

'Harmony Across Time' to Play at State Railroad Museum

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Concerts in the Park Returns in May

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# East Sacramento News

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Bringing You Community News For Over 30 Years

APRIL 11, **2025** 

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# ROOTING UNTIL THEY TURN THE LIGHTS OUT



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### Two Sides of a Coin

### Curiosity Feeds the Art of Mike and Laurie Blanchard

By J.G. Wirt

**SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)** - Mike and Laurie Blanchard have grown older and wiser, yet they still think like art kids looking to put on a show.

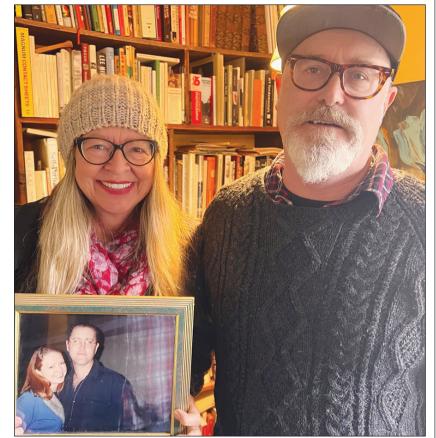
Their current projects are both in print: hers a healthy-lifestyle magazine and his a vintage skateboarding photo retrospective.

Married 30 years, the Blanchards also take side roads into digital publishing, painting, photography, music, tarot reading, gardening, home improvement, travel, rat rods and old motorcycles. For them, the more interests, the better. And they are blessed to have each other as in-house muses and constructive critics.

During a two-hour visit at their Rosemont home, the couple shared with the newspaper how they indulge their individual and collective interests.

Their collaboration began when each played in Sacramento-area bands in the 1990s. Their acts supported each other in local gigs and road shows. Later, she added a June Carter-meets-Grace Slick kind of harmony to his Americana quintet, Mike Blanchard & The Californios.

Visual art also came later to Laurie Blanchard, just prior to the pandemic.



Laurie and Mike Blanchard, with an image from younger days, pose for a March 15 photo in their Rosemont home. Photo by J.G. Wirt

She said that her husband's ease at creating sketches or watercolors eventually led her to take paint to canvas. "He was always artistic and I wasn't," she said. "Watching him create, I was always, 'What a beautiful creative outlet' but I didn't think I Continued on Page 2

# U.S. Representative Ami Bera, M.D. News Release SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) - On March 27, U.S. Representative Ami Bera, M.D. (CA-06) responded to a newly released U.S. Postal Service Office of

Postal Service Office of Inspector General (OIG) audit report on mail theft, a report he formally requested following widespread complaints from Sacramento County residents about ongoing theft and vandalism of their mail.

The audit uncovered

serious deficiencies in how local postal facilities track, secure and inspect mailboxes, particularly highlighting severe gaps in oversight of arrow key usage.

"Despite extensive collaborative efforts from my office with USPS and USPIS to address the persistent concerns raised by constituents, the findings of this audit are completely unacceptable," said Representative Bera. "The audit identified serious systemic issues including missing and unaccounted-for arrow keys, inadequate oversight and a troubling lack of mandatory inspections. The Postal Service must immediately implement the Inspector General's recommendations to restore public trust and ensure that Sacramento County residents have the secure and reliable mail services they

deserve."

The Office of Inspector General audit focused on three postal facilities in Sacramento County: Sacramento Main Post Office (Royal Oaks Drive), Fort Sutter Station (Alhambra Boulevard) and Rancho Cordova Post Office (Progress Court).

Key findings include:

"The Sacramento Main Post Office, Fort Sutter Station and Rancho Cordova Main Post Office did not properly track their arrow key inventories."

"There is no tracking

mechanism in place that distinguishes whether a Cluster Box Unit (CBU) is postal-owned or privately owned."
"Local management at

the Sacramento Main Post Office, Fort Sutter Station and Rancho Cordova Main Post Office did not perform Continued on Page 4

Continued

# IS IT EVER TOO LATE TO TALK TO GOD?



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### **Four Women of Distinction Honored**



Honorees with members of the Greater Sacramento Chapter of APAPA. Photo courtesy of Tia Gemmell Media 2025

Asian Pacific American Public Affairs Association News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

March is Women's

- March is Women's History Month and to celebrate the month, chapter leaders from the Greater Sacramento Chapter of the Asian Pacific American Public Affairs Association (APAPA-GSC) recognized four women leaders who have made a difference in the lives of Sacramento residents at its "Voices of Impact: Women of Distinction Awards Night."

The celebration, which also doubled as a fundraising event, recently was held at the APAPA headquarters in Sacramento.

Sharing her own story

of inspiration, Gov. Gavin Newsom's Appointments Secretary Morgan Carvajal delivered the keynote remarks to elected officials and distinguished guests. Among some of the presenters included Senator Christopher Cabaldon, the first Filipino-American elected to the State Senate, who introduced honoree Quirina Orozco.

"There are so many excellent women leaders in Sacramento and in Northern California so we had to narrow down our list to women who made significant impact in our community," said Jacqui Nguyen, Solano Community College Trustee and Co-chair of the Voices of Impact event.

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### Two Sides of a Coin

Continued from Page 1 could do it. And I had this huge block on visual art and I had to work through that in order to get to the point where I could even try."

"Once I could get past that self-judgment, I began to recognize that I had my own unique way, and he definitely supported that and encouraged that," Laurie Blanchard said. "Generally, he stays in his lane unless I ask his opinion."

"Her interests are different than mine and her inner psychology is different than mine, so what she's going to paint is a lot different than what I do," Mike Blanchard said.

He has studied and practiced photography, painting and general design since junior college in Santa Barbara; he also earned a journalism degree from California State University, Sacramento.

Mike Blanchard was a photographer for Thrasher magazine and covered the 1980s skateboard scene with a keen eye and a fast lens. His earlier band, the alt-country/punk Tattooed Love Dogs, started in the 1980s, is in the Sacramento Area Music Awards (SAMMIES) Hall of Fame.

Later, while the couple were bringing up three sons, Mike Blanchard's day job was as the hands-on manager of a repair shop. It fed his passion for vintage import cars and unusual two-wheeled vehicles. Today, his love for vintage film cameras feeds his day job as the e-commerce manager for a camera shop.

Laurie Blanchard



Mike and Laurie Blanchard are blessed to have each other as constructive critics. Photo courtesy of Laurie Blanchard

worked in sales and

marketing during the fami-

ly-raising days. Previously,

she was a Nashville song-

writer and musician, both

solo and in a group called

Her eventual dive into

visual art landed in a

distinctive mode of fin-

ger-painting. Commissions

for original art to deco-

rate clients' homes keep

Laurie Blanchard busy at

a Midtown Sacramento

studio and she does tarot

readings for individu-

als and at area events.

Recently, she added other

spiritual studies and credits

to her role as a seeker and

it together by exploring

apart. She has gone over-

seas on charity missions

and often treks out of the

area for spiritual retreats

He has been known to

take working tours to the

East Coast, ride a vintage

motorcycle to Monterey or

pilot his hot rod solo to the

and workshops.

The Blanchards keep

teacher.

Her Six Daughters.



Mike Blanchard painted a series of images of vintage spark plugs. Photo courtesy of Mike

"Her interests are different than mine and her inner psychology is different than mine, so what she's going to paint is a lot different than

-Mike Blanchard

what I do."

Bonneville Salt Flats.

All this is to say that the Blanchards are not your joined-at-the-hip artsy couple. They both say that their approach to art couldn't have happened with another partner. And they also say others should tune into their own partners' creative and spiritual

During the newspaper visit, Laurie Blanchard was more meditative

and cerebral while Mike Blanchard was more declarative, although he also noted that turning an idea into art requires creative immersion.

They agree that art comes from curiosity. And they advocate turning off the TV to open channels to creativity. Other modern screens and social influences also detract from the creative potential, they say.

"When you spend time creating, you're unplugging from the machine," Laurie Blanchard said of the marketing and political message streams. "There is something almost subversive in creating art."

In their unfussy yet put-together great room are some of their recent paintings. Hers include florals, aspens and faces. His latest are still-life renderings of vintage spark plugs. Laurie Blanchard said the florals and trees have large appeal to women. But Laurie Blanchard said her own muse goes wild for



painted aspen pieces. Photo by J.G. Wirt

her face portraits, which she paints for herself.

"Those are the easiest," Laurie Blanchard said, "when I'm just doing it for me. I'm in flow state. I'm just doing. And sometimes, it goes horribly awry and goes in the dumpster. But sometimes, there's a breakthrough and you find some new thing."

Mike Blanchard has shown and sold his art and photography at local shows and to individual clients. He described doing extensive research into vintage Vespa motor scooters to paint a piece for a collector of Vespas and art.

"What the client got was something that is individual, meaningful to them in the commission," he said.

The Blanchards' onetime print magazine, Rust, profiled other artists, motor-heads, tattooists and models. After going out of print, it later became a digital showcase for features by Mike Blanchard and others on niche interests ranging from weird bicycles to vintage motorcycles, to craftspeople, racing legends and rarely seen cars.

Both Blanchards have extensive collaborative and promotional networks due to their decades in the local culture, and they use social media and word of mouth to sell their work

"She has a better clientele than I have," Mike Blanchard joked. "She sells way more paintings than I do."

Laurie Blanchard replied to her husband, "You have so many projects going on. I just hustle a little bit more. It doesn't always work but I get it into cafes. I do a lot of florals and I try to keep it reasonably priced."

She also posts images of new paintings on social media and her website and hangs her work at shows.

Laurie Blanchard has

completed a solo album, which the couple is planning to self-release and promote.

And her Spirited Soul quarterly has potential for community-building and digital reach, she said

But for now, show and tell is over. The Blanchards, elders of the Sacramento creative scene, are heading out to pick up the grandkids for the day.

Get the latest from Laurie Blanchard at SpiritedSoulMagazine. com. See Mike Blanchard's work at Rustmag.com. ★

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### **SMUD** to Hold **Public Proposed Rate Joins Committee of 100 Action Workshops**

SMUD News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - The SMUD Board of Directors is holding two public workshops and a public hearing to discuss proposed rate changes.

The Chief Executive Officer & General Manager's Reports and Recommendation on Rates and Services, released by SMUD CEO & General Manager Paul Lau, outlines a proposed rate increase of 3 percent on Jan. 1, 2026, and another 3 percent increase on Jan. 1, 2027. The proposed changes also include an optional Time-of-Day (low use) Rate, updates to transmission rates and other miscellaneous changes.

While SMUD works hard to control costs and operate efficiently, the need for a modest rate increase is attributed to several factors including wildfire prevention and mitigation, new generation projects, higher commodity costs for California clean energy compliance, infrastructure investment to maintain a reliable grid, the Folsom Administrative Operations Building and increased operating costs due to inflation, according to SMUD officials.

SMUD officials say that SMUD is committed to keeping rate increases within inflation, and if the proposed changes are approved, SMUD's rates would remain among the lowest rates in the state,



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currently on average more than 50- percent lower than neighboring PG&E's rates.

Detailed information on the proposed rate action and a complete copy of the Chief Executive Officer and General Manager's Report and Recommendation on Rates and Services can be found on smud.org/RateInfo.

SMUD will work closely with customers and other stakeholders, including community groups, service organizations, business groups, elected officials and more, to discuss these

In addition, two public workshops and a public hearing will be held for customers to learn more about the process and comment on the proposed changes.

Meetings will be held in-person at SMUD's Headquarters building and virtually via Zoom.

A public workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, April 30 at 5:30 p.m., followed by another public workshop on Tuesday, May 13 at 10 a.m. Additionally, a public hearing will be held on Wednesday, June 4

Accommodations are

available for disabled individuals. If you need a hearing assistance device or other aid, or have questions about the proposal, visit smud.org/ RateInfo or call SMUD at 855-736-7655.

Written comments can be emailed to ContactUs@ smud.org or mailed to SMUD, P.O. Box 15830, B256, Sacramento, CA 95852-0830.

As the nation's sixth-largest, community-owned, not-for-profit electric service provider, SMUD has been providing low-cost, reliable electricity to Sacramento County for more than 75 years. SMUD is a recognized industry leader and award winner for its innovative energy efficiency programs, renewable power technologies and for its sustainable solutions for a healthier environment. In 2023, SMUD's power supply was, on average, 78 percent carbon free, and SMUD has a goal to reach zero carbon in its electricity production by 2030.

For more information on SMUD's Zero Carbon Plan and its customer programs, visit smud.org.

# **Metro Chamber CEO**



Robert Heidt is president and CEO of the Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Metro Chamber of Commerce

Sacramento Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The Sacramento Metro Chamber announced that the U.S. Chamber of Commerce has named Robert Heidt, president and CEO of the Sacramento Metro Chamber, as one of 16 new executives to its distinguished Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100 (CCC100).

"On behalf of the Sacramento Metro Chamber, I proudly congratulate our president and CEO, Robert Heidt, on his appointment to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100," said Keri Thomas, vice president of Sutter Health External Affairs and chair of the Sacramento Metro Chamber Board of Directors. "This

prestigious honor reflects his leadership and commitment to strengthening our region's business community; and his voice at the national level will elevate our region ensuring our businesses are well represented in key economic discussions."

With two decades of proven leadership and experience in the chamber industry, Heidt joined the Sacramento Metro Chamber in January 2024. This important new role will help to elevate the voice of the Sacramento Metro Chamber on a national level. Heidt will collaborate with other experienced leaders to network, build partnerships, discuss current issues, share expertise, advise the U.S. Chamber's board of directors, enhance lobbying and coalition work, recommend programming and strengthen outreach to the business and chamber communities.

"It is truly an honor to join the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Committee of 100, a group that brings together some of the most experienced and dedicated chamber leaders in the country," Heidt said.

"The conversations within CCC100 have the power to shape policies and initiatives that not only impact our region but also communities across the nation and around the world. Just recently, we were engaged in discussions on international relations at the ambassador's home in Washington, D.C., a testament to the global reach and significance of the work. I look forward to contributing to these critical conversations and ensuring the voice of our Capital Region's business community is heard at the highest levels."





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### Sacramento State's Spring **Enrollment Hits Historic High**



3.5% following expanded recruitment efforts at high schools and community colleges. Photo courtesy of Sacramento State/Andrea Price

By Cynthia Hubert, Sacramento State University

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) -Sacramento State's spring enrollment this year was the largest in the university's history, continuing to buck trends and exceeding the California State University's (CSU) enrollment goals for the campus.

The official Spring 2025 head count stands at 30,164. That's 197 more students than last year, said Brian Henley, interim senior associate vice president for Enrollment Management.

"That gives us a record number of students enrolled for a spring term in the history of the university," Henley said.

The number exceeds by 3.5% the enrollment target for the academic year the CSU system set for Sac

Across the country, enrollment in community colleges and four-year universities appears to be on the upswing after years of declines in the wake of COVID-19, national data suggests. Last fall, enrollment increased by a modest 0.4% above levels achieved prior to the pandemic, according to the National Student Clearinghouse Research

Even as other institutions saw post-pandemic declines, Sac State's enrollment held steady. Henley said this spring's enrollment bump is the result of hard work behind the scenes.

"We're getting the message out about Sac State, and that message is very positive," he said.

Admissions staffers have been visiting high schools and community colleges, attending college fairs and messaging prospective students via text and email about Sac State's attributes, said Henley.

"One of the things that we are emphasizing is that we have great programs and services that can help all students be successful,' he added. "We are here to meet their needs."

Sac State's tuition remains relatively low compared to other California universities, Henley pointed out, and financial aid is available to most students. The university boasts programs such as a food pantry and peer mentoring that can help clear obstacles to students' academic goals.

"Across the board, we're just doing a very good job of delivering our message, and it's making a difference," Henley said.

### **Golf Council Adds Junior Tournament**

Sacramento Golf Council News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - A new Sacramento City Junior Fall Classic tournament for golfers ages 7-11 years will be played Oct. 4 and 5 at William Land Golf Course. Tom Bacon has been named tournament director. This brings the total to 26 city and county golf tournaments that the Sacramento Golf Council sponsors each

Headed by Mark Perry, the Sacramento Golf Council is a nonprofit, the only one of its kind in California. The annual tournaments bring together all skill levels, ages and genders to compete in both team and individual championships. City tournaments are played at Bing Maloney, Bartley Cavanaugh, William Land and Haggin Oaks golf courses. The County tournaments are played at Mather and Ancil Hoffman golf courses.

According to Perry, "Golfers travel from all over Northern and Southern California to compete in our championships. We had junior golfers from other countries. Golfers consistently rate the SGC Championships as the best-run



Mark Perry, right, president of the Sacramento Golf Council, talks with Tom Bacon, director for a new tournament for juniors set for Oct. 4-5 at William Land Golf Course. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Golf Council

tournaments in the state."

In addition to tournament management, in 2024 the council offered \$11,000 in college scholarships for deserving junior golfers. They were the Peggy Dodds Memorial Scholarships, \$3,000 each for a boy and girl; the Sacramento Golf Council Scholarship, \$2,500; and one \$2,500 Morton Golf Foundation Scholarship.

The Council conducts six junior tournaments with the mission of keeping the entry fees affordable and accessible to junior players.

Visit sacgolfcouncil.org for tournament schedule and golfing news.

### **Four Women of Distinction Honored**

Continued from Page 1

"From a well-known leader to a former Sacramento mayoral candidate, our honorees are individuals who are making a positive impact in our Sacramento communities. Congrats to all the amazing honorees!"

The honorees who were recognized included:

Karina Talamantes is the current vice mayor for the City of Sacramento and received the Innovative Leadership Award.

Quirina Orozco was re-elected to the City of West Sacramento in 2024. As a breast cancer survivor, Orozco has dedicated her career in fighting crime as a deputy district attorney for Sacramento County. Orozco was awarded the Impactful Leadership Award.

Linda Lui is the outgoing president of the Sacramento Chinese of IndoChina Friendship Association. For the past decade, Lui held the position of president and provided free vegetarian meals to thousands of families in South Sacramento. During COVID, Lui and

her board of directors provided free masks to the community. Lui received the Excellence in Community Outreach

Dr. Flo Cofer was a mayoral candidate in 2024 when she ran for Sacramento

Dr. Cofer was also the chair of Sacramento Measure U, a sales tax with funds promised to go to underserved communities. Dr. Cofer has received the Rising Star Award.

"Congratulations to our honorees as they have selflessly given back to the community through their dedication and hard work," said Romer Cristobal, Newsom's gubernatorial appointee and co-chair of of the Voices of Impact event. "These women leaders are mothers, sisters, aunts and pioneers. We celebrate them and their positive contributions to our community. Hats

Members of the Greater Sacramento Chapter raised nearly \$9,000, which will go toward leadership development and student internship programs.

Messenger Publishing Group

### **Chocolate Chase 5K to Benefit Craniofacial Awareness**

By MPG Staff

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - The inaugural Chocolate Chase 5K has been scheduled for Sunday May 18, at Crocker Park in Sacramento.

The Chocolate Chase is a family fun/ friendly event consisting of a 5K run, onemile walk and superhero kids dash. The post-race venue will include a cleft dog rescue, therapy dogs and multiple booths celebrating kids and individuals with craniofacial differences.

Whether the public participates in the timed 5K race, one-mile walk, kids dash or just comes out to celebrate and support, the event will have something for everyone. Best of all: chocolate treats.

The post-race venue in Crocker Park will provide an opportunity for families and friends to connect. Event participants



The inaugural Chocolate Chase 5K has been scheduled for Sunday, May 18 at Crocker Park in Sacramento. Photo courtesy of Chocolate

will receive medals and, of course, chocolate treats. Event proceeds will benefit Faces of Tomorrow, a local nonprofit that provides craniofacial/cleft surgeries worldwide.

For more, visit the event website at chocolatechase5k.com.

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### Rep. Bera Responds to **General Mail Theft Report**



An audit by the U.S. Postal Service Office of Inspector General uncovered serious deficiencies in how local postal facilities track, secure and inspect mailboxes. Photo by Arti Kh/Pexels

Continued from Page 1

the annual safety inspections for the condition of blue collection boxes, CBUs, and green relay boxes."

The report outlines why these failures occurred, their impact on the community and specific steps for corrective action. The Office of Inspector General has also issued implementation deadlines and will require proof of compliance.

Representative Bera's office will closely monitor the U.S. Postal Service's progress in addressing these critical issues and will continue advocating on behalf of Sacramento County residents to ensure their mail is delivered securely and on

The full report, "Mail Theft Mitigation and Response: Sacramento, CA," can be viewed at uspsoig.gov/reports.

### Youth Orchestra's 'Harmony **Across Time' Plays April 26** at State Railroad Museum



Purple Silk musicians perform at the California State Railroad Museum. Photo courtesy of Purple Silk Music Education Foundation

#### **Communications** News Release

#### SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)

- The California State Railroad Museum & Foundation are proud to welcome the Great Wall Youth Orchestra for special live musical performances on Saturday, April 26.

The "Harmony Across Time" concert uses music to connect railroad history with the present and future for an immersive cultural experience. With a visual backdrop surrounded by historic locomotives, railcars and railroad stories that have lasted through the ages, the multi-sensory concert experience inside the museum is in partnership with the Purple Silk Music Education Foundation.

Student musicians will perform on traditional

Chinese instruments, adding an extra layer of cultural immersion to the

The live performance and public schedule for April 26 is as follows: 11:30 a.m. to 12:30

p.m.: Small "spot" performances at various locations throughout the museum.

1:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.: Main performance in Roundhouse.

2:30 p.m. to 3 p.m.: Audience and museum visitors are invited to meet the talented students and see the instruments after the conclusion of the live performance.

Visitors who come to experience the concert may also want to explore and tour the world-class museum. Of particular interest, the "Chinese Workers' Experience" exhibit in the first-floor Transcontinental

Gallery showcases and shares stories of the of Chinese railroad workers who were essential in the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. In addition, the Railroad Museum is home to the priceless "lost" Gold Spike and precious artifacts cast at the same time as the gold spike used at the Promontory Summit ceremony, plus the famous "Last Spike" painting by Thomas Hill that illustrates the scene of the famous joining of the Union and Central Pacific Railroads.

The concert is included with the price of museum admission. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Regular admission is \$12 for adults, \$6 for youth (ages 6 to 17), and free for children 5 and

For more, visit californiarailroad.museum.

#### **ABOUT TOWN**

#### Fairytale Town Spring Eggstravaganza April 19-20

Families are invited to hop into Spring at Fairytale Town's Spring Eggstravaganza on Saturday and Sunday, April 19-20, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. (weather permitting). Spring Eggstravaganza activities include all-day egg hunts on the Mother Goose Lawn, egg-finding games, creative crafts, engaging scavenger hunts, fairy visits and exciting prizes.

Advance tickets for Spring Eggstravaganza are \$12 for Fairytale Town members and \$15 for non-members. Fairytale Town is 3901 Land Park Drive, Sacramento 95822.

Buy tickets at fairytaletown.org.

Fairytale Town is home to more than 25 three-dimensional play sets based on favorite fairytales and nursery rhymes, a family of 22 rare and miniature breed animals, three interactive learning gardens, and two performing arts stages.

#### **Pocket Community Day** Train Ride April 26

The Pocket community can reconnect with friends and neighbors while traveling through the scenic Yolo countryside aboard the River Fox Train at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, April 26.

Enjoy open seating in indoor cars, equipped with climate control and restrooms, or in outdoor patio cars, which feature flaps and heaters during cooler

Adult tickets are \$59.95, excluding fees. Two children under 13 are free with one Adult paid admission. Pets are welcome at an additional fee.

Get tickets and information at riverfoxtrain.com/pocket.

#### **Holy Spirit's Tri-Tip-to-Go** April 27

Holy Spirit's Knights of Columbus council is holding its annual Tri-Tip-to-Go dinner on Sunday, April 27. Pre-orders are required and can be made at hs-knights.

Proceeds benefit Horses for Healing, a nonprofit that provides therapy for children and adults to help facilitate growth, learning and healing.

Don't miss out on this excellent, affordable meal.

#### Cinco de Mayo Party May 3 at Elks Lodge 6

Mariachi music, salsa dancers, and

dining and dancing are on the menu for Elks Lodge No. 6's Cinco de Mayo celebration from 5 to 11 p.m. Saturday, May 3 at the lodge, 6446 Riverside Blvd.

Mariachi Nuevo Continental and Yemaya Dance Group will entertain, and Los Elegantes will provide the dance

Tickets are \$40 per person. Call 916-422-6666 for tickets.

#### **Area Museums Offer Plenty** of Experiences

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

California Museum - Our War

Too: Women in Service is a groundbreaking special exhibit honoring the nearly 350,000 American women who answered the call to serve their country during World War II. Made up of unique and color-

ful artifacts from The National WWII Museum's collection, the exhibit explores the efforts, struggles, and accomplishments of these servicewomen, the impacts of which extend into the present day.

Through May 4. Details at californiamuseum.org.

#### California Automobile Museum –

Sixty Years of Mustang. A comprehensive history of the Mustang, from when it first hit the roads in 1965 to the current era of Mustangs.

Highlighting stories from prolific names in Mustang history like Saleen, Shelby and Iacocca. In addition, interactive experiences and digital displays showcase the iconic image of the Mustang over the decades.

#### **Elks Lodge 6 Calendar of Events**

Elks Lodge 6 Sunday Breakfast, 8:30 am-11 am every Sunday; \$15 tax included. Good time and place to connect with friends and family.

Yoga, Monday 12 p.m., Wednesday 3:30 p.m. Lodge members free.

Martial Arts, Monday 5 p.m.

Pickleball, Monday, Wednesday, 9 a.m.-12 p.m.; Thursday, 4:30-7:30 p.m.; Sunday, 4-7 p.m.

Karaoke Nights, Thursdays and Saturdays, 7 p.m.

Wednesday Night Dinner, 5:30 to 7 p.m. See elks6.net for weekly menu. ★



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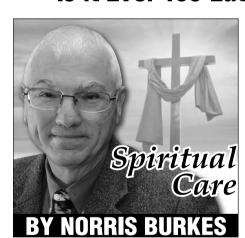
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### Is it Ever Too Late to Talk to God?



During my career as a healthcare chaplain, I would often feel like I was pastoring a parade. That's because, by definition, my chaplain relationship with patients was a temporary one.

I suppose that's why I am relieved when a patient asks if they can call me "Pastor" instead of "Chaplain." I hear their request as an invitation to assume the more personal role of their family pastor.

However, that's not quite how it started with a patient I first knew as "Mr. Penny." I call him "mister" because that's how he introduced himself when I entered his hospital room at Houston Northwest Medical Center in 1992.

I reciprocated his formality by introducing myself as "Chaplain Burkes."

At first, I thought he was using titles in recognition of our age difference. But eventually it seemed like it was more about him wanting to distance himself from the three-piece-suited chaplain who matched his stereotypical idea of the "preacher."

Doctors told Penny he had inoperable brain cancer, but he didn't want to talk about that. The balding, bony man just wanted to chat. During his next several hospitalizations we

talked sports – either the Houston Oilers or my lunchtime basketball games with local clergy.

For Penny, the greater the emotional distance we could maintain from reality, the better.

Finally, though, on his last hospitalization, his nurse summoned me from lunch to tell me Penny had a favor to ask.

Thinking this sounded like the call to a deathbed confession, I made a quick exit from

the cafeteria toward the ICU.

I walked into his room to find his wife stroking his fevered head.

"Oh good," she said. "I'm glad you're here

today and not playing basketball." "Knee problems," I said.

"He wants to ask you something." I looked at the figure on the bed, twisted and ghostly. His raspy breathing suggested conversation, so I leaned over the bed and called to him as if announcing my presence

through a dense fog. "Mr. Penny, it's Chaplain Burkes," I said. "Is here something you want to ask me?

He nodded. "Teach me..." he said, his voice He took a fuller breath and added, "Teach me

to pray." Confused by his sudden approach to an intimate moment, I searched his wife's face for

context. She was chewing on her thumbnail. "He's

embarrassed."

"Embarrassed?" I asked. "He's afraid he's being hypocritical to wait

until his death to talk to God," she added. I nodded. It's a common reasoning I hear from patients.

Jesus summarily dismissed this poor logic in his conversation with two insurgents occupying crosses on either side of his.

The first man spent his last hours mocking Jesus and goading him to use his power to save

But the other guy was quite the opposite. He felt shame for his past life, so he asked Jesus, "Remember me when you enter your kingdom."

Jesus swiftly responded. "Today you will be with me in paradise."

Instead of disqualifying the dying man for being hypocritically tardy, Jesus assured him that he would be rewarded in the promptest

"Mr. Penny," I said. "I think you'll find that God cares very little about your past.

He mostly cares about what you'll do with the next minute of your life."

Penny nodded.

"Prayer is just talking to God," I added. "It's not theologically complicated. Just talk from your heart."

lips. I couldn't hear what he was saying, but when he opened his eyes his expression told me that he'd heard God's voice. I know this because the "mister" who had

Penny closed his eyes and began moving his

been so dependent on titles to gain distance from spiritual matters shifted his heart to say one last thing to me.

"Thank you, Pastor. Thank you."

Sign up to receive this weekly column in your email box at https://thechaplain.net/newsletter/ or send me your email address to comment@ thechaplain.net.

All of Norris's books can be ordered on Amazon. Autographed copies can be obtained on his website www.thechaplain.net or by sending a check for \$20 for each book to 10566 he wouldn't have much strength for this Combie Rd. Suite 6643 Auburn, CA 95602. ★

**6** • East Sacramento News APRIL 11, **2025** 

### Kings Korner By V.G. Harris



For the Sacramento Kings, life is like a box of chocolates, you never know you're going to get.

After a blowout loss to the Orlando Magic, the Kings sustained back-toback close losses to the Indiana Pacers and the lowly Washington Wizards. For many Kings fans, it was their darkest

Radio talk shows lambasted the Kings, and many even suggested the team was playing to opt out of the playin, in favor of securing a first-round draft pick.

I would never accuse the Kings of tanking, because I don't believe it's in their DNA. There is far too much pride in these gladiators for any of them to take a night off.

True, at times they look like they've never seen a basketball before, but I see effort on the court every night, and I believe in this eccentric group that has captured the hearts of so many fans.

With negativity abounding the Kings drubbed the Charlotte Hornets 125-102 in a game that was never in question, but looming ahead was the indomitable Cleveland Cavaliers.

No one gave the Kings a chance and considering that the Sactown boys had just handed the Cavaliers a shocking loss in Sacramento just three weeks earlier, the Cav's were just waiting for payback.

In a game that was thoroughly entertaining, the Kings played like a team on a mission, and outplayed the Cavaliers for 48 minutes, handing the Eastern Conference leader only their 16th loss of the season.

Domantas Sabonis came to play and made a statement early, scoring 15 of his 27 points in the first quarter. Zach Lavine showed off his offensive prowess by adding 37 huge points in a 120-113 win over the Cavaliers and making the potential for postseason basketball a very real possibility for the Sacramento Kings.

But this win doesn't just portend postseason basketball, it sends a message to every negative pundit, and every Kings fan, that on any given night this newly assembled group of ballers, can beat the best that the NBA has to offer.

Hope is a fleeting emotion, but on this night in Cleveland, the Kings gave every fan a reason to play on. No more nonsense about playing for draft picks. Instead watch the movie "Hoosiers" again, and while you're at it why not plug in "Miracle on Ice".

I remember the 1976 Warriors that with only one star, went on a run that saw them winning four straight games over the Washington Bullets and shocking the basketball world.

These things happen, and they're the very reason we watch basketball.

We as fans are blessed with an eclectic group that have come together under difficult circumstances, and with a rookie coach, are trying to do what every supposed expert believes they can't do.

Well call me Pollyanna, because I decide what I believe, and I'll be rooting until they turn the lights out.

For many fans, your favorite player isn't even a member of the starting five, and that is what drives you. Bench rotations are ever so critical, and whether it's Malik Monk, Isaac Jones, or even Doug McDermott, fans live and die with every shot.

I was astounded to hear that Vegas has the Detroit Pistons as 6 1/2 favorites over the Sacramento Kings Monday night, and every player on the Kings should take that as an insult. Put a chip on your shoulder and show the Pistons how they just defeated perhaps the best team in the Eastern Confernce the night before.

Look for anything that brings motivation and let's end this season on a high

Will the Kings finish 500 or better? I don't know, but I'll be watching, and I know anything is possible.

The offseason and its moves will take care of itself. It's time to put the hammer down and play basketball the way every fan knows this team is capable of.

Stay tuned Kings fans because the playoffs are more than just a pipe dream!

All the best!

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

### **Social Security Matters**

### When is the Best Time for Me to Claim Social Security?



AMAC Certified Social Security Advisor

Dear Rusty: I will be 66 ½ in June and would like to discuss when would be the best time for me to start taking my social security benefits. I am still employed full time and don't want to be penalized because of that. Please let me know what I need to do to set up an appointment with you. I got your information from the AMAC website, and I look forward to hearing from you. Signed: Ready to Claim

Dear Ready: You can certainly call us on 1.888.750.2622 during normal EST business hours for a personal conversation. But to facilitate that conversation, be aware that deciding when to claim your Social Security benefit normally depends on just a few factors, including your financial need, your health and expected longevity, and your marital status. A few things to be aware of:

• Born in 1958, your "full retirement age" is age 66 years and 8 months. If you were born in October 1958, you will reach you FRA in June 2025, and that is the point you can get 100% of the SS benefit you've earned from a lifetime of working.

• Once you reach your FRA in June, Social Security's "annual earnings test" no longer applies. Thus, you can continue working after you start your SS benefits and your earnings will not negatively affect your monthly benefit amount. If you claim any earlier than your FRA, you will get a smaller benefit and also be subject to Social Security's annual earnings test (which for you this year - your FRA year is \$62,160, or \$5,180/month after you start your SS benefits). If you decide to claim before your FRA, your benefit will be reduced by .556% for each month early (a permanent reduction).

· You can also wait beyond your FRA to claim and earn Delayed Retirement Credits (DRCs) at the rate of .667% per month (8% per year of delay), in order to get an even higher benefit later. If financially feasible, you can delay up to the age of 70 when your monthly benefit will reach maximum - about 27% more than it will be in June of this year.

• If you are single and will not be eligible for a spousal benefit, then you should make your claiming decision based only on your own needs. If, however, you are married and your spouse's FRA benefit is more than twice your FRA amount, you may be entitled to a "spousal boost" (a supplemental amount added to your own SS benefit).

• Your life expectancy should be considered when deciding when to claim your SS retirement benefits. If you expect to enjoy at least "average" longevity (about 87 for a woman your current age), then you might also consider delaying your claim (if financially feasible) and that is often a prudent choice. If you don't expect to achieve a long life, or if you need the money sooner, or if you are entitled to spousal benefits, then claiming at your FRA of 66 years and 8 months is likely your best option. In the end, only you can

decide when you should claim your Social Security, but we're always here to answer any additional questions you may have. You can feel free to call us at any time (1.888.750.2622) during normal EST business hours to discuss your options directly with one of our certified Social Security advisors. Or you can also ask any additional questions via email, which we will be most happy to respond to promptly.

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

### In California's Capitol, Some Political Fights Span Decades



By Dan Walters, CALMatters.org

Were we able to transport ourselves back in time 50 years and into California's Capitol, we would find a governor seeking and enjoying massive attention by national political media as he eyes some greater office. We'd also find a Legislature dealing with conflicts among influential interests with heavy financial impacts.

In other words, the Capitol's dynamics in 1975 were pretty much what they are today.

The resemblance even extends to specific issues. For instance, then-Gov. Jerry Brown was touting a "peripheral canal" in 1975 to carry water around the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta. Gavin Newsom was seven years old then, but now as governor is waging the same campaign for a tunnel to do the same thing and is facing the same opposition.

Other conflicts that confronted Brown and legislators a half-century ago can be found again among the hundreds of bills introduced so far in the 2025 legislative session.

On Tuesday, for instance, the Senate Judiciary Committee took up Senate Bill 29, a measure that would extend indefinitely the ability of survivors of people who died as a result of medical malpractice to sue for "pain, suffering, or disfigurement." provides income and med-During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Legislature provided a temporary window for such suits because the court system was in pandemic-induced turmoil.

Insurers and other opponents of the measure contend that it violates a 2022 compromise on the limits of malpractice damages, a deal that seemingly ended a 47-year-long political battle that began when Brown signed the Medical Injury Compensation Reform Act in 1975.

A half-century ago, doctors and other health care providers were also skirmishing over "scope of practice," the body of state law that defines in great detail which medical professionals can perform which procedures on which parts of the human body.

The hardest-fought battle pitted orthopedic surgeons against podiatrists over the legal right to perform ankle surgery, and it raged for years until the latter prevailed. Ever since, there have been similar conflicts too numerous to list, such as psychologists vs. psychiatrists over the right to prescribe drugs, optometrists vs. opticians over eye treatment - and even veterinarians vs. dog groomers over who could legally brush a dog's teeth.

The current version of this perennial turf battle is Assembly Bill 876, which would allow nurse anesthetists to provide their services more independently — the latest in a years-long string of legislative efforts by nurses to bolster the scope of their

practices. Soon after becoming governor, Brown pledged to reform workers' compensation, the system that ical care to those with work-related illnesses and injuries. That effort failed, but as one of the last acts of his first governorship, Brown signed a bill to increase payments to such workers by about \$3 billion a year, angering employers who must provide coverage.

That touched off a predictable cycle in which a majority of the workers' compensation interest groups would work out some sort of systemic overhaul once each decade and get it enacted over objections of groups left out of the negotiations.

The last such instance occurred in 2012 when Brown, once again governor, negotiated and signed legislation to raise benefits again, but impose new rules on eligibility and medical care to save enough money to pay for the benefits.

The Capitol is overdue for another workers' compensation deal and a newly introduced measure, Senate Bill 555, could be the vehicle. It would increase benefits to workers with partial but permanent disabilities, which have been capped at \$1,256 a month for the last decade.

The bill would provide automatic cost of living increases and is certain to draw fire from employers — another chapter in what has been one of the Capitol's longest running high-dollar conflicts.

Dan Walters is one of the 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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### Fraudulent Invoices Hit County's Planning Customers

Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO COUNTY, CA (MPG) -Sacramento County officials have been made aware of a fraudulent email scheme targeting both current and former planning customers.

The scam involves sending fake invoices using the names of county officials and the official Sacramento County logo, instructing recipients to wire money. The current reports of this scam utilize an email address of "planning-applications. saccounty.gov@usa.com."

Customers are urged to be cautious and not respond to these emails or send any payments. Anyone who receives a suspicious email of this nature should forward it to sacplan@saccounty.gov for review.

"Sacramento County takes this matter very seriously and we are actively working to educate our customers so that they don't fall victim to this scam," said Sacramento County Planning Director Todd Smith.

"We urge our customers to remain vigilant and verify any financial requests directly with the county before taking action. If vou're unsure whether an invoice is official, contact us to verify."

The Sacramento County Department of Technology is investigating the incident and will collaborate with law enforcement if necessary.

The Sacramento County Department of Finance issues planning customer invoices through the U.S. mail and does not instruct

customers to wire funds as a method of payment. Payments are only accepted by mail to P.O. Box 1587, Sacramento, CA 95812, in person at county locations, and certain payments are accepted online.

If you have received an invoice from Sacramento County Planning and Environmental Review and would like to verify its authenticity, email sacplan@ saccounty.gov or call Planning and Environmental Review at 916-874-6141.

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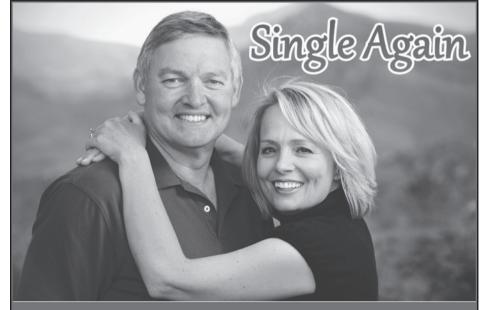


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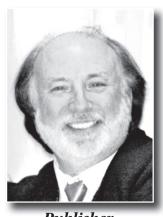
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### SchoolsFirst FCU Sponsors Heroes of Arts Gala

SchoolsFirst Federal **Credit Union News** Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) -SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union (FCU), the largest credit union in California and the largest serving school employees and their families, served as the lead sponsor of the third annual Friends of Sacramento Arts Heroes of Arts Education Gala, which recognizes community leaders and local arts educators for their role in supporting and bringing arts education to local schools. The event was held on March 12 at The Sofia, Home of B Street Theatre in Sacramento.

Friends of Sacramento Arts works to ensure equitable access to comprehensive arts education in K-12 public schools. The nonprofit organization advocates for increased access to arts education for K-12 public school students in El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento and Yolo counties, serving as a capacity builder for arts organizations and school districts, and provides information, resources and connections to advance these goals. The Heroes of Arts

Education Gala showcases local student talents and shines a spotlight on the arts educators and supporters of arts education in Sacramento, including the presentation of awards to extraordinary teachers from 12 Sacramento region school districts who have brought arts education into K-12 public school



The Heroes of Arts Education Gala included the presentation of awards to extraordinary teachers from 12 Sacramento region school districts. Photo courtesy of SchoolsFirst Federal

classrooms in creative and impactful ways.

"Arts leaders and educators inspire and engage our school children through music, dance, theater and fine arts," said Allison Cagley, executive director of Friends of Sacramento Arts. "Our organization believes every child deserves arts education to support academic and social-emotional learning, yet there are significant gaps in access.

We're proud of our partnership with SchoolsFirst Federal Credit Union, and we're grateful for their generous support to help connect schools with arts education resources and provide information to support arts program expansion in Sacramento's K-12 schools."

Josh Smith, vice president, school and community relations, at SchoolsFirst FCU, added, "It is an honor to partner with Friends of Sacramento Arts to work toward their stated mission of 'Arts Every Day for Every Child in Every School.' We know support for this initiative makes an impact not only on the lives of educators, but also on the lives of their students. Allison and her team have done an

outstanding job in organizing this Gala and drawing attention to the importance of arts education in our public schools."

In addition to recognizing arts teachers from schools in the region, the 2025 Heroes of Arts Education Gala recognized Letty Kraus, Arts Initiative Director for California County Superintendents, as an outstanding leader in the field of arts education. Tony Thurmond, Superintendent of Public Education for the State of California, attended the gala and delivered remarks to the audience. Also in attendance were Sacramento City Councilmember Roger Dickinson and Vice Mayor Karina Talamantes.

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### More Than a Meal



The solutions-focused partnership between Meals on Wheels and Sacramento County Department of Child, Family and Adult Services helps ensure that no senior is left without food

meals.

#### Sacramento County News Release

SACRAMENTO REGION, CA (MPG) - On a routine Monday meal delivery, a volunteer driver with Meals on Wheels (MoW) Sacramento County made a frightening discovery. A senior had been trapped in a collapsed bed since Friday, without food, water or a way to call for help. Staying calm, the driver called 911 and remained at the scene until the emergency contact

Reflecting on moments like these, Mindy Klick, executive director of Meals on Wheels Sacramento County shared, "I want to say these are success stories but they are more like life-saving stories."

Although often mistaken for a public agency, Meals on Wheels Sacramento County is a program of the private nonprofit called ACC Senior Services, formerly known as The Asian Community Center of Sacramento Valley.

Meals on Wheels Sacramento County partners with Sacramento County Department of Child, Family and Adult Services to tackle senior hunger and isolation head-on.

Department of Child, Family and Adult Services' support has helped shrink the growing waitlist by providing funding, vehicles and equipment to make meal delivery safer and more efficient.

"We try to provide whatever we can to help seniors stay in their homes safely,"

In the current fiscal year, Meals on Wheels Sacramento County is serving an average of about 1,500 meals to seniors each month, with flexible meal options designed to fit their lifestyles:

Home delivery gives participants a choice of daily hot meals or weekly frozen meal packs.

Restaurant meal vouchers provide flexibility and the opportunity to dine out at local partner restaurants.

Community Cafés, located in community centers and other sites across the county, provide more than just a meal; they offer a space for seniors to connect, socialize and combat loneliness. For many participants, the opportunity for conversation is just as important as the food itself.

AniMeals, a pet food program, ensures

that seniors don't have to choose between feeding themselves and their beloved pets. Many participants consider their pets to

be family and AniMeals provides food for

these furry companions, allowing seniors to

care for them without sacrificing their own

Despite their name, Meals on Wheels is about far more than just meals: "This is about making sure our seniors are safe, cared for and not forgotten," Klick

To help achieve these goals, Meals on Wheels Sacramento County also equips seniors with essential home items such as microwaves for easy meal prep, shower chairs for safer bathing and bedside commodes for added convenience. Regular wellness checks and emergency support add another layer of safety, ensuring help is always within reach.

"We try to provide whatever we can to help seniors stay in their homes safely,' Klick explained.

A key part of this safety net is the bond between seniors and their delivery drivers. Assigned to regular routes, drivers provide consistency which builds trust and familiarity. For many homebound seniors, they might be the only human connection that day or even that week.

If something seems off such as changes in behavior, health or routine, the driver initiates the chain of support by alerting their caseworker who can respond as needed.

"If we see a situation that concerns us, we're able to reach out to DCFAS (Department of Child, Family and Adult Services) and either get advice, coaching on how to handle it or have Adult Protective Services step in and assist," said

Klick spoke highly of the Department of Child, Family and Adult Services team.

'I have not met a nicer group of people with the biggest hearts, trying to do the right thing," she said. "I can pick up the phone and say, 'This is the challenge we're facing, what are your thoughts? How can we partner?"

This open, solutions-focused partnership between Meals on Wheels and Sacramento County Department of Child, Family and Adult Services helps ensure that no senior is left without food or a safety net.

### **Comprehensive Update** on Response to Homelessness

Sacramento County News Release

#### SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) -

The Sacramento County departments of Homeless Services and Housing, and Health Services presented their biannual report to the Board detailing outreach efforts to the homeless population in the unincorporated region of Sacramento and along the American River Parkway from July 1 to Dec. 31, 2024.

This is the third such report out since the start of the city/county partnership agreement was signed in December 2023. In addition to reporting on joint outreach efforts in the City of Sacramento, county staff also report on similar activities in the unincorporated county.

Looking at the county outreach items by the numbers starting from July 1 to Dec. 31, 2024, 10 parkway staff, 10 encampment services staff and six community-based outreach staff provided 25,274 services to 810 unduplicated individuals and supported 184 unduplicated individuals with transitioning out of unsheltered homelessness (which includes shelter and housing). On average, that is 31 services per participant.

Examples of service numbers and types include:

General case management: 16,397

Housing search/placement: 1,206

1,024 Healthcare Services:

Vital document support:

CalAim services: 294

Coordinated Access System (CAS) Referrals:

More than 70% of unsheltered individuals served were between the ages of 25 and 61, 53% were male and 53% were Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC).

What about individuals in shelters? In county-funded shelters,



More than 70% of unsheltered individuals served were between the ages of 25 and 61, 53% were male and 53% were Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC). MPG file photo

45% of individuals are between the ages of 45 and 64, 64% report a disabling condition, 40% have no income, and on average, have experienced nearly four years of homelessness.

From July 1 to Dec. 31, 2024 county shelters enrolled 1,137 unique households.

Taking a look at behavioral health services by the numbers indicate that from July 1 to Dec. 31, 2024, 1,360 unhoused residents were referred to behavioral health services and 947 individuals were successfully admitted and linked to services.

During the same period, HEART Team efforts included 1,607 individuals engaged, 342 referrals to behavioral health services and individuals linked to and served by outpatient programs.

From July to December 2024, the Full-Service Partnerships (FSPs) served 2,631 (95% of total capacity) unduplicated individuals out of which 76% of those individuals are housed, 11% are in shelters, 9% are unsheltered and 4% are unknown.

The Department of Homeless Services and Housing continues to update its data dashboards, reflecting its commitment to providing clear, accessible information to support

data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement in addressing homelessness.

Data presented in the dashboards is organized into two general categories: program performance data and demographic insights data. Program performance

data helps track key performance metrics, including program reach, services provided to program participants, program utilization and connections to shelter and housing. Demographic insights

include data on age, gender, race/ethnicity and vulnerability factors such as lengths of homelessness, disability conditions and financial resources.

homelessness, disability conditions and financial resources.

Explore the dashboards at https://schs.saccounty. gov/Pages/Sacramento CountyHomelessnessData Dashboard.aspx and discover how the collective efforts are making a difference in our community. Currently, the dashboards only reflect demographics and outcomes from Department of Homeless Services and Housing funded programs.

For more information on what Sacramento County is doing to address homelessness, visit schs.saccounty.

Elk Grove authors George

East Sacramento authors Anara

Land Park authors Ron Javor,

Arden Arcade/Arden authors

Lynda Smith Hoggan, Amy

Rogers, Brenda Davis and Gloria

South Sacramento authors Pat

Orangevale authors Phyllis

Davis authors Judith Starkston,

Woodland authors Belinda Sikes

Roseville authors Betsy Miller,

Placerville author Terol

Madeline Olson and Sharon

Fujimoto. Rocklin authors Lois

Lally Pia, Sharon McDonell and

Henshaw and Maryalice Tomoeda.

Laatsch and Britney Nida.

Justine Villanueva.

and Lisa Montanaro.

Butcher and Kate Moore.

Jennifer Morita and Michele Drier. Pocket authors Eileen Hook and

Guard and Brian Reisinger.

Hahn, Rosemary Covington, Betsy Schwarzentraub, Nafisa Kahn and

Bryan Hill.

Dorothy Rice.

Galloway.



### Sacramento Book Festival Welcomes Big Names

Sacramento Book Festival

News Release

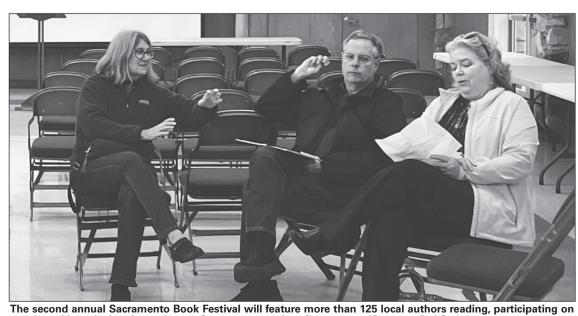
SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG) - From 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. May 31, the California Writers Club Sacramento Branch will launch the second annual Sacramento Book Festival at the Shepard Garden & Arts Center, next to McKinley Park, in East Sacramento.

As part of the free festival's focus on literacy, organizers will run a book drive for new and gently used children's books for the Mustard Seed School. This Sacramento Loaves & Fishes program is a free private school for children ages 3 to 15 years old who are currently homeless.

The Sacramento Book Festival committee will also welcome the Sacramento Literacy Foundation to the event, an organization whose mission is to help all children in the community read at grade-level. Also, there will be 916 Ink, an arts-based creative writing and literacy nonprofit organization helping Sacramento youth discover a love of reading.

The festival will feature more than 125 local authors reading, participating on panels and introducing themselves to Sacramento

readers. The roster includes New York Books on K, Capitol Crimes, Elk



panels and introducing themselves to Sacramento readers. Photo courtesy of Sacramento Book Festival Times bestselling thriller author Grove Writers Guild, Friends of

James Rollins, award-winning mystery author Catriona McPherson, crime fiction writers Claire Booth and James L'Etoile, among many others who

Sacramento-area readers will In addition, there will be children's activities, a food truck and a

scavenger hunt with prizes. Event sponsors include 916 Ink, Amatoria Fine Art Books, Avid Reader on Broadway, Black Women Write, Capital

the Sacramento Library - Book Den, the Mustard Seed School, Northern California Publishers and Authors, Northern California Romance Writers, Paper Lantern Writers, Sacramento Literacy Foundation, Sacramento Public Library, A Seat at the Table Books and Underground Books.

The authors, by neighborhood, are as follows:

River Park authors Scott Coatsworth authors Ann Naimark

and Ann Da Vigo. Fair Oaks authors Tim Schooley and Sandra Navarro.

Curtis Park/Downtown Sacramento authors Michael Gorman, Grete Brewer-Bakken, Brian Buhl, Melissa Buhl, Chance Knight, Linda Townsdin and Jeff Galvin.

Carmichael author Ann Chehak and Antelope author Candice

West Sacramento author Jeyzel Rossi and American River author

Oleas and Rancho Cordova author

Jill Davis.

Bonnie Blue. Gold River author Luanne McCullar and Granite Bay authors Ryan Hoyt, Donna Wierzbowski, Cindy Sample and Bill George. El Dorado Hills authors Jenifer

Rowe, James L'Etoile and Bitsy Kemper.

Folsom author Joanne Kwan and Winters author Catriona McPherson.

10 • East Sacramento News

### Concerts in the Park Returns in May

Downtown Sacramento Partnership News Release

SACRAMENTO, CA (MPG)
- On April 4, Downtown
Sacramento Partnership
announced the much-anticipated "Concerts in the
Park" series lineup, bringing live music back to
downtown Sacramento on

May 2, 2025.

Booking major national touring artists, this string of concerts are a staple to the growing music scene in Sacramento.

Fridays at 6 p.m. starting

Following the footsteps of other festivals and state fairs, this year "Concerts in the Park" is changing dates and times of the concert series. Beginning this season, gates will open at 6 p.m. and music will finish at 9:30 p.m.

While previous years have been 12 weeks of music, this year it will be nine, finishing the season at the end of June before the intense heat hits in July. The concert venue remains the same, Cesar Chavez Plaza.

"We've been very focused the last three years on adjusting 'Concerts in the Park' to be more reflective of Sacramento," said Madelyn Bussola, Director of Communications and Outreach for Downtown Sacramento Partnership. "We started by adjusting the lineup to include more genres with their own specific nights, bringing in different partners and food and beverage options to make it more community-oriented. It's only natural that as summers get warmer and downtown evolves that we also



Downtown Sacramento's "Concerts in the Park" is returning to César Chávez Plaza on May 2. Photos courtesy of Downtown Sacramento Partnership



"Concerts in the Park" attendees enjoy the music and atmosphere.

change the dates and times, not only to make it more comfortable, but also make it more safe. That's always been our No. 1 priority."

The one thing that the Partnership won't change: the event will always be free. A purposeful choice in an increasingly expensive field.

"Concerts in the Park' has always been for the community, and in order for that to remain authentic, it has to be reflective of the changes happening within it," said Michael Ault, Executive Director of Downtown Sacramento Partnership.

"Thirty-two years ago, these were a vehicle to keep office workers downtown for an hour or two longer after they clocked out at 5 p.m. Even with return-to-office orders,

we want downtown to be a destination of choice, not obligation, so it's our responsibility to provide an experience that people want to come to, in-office or not."

The dynamic and high-energy 32nd annual "Concerts in the Park" line-up contains local and national artists including XZIBIT (hip-hop), Phantogram (indie rock),



The 2025 "Concerts in the Park" lineup was announced by Downtown Sacramento Partnership on April 4.



starting on May 2 and concluding on June 27.

Winona Fighter (emo), Jackie Greene (Americana) and Discrete (EDM), along with popular DJs including DJ Oasis, EDDY, and Joseph ONE.

A detailed lineup along with more information about "Concerts in the Park" is available at downtownsac.org/downtown-sac-experiences/concerts-in-the-park.

A production of Sacramento.

Downtown Sacramento Partnership, "Concerts in the Park" is proudly sponsored by Dignity Health, Donaghy Sales, Jack Daniels, Bonney Electrical, Heating & Air, Republic Services, Audacy, Citizen Hotel, Xfinity & Comcast Business, and Visit Sacramento.

César Chávez Plaza is located at 910 I St. in Sacramento. ★





