Via Del Cerrito: Fallen tree from RMA common area. CSO arrived to confirm. Maintenance advised of tree fallen in nearby resident driveway, maintenance removed tree.

**Feb. 6**  
2 : 4 6 a . m . , Miscellaneous, Murieta Plaza: Vehicle in parking lot near Ace Hardware. CSO found two occupants sleeping inside vehicle; contact made with occupants who stated they were just passing through.

Driver advised to leave area; driver complied.

**Feb. 9**  
2:27 a.m., Disabled vehicle, Northgate: Individual parked in center resident lane. was not a resident and informed that his electric vehicle had completely lost power and he was without a phone. Subject was given a phone with which was used to call a tow truck from his service.

**Feb. 10**  
2:23 a.m., RMA Rule Violation, Stonehouse Park: Stonehouse Park guest without resident after hours; citation issued.  
2:33 a.m., RMA Rule Violation, Stonehouse Park: Stonehouse Park guest without resident after hours; citation issued

**Feb. 11**  
6:34 p.m., Fire, Lake Calero: Upon arrival, patrol observed a small bonfire with bunch of juveniles around the area. Juveniles left the area upon patrol's arrival. Bonfire was extinguished and juveniles were unable to locate.

**Feb. 12**  
5:27 a.m., RMA rule violation, Rio Oso: Resident overnight street parking in front of house. Citation issued.

**Feb. 13**  
12:54 a.m., RMA Rule violation, Lake Calero: Residents in North back areas after hours; citation issued.

**Feb. 14**  
10:27 a.m., Disabled vehicle, Raley's: red Camaro parked for two days. Patrol contacted occupants of vehicle, one male driver and one female passenger. They both assured that they would be gone soon and that their car battery died.

**Feb. 15**  
12:45 a.m. RMA rule violation, Gazebo Park: White Chevrolet truck parked at Gazebo Park after hours with sleeping occupant. Informed subject

she wasn't allowed and she left.

**Feb. 16**  
8:43 p.m., Trespassing, Lago Drive: Received call for intruder. While en route received a separate call from North Gate requesting to pick up reporting party at North Gate. Made contact with RP who was walking down Murieta Parkway. RP stated that he "saw his wife's ex-husband on his balcony." He then stated that his wife denied that her ex-husband was there. RP's wife said there was no intruder and that her husband was confused due to stress. Sacramento Sheriff's Department determined the situation safe and departed.

**Feb. 17**  
12:05 a.m., Jackson Highway: Abandoned vehicle blocking driveway. CHP will tow.  
4:23 a.m., Lobo Drive: Vehicle overnight in guest parking on Lobo Drive. Citation issued.  
5:09 p.m., Fire, Lake Calero: Patrol responded to a call about a fire set by juveniles at Lake Calero. When on scene, patrol saw smoke coming from trees and two residents taking video and shouting at three young males running from scene. Patrol assessed severity of fire and saw that it was almost extinguished but seemed safe. Patrol followed in direction of subjects and found two young males separate from the group. The two subjects stated that their friends started the fire and they weren't involved. The subjects were unwilling to give any personal info. Further questioning the witness, patrol obtained pictures of golf cart the suspects used. There was no bar code on the club cart.

**Feb. 18**  
5:05 a.m., RMA rule violation, Terreno Drive: Vehicle overnight parked on street wrong way in front of the house. Citation issued. ★

# COMMUNITY BRIEFS

## Houseplant Expert to Speak to Garden Club on Feb. 25

Lori Ann, a true plant whisperer and owner of Emerald City Interior Landscaping services in Sacramento, will share her expertise on selecting and caring for houseplants when she speaks to the River Valley Garden Club on Feb. 25 at the RMA Building.

The doors open at 6 p.m. with refreshments and a raffle. The program begins at 7 p.m.

Learn how to choose the right plants for your space and to keep them thriving. The first meeting is free to non-members.

## Time to Order 2025 Senior Banners

It's time to order senior banners to celebrate our 2025 Rancho Murieta graduates.

Email the following to [RMseniorflags@gmail.com](mailto:RMseniorflags@gmail.com): the graduate's first and last name, location on the north or south, school names and photo at least 1 mb in size. The cost is \$92.44. Venmo [Michelle@michele-Robb](mailto:Michelle@michele-Robb).

If you have questions reach out to Michelle Robb at the email address.

## Wilton Bingo Games Held Monthly

March bingo will be on Saturday, March 1. Doors open at 6 p.m. with food available for sale and bingo starts at 7 p.m. in the Wilton Community Center (9717 Colony Road, at Dillard Road).

All proceeds go to two non-profits: the local Park Council and the Wilton History Group. Questions? Call Lorraine Robinson at 916-212-8896.

## RM Caregiver Support Group to Meet March 5

If you find yourself in a situation of caregiving for a loved one, it can be rather perplexing. Those attending the Rancho Murieta Caregiver Support Group are helpful to each other.

Receive helpful information and take some respite time for yourself. Privacy is strictly observed.

The group meets on the first Wednesday of the month. If you have any questions, contact Nan at 916-354-2281.

## VFW Auxiliary Seeks New Members

The Rancho Murieta Veterans for Foreign Wars (VFW) Auxiliary is looking

for new members who are passionate about supporting veterans and miliary families while benefiting from personal and professional growth opportunities.

Eligibility requires a family relationship to a VFW-eligible veteran such as a spouse, parent or grandchild. For more information about the local auxiliary, contact President Melissa Mineni at [mel.mineni@gmail.com](mailto:meleni@gmail.com).

If you are interested in joining the Rancho Murieta VFW Post, reach out to Membership Chairman Tylor Fugate at [tylorfugate150@gmail.com](mailto:tylorfugate150@gmail.com). Eligibility for VFW membership requires honorable service in the U.S. Military and participation in a foreign war, expedition or campaign recognized by the VFW.

## Free Firewood Available

Rancho Murieta residents in need of firewood can find a free source adjacent to Greens Park and behind the reservoirs, following the completion of a fuel reduction project.

After parking on the roads in these areas, residents can gather large pieces of wood lying on the ground and carry them back to their vehicles.

## Local Crime Records Online at RVT Website

The online edition of the River Valley Times at [therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com) includes a section called "Local Crime Arrests," which compiles public arrest records for Rancho Murieta and Wilton residents. This section can be found on the right side of each page.

As of Feb. 16, the map showed the arrests of one Rancho Murieta resident and five Wilton residents. The Rancho Murieta resident was arrested for driving under the influence and had a prior arrest for kidnapping.

One of the Wilton residents was arrested for arson involving a structure or forest land. Both men were arrested by the Amador County Sheriff's Office.

## Rancho Murieta Band to Perform at Ione Casino

A rock band comprising four Rancho Murieta residents, Davey Boy and the Funomenals, will perform from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. March 16 at Harrah's Northern California Casino.

The casino is located at 4640 Coal Mine Road in Ione. Admission is free. ★

# Brighten a Senior's Day

## Volunteer with Meals on Wheels Sacramento County

We need compassionate volunteers to deliver meals, support our community cafes, or help with clerical tasks. Your kindness helps our elderly neighbors maintain independence and dignity through improved nutrition.

For more information and to sign up, visit [mowsac.org](http://mowsac.org) or call (916) 444-9533.

Be the reason someone smiles today.

Volunteer with us and make a heartfelt difference.





# WE SUPPORT FIRST RESPONDERS





Serving our local communities for over 65 years

# HOME EQUITY Line of Credit Loan



Serving our local communities for over 65 Years

**www.eldoradosavingsbank.com**

**RANCHO MURIETA** • 7185 Murieta Drive • 916-354-2661

**ELK GROVE** • 9003 Elk Grove Blvd. • 916-685-3936

**SHELDON** • 8973 Grant Line Road • 916-686-0200

Member **FDIC**  
NMLS ID 479256

**Se Habla Español LENDER**

# 6.75%

Initial APR

## 5 Year FIXED RATE

CHECK THE EL DORADO ADVANTAGE:

- ✓ **FIXED RATE** for 5 Years
- ✓ **Local Processing & Servicing**
- ✓ **No Closing Cost on Qualifying Transactions; Except for Appraisal/Evaluation Costs**
- ✓ **Have Funds Available for Current and Future Needs**
- ✓ **Home Improvement, Debt Consolidation, College Tuition**
- ✓ **Interest May be Tax Deductible (Please consult your tax advisor)**

The initial Annual Percentage Rate (APR) is currently 6.75% for a new Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC), and is fixed for the first 5 years of the loan which is called the draw period. After the initial 5 year period, the APR can change once based on the value of an Index and Margin. The Index is the weekly average yield on U.S. Treasury Securities adjusted to a constant maturity of 10 years and the margin is 3.50%. The current APR for repayment period is 8.00%. The maximum APR that can apply any time during your HELOC is 15%. A qualifying transaction consists of the following conditions: (1) the initial APR assumes a maximum HELOC of \$200,000, and a total maximum Loan-to-Value (LTV) of 70% including the new HELOC and any existing 1st Deed of Trust loan on your residence; (2) your residence securing the HELOC must be a single-family home that you occupy as your primary residence; (3) If the 1st Deed of Trust loan is with a lender other than El Dorado Savings Bank, that loan may not exceed \$300,000, have a total maximum Loan to Value (LTV) of 65% and may not be a revolving line of credit. Additional property restrictions and requirements apply. All loans are subject to a current appraisal or property evaluation. This cost will be disclosed in your commitment letter and paid at loan closing. Property insurance is required and flood insurance may be required. Rates, APR, terms and conditions are subject to change without notice. Other conditions apply. A \$525 early closure fee will be assessed if the line of credit is closed within three years from the date of opening. An annual fee of \$85 will be assessed on the first anniversary of the HELOC and annually thereafter during the draw period. Ask for a copy of our "Fixed Rate Home Equity Line of Credit Disclosure Notice" for additional important information. Other HELOC loans are available under different terms.



# Glenn Guenard & Ross Bozarth

are dedicated to the victims of accidents.

We help with serious injuries that require serious representation.

We are the Law Offices Of Guenard & Bozarth.

We have over 80 years of experience on our legal team... the most experienced law firm in Elk Grove. If you are looking for results Call GB Legal 24/7/365 at 888-809-1075 or visit [gblegal.com](http://gblegal.com)

## WE CAN HELP!

The Law Offices of Guenard & Bozarth represent injured people. Our Office is located at 8830 Elk Grove Blvd. in the heart of Elk Grove.

# DO YOU KNOW THESE GUYS?

Insurance Companies Know Them Because They Have Paid Them Over **\$130 Million Dollars**



# New Home BUILDING SUPPLY

"Since 1949"

5310 Franklin Blvd. • Sacramento

(916) **455-3057**

- We have all the hard-to-find sidings
- Quality lumber for any size project
- Competitive pricing
- Variety of deck materials
- Local Steving family owned & operated



# Kings Korner

By V.G. Harris



Well, the all-star break is upon us, and if ever there is a time of reflection needed for Sacramento Kings fans, the time is now.

A beloved member of the Kings family is no longer with the team, and there are some fans that are simply not getting over it. For others, they understand that at the end of the day, the NBA is a monstrous business, and even the most electric of players at times, must be moved for the good of the franchise.

Make no mistake about it, Zach Lavine is no slouch, and he may not be as fast as DeAaron Fox, but this former all-star has game.

Zach has already impressed fans with his mid-range game, and as his 3-point prowess kicks in, Sacramento fans will get a look at the true foray of talent that this baller has to offer.

The acquisition of Jonas Valanciunas is not only welcome, it is long overdue. I have been writing about this big man for over a year, and my only consternation is why he wasn't acquired over the off season when he was available?

Valanciunas will prove his value as the Kings strive to come down the home stretch healthy, and with a team that is just now finding its rhythm.

Amazingly, as the newly assembled Kings have yet to have a single practice with the bevy of new players and that includes newcomer Markelle Fultz. Markelle was drafted No. 1 overall in the 2017 draft, ahead of players like Jason Tatum, Donovan Mitchell, and yes, Sacramento's former point guard DeAaron Fox. Ironic, I would say so, but the NBA is a league of second chances, and if anyone ever needed one, it's Markelle Fultz.

After a storied college career with the Washington Huskies, Markelle leaped to the front of the class and was drafted No. 1 overall by the Philadelphia 76ers. Sadly, his NBA career would get off to an abysmal start, as he suffered a debilitating shoulder injury and the 76ers gave up on their No. 1 pick. Fultz was traded to Orlando Magic but after 5 uneventful and injury riddled seasons, the Magic did not resign Markelle.

I smiled from ear to ear when I heard that Markelle was quoted as saying on his signing with the Kings, "I haven't felt this good since I came into the league. I never had the opportunity to take my time and get healthy, so being able to do that last summer has been great for me. I'm super excited for this opportunity and I'm thankful for it."

I love hearing that kind of talk, and just as the Kings have had No. 1 draft choice busts in the past, perhaps a real opportunity to turn back the clock has finally come their way.

Our starting five is full of talent, but with departure of Alex Len, Kevin Huerter, Jordan McLauglin, Jalen McDaniels, and most recently Colby Jones, the real question has been the quality and depth of the bench.

Recently acquired Jake LaRavia and Jonas Valanciunas will bring a sturdier presence to front line, and with a healthy Markelle Fultz coming off the bench to give malik Monk some much-needed rest, it's entirely possible the Kings bench is in its best posture all season.

Isaac Jones remains a diamond in the rough, and I'm hopeful coach Christie hasn't lost sight of him. Dynamic, athletic, and able to jump out of the gym, Issac is in his rookie season, and has still to get anything resembling a real shot at playing time. Don't miss on this guy, because I see an enormous upside, and just as we've seen Keon Ellis rise to new heights, so can Isaac Jones.

So, imagine Valanciunas, Keon Ellis, LaRavia, Fultz, Trey Lyles, and Isaac Jones as the key bench players, with Devin Carter and Doug McDermott in the wings. I believe this is overall the strongest bench the Kings have had in the past three seasons, so hold onto your seats Kings fans, because it's just possible the fun has just begun.

There are stories yet to be written, and it's my hope that players like Markelle Fultz and Isaac Jones will soon take center stage!

Playoffs, NOT Play-in!

Enjoy the home stretch Kings fans, it could be a real barn burner!

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

## A 1995 California Court Ruling That Restored Immigrant Rights Could Backfire Now



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

California has the nation's largest population of undocumented immigrants with roughly 1.8 million people. Over the last three decades, Californians' attitudes about that fact have undergone an astonishing swing.

Hostility reached a peak in the early 1990s, demonstrated by passage of Proposition 187 in 1994 by a 3-2 margin. The measure would have required police to check the legal status of people they encountered and barred public services, including education, to those who could not prove citizenship or legal residency.

It was the centerpiece of Republican Gov. Pete Wilson's campaign for a second term, contending that undocumented people were overwhelming the state's budget.

However, support for a crackdown was not confined to GOP voters. Not only did many Democrats — then as now the largest bloc of voters — vote for the measure, but a Legislature dominated by Democrats passed anti-immigrant laws, such as banning driver's licenses.

Soon, however, public sentiment and the political atmosphere began to change. Undocumented immigrants and their advocates scored a big win a year after Prop. 187's passage when federal Judge Marianna Pfaelzer

ruled that the measure violated the federal government's exclusive power to regulate immigration.

"The California voters' overwhelming approval of Proposition 187 reflects their justifiable frustration with the federal government's inability to enforce the immigration laws effectively," she wrote at the time. "No matter how serious the problem may be, however, the authority to regulate immigration belongs exclusively to the federal government and state agencies are not permitted to assume that authority. The state is powerless to enact its own scheme to regulate immigration or to devise immigration regulations which run parallel to or purport to supplement the federal immigration laws."

A few years later, after Democrat Gray Davis succeeded Wilson, the state abandoned an appeal of Pfaelzer's ruling. In subsequent years the Legislature repealed other laws, such as the one on driver's licenses, and has done whatever it could to treat undocumented immigrants as if they were legal residents, such as expanding health care benefits.

When Donald Trump was elected president in 2016 and promised a crackdown on illegal immigration, California reacted with legislation to make it more difficult for federal immigration authorities to capture and deport undocumented Californians.

The most important was Senate Bill 54, introduced a month after Trump won the election. Dubbed the California Values Act, it essentially bars California police from aiding in any way federal efforts to identify and deport undocumented immigrants.

SB 54 survived one court challenge but Trump is once again in the White House, declaring his intention to rid the nation of undocumented immigrants, and is taking aim at California and other states with sanctuary laws.

The U.S. Department of Justice has filed suit to overturn Illinois laws quite similar to California's SB 54, and its contention in the Illinois suit could — with great irony — convert the federal court decision against Prop. 187 three decades ago into a hammer to smash SB 54. If California was illegally interfering with the federal government's exclusive power over immigration in Prop. 187, the suit implies, sanctuary laws also interfere with that power.

The 23-page complaint, filed in federal court in Chicago, alleges that Illinois laws "have the purpose and effect of making it more difficult for, and deliberately impeding, federal immigration officers' ability to carry out their responsibilities in those jurisdictions."

California officials are aware that the Illinois suit will not be the only challenge to local and state laws meant to protect undocumented immigrants.

Were the Illinois suit's argument to prevail, the situation in California could come full circle. A legal principle that protected California's immigrants from Prop. 187 in 1995 might make identifying and deporting them easier in 2025.

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

### About Claiming Social Security when I have a Health Savings Account (HSA)



By Russell Gloor, AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

**Dear Rusty:** I have reached my full retirement age (66 plus 8 months) and plan to apply for Social Security this month, but I've seen articles which say that when I apply, I must also take Medicare Part A. This, even though I am continuing to work and am covered by my employer's health insurance (a high deductible plan). I contribute bi-weekly into an HSA (Heath Savings Account). I've read that Medicare back dates Part A coverage by 6 months, which suggests I would have had to stop contributing to my HSA six months ago. If this is true, will I need to pay penalties and such to the IRS? I'm not able to find anything else about this topic, and I'm wondering what you might have to say. I have my wife and two children on my employer's HDHP. We contribute \$6,000 annually to our HSA and my employer contributes \$1,250 on January 1st each year. We can live

without the HSA, but the taxes and IRS penalties concern me. Signed: Wanting to Claim SS (but concerned)

**Dear Wanting to Claim:** I'm afraid that what you've read is correct — it is mandatory for you to take Medicare Part A (inpatient hospitalization coverage) when receiving Social Security benefits after age 65. Medicare Part A is free to you, and even though you are still covered under your employer's creditable high deductible healthcare plan and can delay taking Medicare Part B, you must take Medicare Part A to collect Social Security after 65. Medicare and your employer's plan will coordinate healthcare benefit payments.

That does, however, also mean your Health Savings Account (HSA) will be affected because, as you have found, Medicare will backdate your Part A coverage by 6 months. And because Part A is not a high deductible plan (a requirement for HSA), any contributions you make after the effective date of Part A will be subject to an IRS penalty, and your HSA contributions won't be considered tax-exempt. This will mean the IRS will likely assess a 6% excise tax on any contributions made after your Part A effective date, and you'll need to pay income tax on those

contributions.

What you may wish to consider is stopping your HSA contributions now and waiting an additional six months or so to claim your Social Security benefits (to get beyond the HSA penalty phase). This would have the advantage of avoiding the IRS penalty on your HSA contributions and would also increase your Social Security benefit due to Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs). You earn DRCs at the rate of .677% for each month beyond your FRA that you wait to claim, which means an SS benefit about 4% higher if you wait six months longer to claim SS.

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

## SACRAMENTO CHORAL SOCIETY & ORCHESTRA

DONALD KENDRICK, MUSIC DIRECTOR


### EUROPEAN MASTERWORKS

*Creation Mass* | Franz Joseph Haydn  
(*Schöpfungsmesse*)  
*Adagio For Strings* | Samuel Barber  
*Lux Aeterna* | Morten Lauridsen


*One of the six great Mass settings that forms the crowning glory of Haydn's choral music along with "The Creation" and "The Seasons"*

**SATURDAY | MARCH 1 | 3PM**


PRE-CONCERT TALK AT 2 PM | Conductor Donald Kendrick  
SAFE Credit Union Performing Arts Center




Sutphen



Couden





Atti



Soar

Elizabeth Sutphen, Soprano  
Sarah Couden, Mezzo  
Salvatore Atti, Tenor  
David Soar, Bass





**SAFE CREDIT UNION PERFORMING ARTS CENTER**  
1301 L STREET, SACRAMENTO

**TICKETS |SAFE CU PAC Box Office | 916.808.5181**  
or [Ticketmaster.com](https://www.ticketmaster.com)



### Eliminate gutter cleaning forever!

LeafFilter, the most advanced debris-blocking gutter protection. Schedule a FREE LeafFilter estimate today. 20% off Entire Purchase. 10% Senior & Military Discounts. Call 1-855-424-7581

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### Autos Wanted

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE to fund the SEARCH FOR MISSING CHILDREN. FAST FREE PICKUP. 24 hour response. Running or not. Maximum Tax Deduction and No Emission Test Required! Call 24/7: 1-877-434-6852

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### GOT AN UNWANTED CAR???

DONATE IT TO PATRIOTIC HEARTS. Fast free pick up. All 50 States. Patriotic Hearts' programs help veterans find work or start their own business. Call 24/7: 1-855-408-6546

(Cal-SCAN)

---

Tiene un vehiculo no deseado? Donelo a Patriotic Hearts! Recogida rápida y gratuita en los 50 estados. Patriotic Hearts ofrece programas para ayudar a los veteranos a encontrar trabajo o iniciar su propio negocio. Llama ahora: 1-855-408-7368 (24/7)

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### Get a break on your taxes!

Donate your car, truck, or SUV to assist the blind and visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup and secure a generous tax credit for 2025. Call Heritage for the Blind Today at 1-844-491-2884 today! (Cal-SCAN)

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### Cellular Plans

Consumer Cellular - the same reliable, nationwide coverage as the largest carriers. No long-term contract, no hidden fees and activation is free. All plans feature unlimited talk and text, starting at just \$20/month. For more information, call 1-844-908-0605.

(Cal-Scan)

---

### Concrete

#### SONDROL CONCRETE

25+ years experience. All types of finishes. Patios, driveways, slabs Walkways, Spa pads. Tear out/ Replace Tractor work. Written estimates. Lic. # 778034  
**916-955-1083**

---

### Perez Landscaping & Concrete

- Concrete Finishing/Stamping
- Landscape installation and Design
- Sodding, •Planting
- Irrigation •Retaining Walls
- Yard maintenance.

Free estimates. Fore more info. call **916-834-2352**  
email:Elvperpez@att.net  
Lic #14-00016214

---

### 3DR CONCRETE

All your concrete needs. Bobcat services, driveway repair. Comm & Res. Lic # 968987 insured (209)570-7304

---

### Estate Sale

**Luxury Blowout Sale,** 13970 Islandview Way, Walnut Grove, 9am - 3pm Feb. 21-23. Full of furniture, ANTIQUES, collectibles, books, audiobooks, electronics, garage full of tools, fishing boat, organ, woodworking, fishing, VINTAGE everything.

---

### Financial

Struggling with debt? If you have over \$10,000 in debt we help you be debt free in as little as 24-48 months. Pay nothing to enroll. Call Now: 1-877-435-4860

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### For Sale

**Kings tickets**  
Best Seats in G1 for the \$ Section 218 Row B 7 & 8 Private box area 1st row balcony halfcourt; 16 folding chairs in one row. No one in front or behind. Buy direct save \$ 916-595-5379

---



---

### Health/Wellness

Attention: VIAGRA and CIALIS USERS! A cheaper alternative to high drugstore prices! 50 Pill Special - Only \$99! 100% guaranteed. CALL NOW: 1-888-256-9155

(CalSCAN)

---

### Help Wanted

**Dry Creek is looking for qualified individuals to join our team!**

Open positions for:  
**Administrative Positions:**  
•Asbestos & Lead Coordinator  
•Healthcare & Commercial Services Coordinator  
•Administrative Assistant for our Design Center

Must have 2 years' office experience. Knowledge in general construction, Design 2020 program or T&M Pro are desired but not required.

**Skilld Positions:**  
•Journeyman Plumber  
•Asbestos Abatement & Dry-wall Technician

Must have at least 4 years' experience, pass a background check, a clean driving record and current driver's license.

**Benefits include:**  
•401(k) and 401(k) matching  
•Health and Dental Insurance  
•Paid Holidays and Vacation

If you have any or all the skills listed, you are encouraged to apply. Please send resumes to: info@drylicreekconstruction-co.com.

Dalla Dental Group seeks Sr. Manager, Strategy & Operations Analyst for Elk Grove location. Must have MS in Mngmnt, Bus. Admin. or rel. or foreign equiv. & min. 3 yrs. in Ops Mngmnt roles or rel. w/exp. pertaining to materials requirement, materials planning, controlling inventory & managing costs analysis. Sal: \$146k-149k/yr. Send res: info@oradentistry.com

---

### Home Warranty

Don't Pay For Covered Home Repairs Again! Our home warranty covers ALL MAJOR SYSTEMS AND APPLIANCES. We stand by our service and if we can't fix it, we'll replace it! Pick the plan that fits your budget! Call: 1-855-411-1731

(CalSCAN)

---

### Insurance/Health

DENTAL INSURANCE from Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Do not wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! 1-844203-2677 www.dental5plus.com/calnews #6258

(Cal-SCAN)

---

### Internet

DIRECTV- All your entertainment. Nothing on your roof! Sign up for Direct and get your first free month of Max, Paramount+, Showtime, Starz, MGM+ and Cinemax included. Choice package \$84.99/mo. Some restrictions apply. Call DIRECTV 1-888-641-5762 (Cal-SCAN)

(Cal-SCAN)

### Programmer/Analyst,

13970 Islandview Way, Walnut Grove, 9am - 3pm Feb. 21-23. Full of furniture, ANTIQUES, collectibles, books, audiobooks, electronics, garage full of tools, fishing boat, organ, woodworking, fishing, VINTAGE everything.

---

### Home Improvement

**ALL PHASE HOME REPAIR**  
Elk Grove, CA  
•Electrical •Plumbing  
•Fencing •Fans •Decks  
•Doors •Windows •Tile Flooring •Trim base-board •Sheetrock •Dry Rot Texture •Painting  
•Lighting •Concrete •Sprinkler Repair  
•Framing and more!  
All phases of home repair & any construction needed- Big or small. Quality work guaranteed! Low prices- free est.Serving Elk Grove, Rancho Murietta, Galt, Wilton, Herald, Sac. & Surrounding Areas  
Bus. Lic #1023318  
**(916)287-6164**

nocal

---

Jacuzzi Bath Remodel can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, waiving ALL installation costs! (Additional terms apply.) Subject to change and vary by dealer. (Offer ends 3/30/25.) Call 1-833-985-4766.

(Cal-SCAN)

---

Safe Step. North America's #1 Walk-In Tub. Comprehensive lifetime warranty. Top-of-the-line installation and service. Now featuring our FREE shower package and \$1600 Off for a limited time! Call today! Financing available. Call Safe Step 1888-989-5749

(Cal-SCAN)

---

BATH & SHOWER UPDATES in as little as ONE DAY! Affordable prices - No payments for 18 months! Lifetime warranty & professional installs. Senior & Military Discounts available. Call: 1-877-252-9868

(Cal-SCAN)

---

WATER DAMAGE CLEANUP & RESTORATION: A small amount of water can lead to major damage in your home. Our trusted professionals do complete repairs to protect your family and your home's value! Call 24/7: 1-888-248-0815. Have zip code of service location ready when you call!

(Cal-SCAN)

### Automotive

**Elk Grove**  
**Shell**

**Your Local Full Service Auto Repair Shop Committed to Customer Satisfaction**

**Specializing In:**

- Oil Changes
- Smog Repair
- Smog Inspection
- Safety Inspection
- Transmission Service
- Brakes
- Wheel Alignment
- Check Engine Light Diagnosis
- Tires
- Tune-Up
- Batteries
- 30, 60, 90K Service
- Brake & Lamp Station

**Mon-Fri, 8-5 • 916-685-7796**

**8901 Elk Grove Blvd.**

---

### Roofing

## JIM MOYLEN ROOFING

1981 License # 407605  
A+ Rating with BBB.  
Specialize in Re-Roof, Prompt Repairs, Low Slope Roof, Seamless Gutter Installation.

**Free Estimates! Open Monday-Saturday**  
**916-531-2793 Cell**  
**Tile Repairs**

---

### Junk Removal

**MS Hauling**  
•Junk Removal  
•Garage Cleanouts  
•Yard Debris  
•E-Waste  
Mention this ad and receive 15% off!

Call (916)207-5702  
License # 778034

### Landscaping

**YARD CLEANUP & DECORATIVE ROCK**  
One time cleanup pruning. Also bark, weed control, sod, seed, pruning, sprinkler systems, hauling, etc. Mobile homes, commercial or residential. Local gardener.

**916-205-9310 or 916- 627-9000**

---

### Landscaping

**CREATE YOUR PARADISE**

Winter Yard Cleanups, Complete Landscape Design/Installation, Sprinkler System Installs/Repairs, All Types Concrete Work, Fence Installation, Retaining Walls- All Types, Drainage Systems-all types, Landscape Lighting, Residential/commercial American Landscape Design & Installation. Est 1987 American Construction & Property Maintenance Company  
WE ACCEPT VISA & MASTER CARD  
**(916)612-0776**  
Lic#690968

### Painting

**Shelton Painting, Inc.**

- Repaints: Exterior & Interior
- Dry Wall Repair

**Free Estimates**  
**(209) 745-7897**  
3 Generations of Quality Painters #908019

We accept Visa & Mastercard

---

### Miscellaneous

DID YOU KNOW Newspaper-generated content is so valuable it's taken and repeated, condensed, broadcast, tweeted, discussed, posted, copied, edited, and emailed countless times throughout the day by others? Discover the Power of Newspaper Advertising. For a free brochure call 916-288-6011 or email cecelia@cnpa.com

(Cal-SCAN)

### Painting

**NO PROBLEM PAINTING PRESSURE WASHING ROOF MOSS REMOVAL**

Interior / Exterior  
**NO JOB IS TOO BIG**  
Serving E.G. & Galt since 2004  
Mike Johnson - Owner  
**916-257-9609**  
Bonded & Insured Lic#83045

---

### Real Estate Loans



# CALL-A-PRO

**PURCHASE • REFINANCE**

**FIXED RATE LOANS**

**15 Year Term Fixed Rate Loan**

RATE

5.000%

APR

5.30%

180 Monthly Payments of \$7.91 per \$1,000 Borrowed

**30 Year Term Fixed Rate Loan**

RATE

5.750%

APR

5.93%

360 Monthly Payments of \$5.84 per \$1,000 Borrowed

**Check the El Dorado Advantage:**

✓ No Application Fee ✓ No Prepayment Penalty ✓ Local Processing and Servicing



**EL DORADO SAVINGS BANK**  
Serving our local communities for over 65 Years

ELK GROVE • 9003 Elk Grove Blvd. • 916-685-3936

RANCHO MURIETA • 7185 Murieta Drive • 916-354-2661

SHELDON • 8973 Grant Line Road • 916-686-0200

Se Habla Español

Maximum loan \$650,000.00, primary or vacation residence. 20% minimum cash down payment on purchase. 25% equity required on refinance. Other loans available under different terms.

LOAN TERMS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

www.eldoradosavingsbank.com

800-874-9779

Member

**FDIC**

Member Since 1926



**John Taylor**

Farmers Insurance Agent/Broker

14650 Cantova Way, St. 204  
Rancho Murieta, CA 95683  
jtaylor3@farmersagent.com



**For All Your Insurance Needs — In Business Since 1984**





License #: 0678249

**Call today for a policy review and quote!**  
**(916) 485-3236**  
916-402-6021 (Cell)

**Edward Jones**

> edwardjones.com | Member SIPC

**Compare our CD Rates**  
Bank-issued, FDIC-insured

**6-month**

4.25

%

APY\*

Minimum deposit \$10,000

**1-year**

4.05

%

APY\*

Minimum deposit \$10,000

**2-year**

3.90

%

APY\*

Minimum deposit \$10,000

**Call or visit your local financial advisor today.**



**Linda Sobon**  
Financial Advisor

2360 East Bidwell St., Suite 102  
Folsom, CA 95630  
916-673-6549

\* Annual Percentage Yield (APY) effective 10/16/2024. CDs offered by Edward Jones are bank-issued and FDIC-insured up to \$250,000 (principal and interest accrued but not yet paid) per depositor, per insured depository institution, for each account ownership category. Please visit www.fdic.gov or contact your financial advisor for additional information. Subject to availability and price change. CD values are subject to interest rate risk such that when interest rates rise, the prices of CDs can decrease. If CDs are sold prior to maturity, the investor can lose principal value. FDIC insurance does not cover losses in market value. Early withdrawal may not be permitted. Yields quoted are net of all commissions. CDs require the distribution of interest and do not allow interest to compound. CDs offered through Edward Jones are issued by banks and thrifts nationwide. All CDs sold by Edward Jones are registered with the Depository Trust Corp. (DTC).

FDI-1867K-A © 2022 EDWARD D. JONES & CO., L.P. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.



**Dawny Corsaut**

916-769-7462 | 354-3333



CW Inc. Lic# 01365643

**RMHomesForSale.com**





**KAREN HOBERG**

**(916) 947-6910**

karen@rmhl.net Lic. #00670687

**EXPERIENCE • KNOWLEDGE • RESULTS**



**murieta health club**

"Fun, friendly and professional"

**Erin Howard • 354-8677**

7281 Lone Pine Dr. Ste 105 • Murieta Plaza

**Call (209) 745-1551**  
to advertise with us today!

River Valley Times  
Messenger Publishing Group





**Publisher,  
Paul V. Scholl**

River Valley Times is a member of **Messenger Publishing Group**

To submit your articles, information, announcements or letters to the editor, please email to:  
Publisher@mpg8.com.  
**Be sure to place in the subject field "Attention to Publisher". If you do not have email access, please call us at (916) 773-1111.**

**RIVER VALLEY TIMES**

Serving Rancho Murieta, Sloughouse and Sacramento County.

It is the intent of the *River Valley Times* to strive for an objective point of view in the reporting of news and events. It is understood that the opinions expressed on these pages are those of the authors and cartoonists and are not necessarily the opinions of the publisher or our contributors.

The *River Valley Times* is not responsible for unsolicited manuscripts or materials. The entire contents of the *River Valley Times* are copyrighted. Ownership of all advertising created and/or composed by the MPG is with the publishing company and written permission to reproduce the same must be obtained from the publisher.

Subscriptions should be mailed to *River Valley Times*, 7144 Fair Oaks Blvd. Suite 5, Carmichael, CA 95608.

The *River Valley Times* is published twice monthly. Call (916) 773-1111 for more information.

We are proud members of these newspaper associations.



**Do You Need Your Legal Ads Published?**

**We can help.**

Call us now to place your legal advertising!



**916-773-1111**

All legal ads published by Messenger Publishing Group.

## TheRiverValleyTimes.com



# CALL-A-PRO



**AZTEC SOLAR**  
INC.

**JACK STANGER**  
SOLAR ENERGY EXPERT  
*Electric • Hot Water • Pool Heating*  
**(916) 853-2700 • (916) 802-1830**  
**FREE ESTIMATES**

LC# 550110

**jack@aztecsolar.com • www.aztecsolar.com**



**ANDRADE**

**HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING**  
**Residential & Commercial**  
Repair • Maintenance • Replacement  
**Tune Up**  
**Andrade Heating & Air Conditioning**  
**(916) 747-9882**

*"We truly believe honesty is the best policy."*  
~AJ & Jen Andrade

  
License #955437



**BEST PRICE Stump Grinding & Tree Service**

CALL Jessie –

**FREE ESTIMATES**

209-210-0625



**25 Years Experience!**  
**CRAMER CONCRETE, Inc.**

**Driveway • Patio • Walkway • Pool Decks • Concrete Removal**  
Stamped • Salt Finish • Exposed Aggregate • Colored • Broom Finish  
*Call a trusted Murieta/Wilton Contractor*  
References available in your neighborhood

**FREE WRITTEN ESTIMATES**  
**Glen Cramer (916) 871-2561**  
**www.cramerconcrete.com**



**Apex**  
Rancho Murieta Residents  
Owned & Operated  
*"Particular Homeowners Deserve Apex"*

**Quality Service At Competitive Prices!!!**

We currently provide pest protection for over 500 homes in your community!!

**Call Today and Compare!**  
Be sure and ask about our Murieta Special!!!  
**354-0209**



**Honor Thy Elders...**  
Senior Living Transitions, LLC  
• All Care Facilities  
• Independent Living • Respite  
• In Home Care Providers  
• Companion • VA Aid  
• Medical Alert • Estate Planning  
Gerontology Degree  
**Caryl Abshire, LNHA**  
**www.HonorThyElders.com**  
**916 320-3631**

Over 25 years experience



**"The Low-rate Leader for Purchase & Refinance Loans"**  
**Bruce Boal**  
California Home Loans  
*RM resident over 20 years!*

916  
417-2001

NMLS# 1070092



**TREE TECH SERVICES**  
*Serving the Green Industry*

A subsidiary of TreeTechnology, Inc.  
Free Estimates • Senior Discounts  
**SENIOR DISCOUNT**  
**FREE ESTIMATES**  
**CERTIFIED ARBORISTS**  
ST.CONT.LIC.#653836  
**www.treetechservices.com**





**Mr. Handyman**  
Home Improvement Professionals  
Professional • Safe • Reliable • Fully Insured  
(916) 487-8655  
**www.mrhandyman.com/arden-arcade**

SENIOR DISCOUNTS!

**We Express Excellence in Auto Repair**

*All Insurance Claims Welcome*  
**Auto Body**  
*Written Lifetime Warranty*

**EXPRESSIONS**

  
**685-5078**  
**9734 Dino Dr., Elk Grove**  
**www.autobodyexpressions.com**





**db**  
**DEB BRITTAN TEAM**  
*unlocking your dreams*  
IN RANCHO MURIETA

**COMPLIMENTARY HOME STAGING**  
*just mention this ad*  
**(916) 932.6693**  
**RanchoMurietaHomes.com**

REALTOR® & RANCHO MURIETA RESIDENT

DRE# 02056360

**DICK'S RANCHO**  
**Glass**  
New & Repaired

**Fogged or Leaky Windows?**

**Patio Door Rollers, Custom Mirrors, Shower Doors & Window Screens**

*Since 1956*  
**363-6554**

**Bob's BASEBALL Tours**  
**Sports Lover's Tour**  
See an NHL & NBA game, visit Pro Football Hall of Fame and tour Lambeau Field & see 4 MLB games from April 8-16  
\$2,800/person based on double hotel occupancy

**Ultimate Baseball Tour**  
See 7 MLB in 11 days including Yankee Stadium, Fenway Park & Wrigley Field. Also included: Pro Football and Baseball Halls of Fame and a day at the Little League World Series!  
August 11-21, 2025

Please call or text for FREE brochure 507-217-1326 or visit our website:  
**www.bobsbaseballtours.com**



# Motorist Rescued from Flooded Scott Road



A Jeep that was stranded in Deer Creek remains parked on Scott Road following a Deer Creek water rescue on Feb. 13. Photo courtesy of Sac Metro

By Gail Bullen  
River Valley Times  
Reporter

## RANCHO MURIETA, CA (MPG)

- A motorist stranded on Scott Road after attempting to drive through a flooded section of Deer Creek near Payen Road was safely rescued on Feb. 13, according to the Sacramento Metropolitan Fire District.

After the incident was reported at 6:50 p.m., a battalion from Sac Metro and also a battalion from the Folsom Fire Department were dispatched to the scene.

According to Capt. Mark Nunez, the response included three boat units, 11 firefighters trained in

swift water rescue and boat operations, two engine companies and an ambulance.

“Upon arrival, the crews discovered a jeep approximately 20 yards in the water, submerged in about 12 to 16 inches of swiftly-moving water,” Nunez said. “Crews from Boat 35 (Folsom) rescued the female individual from the Jeep using an inflatable boat by walking out to her.”

“The vehicle was still operational and the crew safely drove it back to dry land with her inside the jeep,” he said.

The rescued individual was medically evaluated and was released on scene.

Nunez said Scott Road

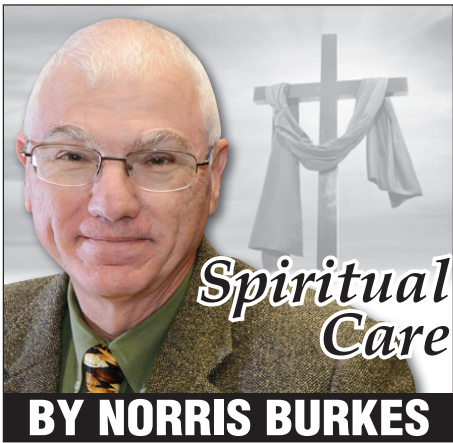
was closed in both directions before the incident. He reminded residents not to risk driving through flooded roadways, noting that as little as six inches of swift-moving water can cause a vehicle to stall or be swept away.

“Our victim was fortunate that the river wasn’t higher as it could have made the rescue much more difficult for crews,” Nunez said.

Deer Creek regularly floods Scott Road during heavy rains. Information about the water levels in Deer Creek is available at <https://sacflood.org>.

*This story is also available online at [therivervalleytimes.com](http://therivervalleytimes.com).* ★

# Chaplain Gets a Clint Eastwood Lesson



OK, folks, today I’m asking for your best Clint Eastwood impression by repeating these words aloud: “A man’s gotta know his limitations.”

If Eastwood was doing his portrayal of “Dirty Harry,” today, he’d need to be more inclusive. “Everyone’s gotta know their limitations.”

Nonetheless, the maxim still gives solid guidance. However, it’s advice I neglected 15 years ago when I was deployed to an undisclosed location far out onto the sand dunes.

It was a blisteringly hot afternoon when I decided to take a stroll toward our perimeter defenses in hopes of making a morale visit with our Security Forces personnel.

As I walked into their camp, I found a group of cops anxiously unpacking ammunition boxes.

“What’s up, guys?” I asked, a little short of situational awareness.

“We’re a little too busy to chat, Chaplain,” said a perturbed sergeant.

I must have looked a little hurt because their lieutenant appealed me with an explanation.

“Intel reports suggest an attack tonight, so we need to load ammunition magazines for our M-16s.”

“In that case, you’ll need all the help you can get,” I said.

“Agreed,” said an airman offering me a stool and a short tutorial on handling ammunition.

Gratefully, I was soon multitasking — loading magazines and facilitating the chat session I’d come for. I was a happy chappy talking with folks about food, families and weather.

After about 20 minutes, I heard someone loudly clearing their throat. I turned around to see an orange-vested officer standing on our perimeter.

“Chaplain, just what the hell do you think

you’re doing?” he demanded.

“Morale visit, Sir. Just chatting up our cops.”

“I mean with your hands!” he said pointing to the magazine I was loading.

Note: This is the moment where I disclose my previously undisclosed location — on the dunes of Malabar, Florida. This was a military exercise, a dress rehearsal for combat.

The irritated officer was an inspector.

“Captain Burkles,” he growled. “You KNOW chaplains are non-combatants and forbidden by the Geneva Convention to have anything to do with weapons — most especially during an inspection.”

Wowzer, I can tell you that a superior addressing a chaplain by rank is like hearing your mom using your middle name.

He was right, of course. Chaplains who violate this rule in a real deployment are subject to court martial.

I knew the rule applied to guns but hadn’t given thought to magazines. Obviously I’d lost sight of my limitations.

As a military chaplain, I had to abide by certain rules of engagement that limited my religious freedoms. For instance, in addition to being unarmed, I couldn’t proselytize, nor could I bring parochial prayers to mandatory formations.

Some of my pastor colleagues balked at such restrictions. However, by knowing and accepting my limitations, I was rewarded the high honor of being present with service-members as they walked into harm’s way.

These limitations aren’t much different for many of you who carry your faith into workplaces. A teacher can’t preach to his students. An executive can’t thump her employees with biblical proclamations. A foreman can’t limit his hiring to those from his faith preference. These rules of engagement are about respect, not political correctness.

However, these limitations needn’t keep you from becoming a light in your field. The contrary is true. Keeping the rules of engagement should mean that your light shines ever brighter as it shows your esteem for co-workers.

By the way, I ran afoul of one other limitation that day. The Florida heat index shot up so high that 10 people dropped from heat exhaustion. When Slap Happy Chappy became No. 11, the orange vest yelled into his megaphone, “ENDEX.” (End Exercise.)

All together now — “A man’s gotta know his limitations!”

This column was excerpted from my book “Tell it to the Chaplain.” ★

SACRAMENTO’S LEADING ARTIFICIAL TURF INSTALLER

ARTIFICIAL TURF • PAVERS • CONCRETE

TOTAL TURF

\$500 OFF

For The Month of January

Must be over 1,000 sq. ft.

- 100% Made in USA Turf
- 100% PFA + Lead Free
- Locally Owned & Operated
- 45 Combined Years Of Artificial Turf Experience

- We Never Use Cheap Or Foreign Turf
- Licensed & Insured, No Subcontractors
- Over 1.000 Successfully Completed Jobs
- PGA Certified Putting Greens

Tom, Total Turf Owner

CALL TOM FOR A FREE ESTIMATE

916-671-0070

TotalTurf.com | LIC #1125443

HOURS: 7AM-8PM / M-Sat